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MISS O'NEILL,
IN THE CHARACTER OF BELVIDERA.

Engraved by J.B. Longacre from a picture by W. Devin.

THE
BRITISH DRAMA

A Collection of the most approved

Tragedies, Comedies, Operas,
& FARCES.

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THE
BRITISH DRAMA:

A COLLECTION OF THE MOST ESTEEMED

TRAGEDIES, COMEDIES, OPERAS, AND FARCES

IN THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

VOLUME I.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
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1859.

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FATAL CURIOSITY:

A TRAGEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY GEORGE LILLO.

REMARKS.

THE story of this piece is very simple and affecting, and is said to have been founded on a fact which happened on the western coast of England. The circumstance of a son, long absent from his parents, keeping himself, on his return to visit them, for some time unknown, is unforced; while at the same time their inducement, from the depth of distress and penury, to perpetrate his murder, for the sake of the treasures he had shown them, is productive of some very fine scenes of intermingled horror and tenderness. Mr. Lillo rendered the distresses of common and domestic life as interesting to the audience, as those of kings and heroes; and the ruin brought on private families by an indulgence of avarice, lust, &c. as the havoc made in states and empires by ambition, cruelty, or tyranny. His *George Barnwell*, *Fatal Curiosity*, and *Arden of Feversham*, are all planned on common and well-known stories; yet they have always drawn tears from the audience, and even the critics have laid down their pens to take out the handkerchief.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.	HAY-MARKET.
OLD WILMOT,.....	Mr. Kemble.....	Mr. Bensley.
YOUNG WILMOT,.....	Mr. Barrymore.....	Mr. Palmer.
EUSTACE,.....	Mr. Truman.....	Mr. R. Palmer.
RANDAL,.....	Mr. C. Kemble.....	Mr. Bannister, Jun.
AGNES,.....	Mrs. Siddons.....	Miss Sherry.
CHARLOTTE,.....	Mrs. Powell.....	Mrs. Bulkeley
MARIA,.....	Miss Leake.....	Miss Hooke.

SCENE.—Penryn, Cornwall.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in OLD WILMOT'S House.

Enter OLD WILMOT.

O. Wil. The day is far advanc'd; the cheerful sun

Pursues with vigour his repeated course;
No labour lessens, nor no time decays
His strength or splendour: evermore the same,
From age to age his influence sustains
Dependent worlds, bestows both life and motion
On the dull mass that forms their dusky orbs,
Cheers them with heat, and gilds them with
brightness.

Yet man, of jarring elements compos'd,
Who posts from change to change, from the first
hour

Of his frail being till his dissolution,

1*

Enjoys the sad prerogative above him,
To think, and to be wretched.—What is life,
To him that's born to die! or what that wisdom,
Whose perfection ends in knowing we know
nothing!

Mere contradiction all! a tragic farce,
Tedious though short, and without art elab'rate.
Ridiculously sad——

Enter RANDAL.

Where hast been, Randal?

Ran. Not out of Penryn, Sir; but to the strand,
To hear what news from Falmouth since the
storm

Of wind last night.

O. Wil. It was a dreadful one.

Ran. Some found it so. A noble ship from
India

5

Ent'ring in the harbour, run upon a rock,
And there was lost.

O. Wil. What 'came of those on board her?

Ran. Some few are sav'd; but much the greater part,

'Tis thought, are perished,

O. Wil. They are past the fear

Of future tempests or a wreck on shore;

Those who escap'd are still expos'd to both.

Where's your mistress?

Ran. I saw her pass the High-street, towards the Minster.

O. Wil. She's gone to visit Charlotte—She doth well.

In the soft bosom of that gentle maid,

There dwells more goodness than the rigid race

Of moral pedants e'er believ'd or taught.

With what amazing constancy and truth

Doth she sustain the absence of our son,

Whom more than life she loves! How shun for him,

Whom we shall ne'er see more, the rich and great;
Who own her charms, and sigh to make her happy.

Since our misfortunes, we have found no friend,

None who regarded our distress, but her;

And she, by what I have observ'd of late,

Is tir'd, or exhausted—curs'd condition!

To live a burden to one only friend,

And blast her youth with our contagious woe!

Who that had reason, soul, or sense, would bear it

A moment longer!—Then, this honest wretch!—

I must dismiss him—Why should I detain

A grateful, gen'rous youth to perish with me?

His service may procure him bread elsewhere.

Though I have none to give him. Pr'ythee

Randal,

How long hast thou been with me?

Ran. Fifteen years.

I was a very child when first you took me,

To wait upon your son, my dear young master!

I oft have wish'd I'd gone to India with him;

Though you, desponding, gave him o'er for lost.

I am to blame.—This talk revives your sorrow

For his absence.

O. Wil. That cannot be reviv'd,

Which never died.

Ran. The whole of my intent

Was to confess your bounty, that supplied

The loss of both my parents: I was long

The object of your charitable care.

O. Wil. No more of that.—Thou'st serv'd me

longer since

Without reward; so that account is balanc'd,

Or, rather I'm thy debtor. I remember,

When poverty began to show her face

Within these walls, and all my other servants,

Like pamper'd vermin from a falling house,

Retreated with the plunder they had gain'd,

And left me, too indulgent and remiss

For such ungrateful wretches, to be crush'd

Beneath the ruin they had help'd to make,

That you, more good than wise, refused to leave me.

Ran. Nay, I beseech you, Sir!—

O. Wil. With my mistress,

In perfect contradiction to the world,

Thy love, respect, and diligence increased;

Now all the recompense within my power,

Is to discharge thee, Randal, from my hard,

Unprofitable service.

Ran. Heaven forbid!

Shall I forsake you in your worst necessity?

Believe me, Sir, my honest soul abhors

The barb'rous thought.

O. Wil. What! canst thou feed on air?

I have have not left wherewith to purchase food

For one meal more.

Ran. Rather than leave you thus,

I'll beg my bread and live on others' bounty

While I serve you.

O. Wil. Down, down my swelling heart,

Or burst in silence: 'tis thy cruel fate

Insults thee by his kindness. He is innocent

Of all the pain it gives thee. Go thy ways,

I will no more suppress thy youthful hopes

Of rising in the world.

Ran. 'Tis true; I'm young,

And never tried my fortune, or my genius;

Which may, perhaps, find out some happy means

As yet unthought of, to supply your wants.

O. Wil. Thou tortur'st me—I hate all obligations

Which I can ne'er return. And who art thou,

That I should stoop to take 'em from thy hand?

Care for thyself, but take no thought for me;

I will not want thee—trouble me no more.

Ran. Be not offended, Sir, and I will go:

I ne'er repin'd at your commands before;

But, heaven's my witness, I obey you now

With strong reluctance and a heavy heart.

Farewell, my worthy master!

[Going]

O. Wil. Farewell—Stay—

As thou art yet a stranger to the world,

Of which, alas! I've had too much experience,

I should, methinks, before we part, bestow

A little counsel on thee. Dry thy eyes—

If thou weep'st thus, I shall proceed no farther.

Dost thou aspire to greatness, or to wealth,

Quit books and the unprofitable search

Of wisdom there, and study human kind:

No science will avail thee without that;

But, that obtain'd, thou need'st not any other.

This will instruct thee to conceal thy views,

And wear the face of probity and honour,

'Till thou hast gain'd thy end; which must be

ever

Thy own advantage, at that man's expense

Who shall be weak enough to think thee honest.

Ran. You mock me, sure.

O. Wil. I never was more serious.

Ran. Why should you counsel what you

scorn'd to practise?

O. Wil. Because that foolish scorn has been

my ruin.

I've been an idiot, but would have thee wiser,

And treat mankind, as they would treat thee,

Randal;

As they deserve, and I've been treated by 'em.

Thou'st seen, by me, and those who now despise

me,

How men of fortune fall, and beggars rise;

Shun my example; treasure up my precepts;

The world's before thee—be a knave and prosper.

What, art thou dumb? [After a long pause.]

Ran. Amazement ties my tongue.

Where are your former principles?

O. Wil. No matter;

Suppose I have renounc'd 'em: I have passions,

And love thee still; therefore would have thee

think,

The world is all a scene of deep deceit,

And he who deals with mankind on the square,

Is his own bubble, and undoes himself. [Exit]

Ran. Is this the man I thought so wise and just?
 What! teach and counsel me to be a villain!
 Sure grief has made him frantic, or some fiend
 Assumed his shape—I shall suspect my senses.
 High-minded he was ever, and improvident;
 But pitiful and generous to a fault:
 Pleasure he loved, but honour was his idol.
 O, fatal change! O, horrid transformation!
 So a majestic temple, sunk to ruin,
 Becomes the loathsome shelter and abode
 Of lurking serpents, toads, and beasts of prey;
 And scaly dragons hiss, and lions roar,
 Where wisdom taught, and music charmed before.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A Parlour in CHARLOTTE'S House.

Enter CHARLOTTE and MARIA.

Char. What terror and amazement must they
 Who die by shipwreck? [feel

Mar. 'Tis a dreadful thought!

Char. Ay; is it not, Maria? to descend,
 Living and conscious, to that wat'ry tomb!
 Alas! had we no sorrows of our own,
 The frequent instances of others' woe
 Must give a gen'rous mind a world of pain.
 But you forget you promised me to sing.
 Though cheerfulness and I have long been stran-
 gers,

Harmonious sounds are still delightful to me.
 There's sure no passion in the human soul,
 But finds its food in music—I would hear
 The song composed by that unhappy maid,
 Whose faithful lover 'scap'd a thousand perils
 From rocks, and sands, and the devouring deep:
 And after all, being arrived at home,
 Passing a narrow brook, was drowned there,
 And perished in her sight.

Mar. Cease, cease, heart-easing tears;
 Adieu, you flutt'ring fears,
 Which seven long tedious years
 Taught me to bear.

Tears are for lighter woes;
 Fear, no such danger knows,
 As Fate remorseless shows,
 Endless despair.

Dear cause of all my pain,
 On the wide stormy main,
 Thou wast preserved in vain,
 Though still ador'd;
 Hadst thou died there unseen.
 My wounded eyes had been
 Sav'd from the direst scene
 Maid e'er deplor'd.

[CHARLOTTE finds a letter.

Char. What's this?—A letter, superscribed
 to me!

None could convey it here but you, Maria:
 Ungen'rous, cruel maid! to use me thus!
 To join with flatt'ring men to break my peace,
 And persecute me to the last retreat!

Mar. Why should it break your peace, to hear
 the sighs

Of honourable love? This letter is—

Char. No matter whence—return it back un-
 opened.

I have no love, no charms, but for my Wilmot,
 Nor would have any.

Mar. Alas! Wilmot's dead;
 Or, living, dead to you.

Char. I'll not despair;

Patience shall cherish hope, nor wrong his honour
 By unjust suspicion. I know his truth,
 And will preserve my own. But to prevent
 All future, vain, officious importunity,
 Know, thou incessant foe of my repose,
 Whether he sleeps, secure from mortal cares,
 In the deep bosom of the boist'rous main,
 Or, tossed with tempests, still endures its rage,
 No second choice shall violate my vows;
 High heaven, which heard them, and abhors the
 perjured,

Can witness, they were made without reserve;
 Never to be retracted, ne'er dissolved
 By accidents or absence, time or death.

Mar. And did your vows oblige you to support
 His haughty parents, to your utter ruin?
 Well may you weep to think on what you've
 done.

Char. I weep to think that I can do no more
 For their support. What will become of 'em—
 The hoary, helpless, miserable pair!

Mar. What I can't praise, you force me to
 admire,

And mourn for you, as you lament for them.
 Your patience, constancy, and resignation,
 Merit a better fate.

Char. So pride would tell me,
 And vain self-love; but I believe them not:
 And if, by wanting pleasure, I have gained
 Humility, I'm richer for my loss.

Mar. You have the heavenly art, still to im-
 prove
 Your mind by all events. But here comes one,
 Whose pride seems to increase with her misfor-
 Her faded dress, unfashionably fine, [tunes.
 As ill conceals her poverty, as that
 Strained complaisance her haughty, swelling
 heart.

Though perishing with want, so far from asking,
 She ne'er receives a favour uncompelled;
 And while she ruins, scorns to be obliged:
 Let me depart, I know she loves me not.

[*Exit MARIA.**Enter AGNES.**Char.* This visit's kind.

Agn. Few else would think it so:
 Those who would once have thought themselves
 much honoured

By the least favour, though 'twere but a look,
 I could have shown them, now refuse to see me.
 'Tis misery enough to be reduced
 To the low level of the common herd,
 Who, born to begg'ry, envy all above them;
 But 'tis the curse of curses, to endure
 The insolent contempt of those we scorn.

Char. By scorning, we provoke them to con-
 tempt;

And thus offend, and suffer in our turns:
 We must have patience.

Agn. No, I scorn them yet.

But there's no end of suff'ring: who can say
 Their sorrows are complete? My wretched hus-
 band,

Tired with our woes, and hopeless of relief,
 Grows sick of life.

And, urged by indignation and despair,
 Would plunge into eternity at once,
 By foul self-murder.

Char. Gracious heaven, support him!

Agn. His fixed love for me,
 Whom he would fain persuade to share his fate,

And take the same, uncertain, dreadful course,
Alone withholds his hand.

Char. And may it ever!

Agn. I've known with him the two extremes
of life,

The highest happiness, and deepest woe,
With all the sharp and bitter aggravations
Of such a vast transition. Such a fall
In the decline of life! I have as quick,
As exquisite, a sense of pain as he,
And would do any thing, but die, to end it;
But there my courage fails. Death is the worst
That fate can bring, and cuts off ev'ry hope.

Char. We must not choose but strive to bear
our lot

Without reproach or guilt: but by one act
Of desperation we may overthrow
The merit we've been raising all our days;
And lose our whole reward. And now, methinks,
Now more than ever, we have cause to fear,
And be upon our guard. The hand of heaven
Spreads clouds on clouds o'er our benighted heads,
And, wrapp'd in darkness, doubles our distress.
I had, the night last past, repeated twice,
A strange and awful dream: I would not yield
To fearful superstition, nor despise
The admonition of a friendly power
That wish'd my good.

Agn. I've certain plagues enough,
Without the help of dreams to make me wretched.

Char. I would not stake my happiness or duty
On their uncertain credit, nor on aught
But reason, and the known decrees of heaven.
Yet dreams have sometimes shown events to
come,

And may excite to vigilance and care;
My vision may be such and sent to warn us,
(Now we are tried by multiplied afflictions,
To mark each motion of our swelling hearts,
Lest we attempt to extricate ourselves,
And seek deliverance by forbidden ways;
To keep our hope and innocence entire,
'Till we're dismiss'd to join the happy dead,
Or heaven relieves us here.

Agn. Well to your dream.

Char. Methought I sat, in a dark winter's
night,
On the wide summit of a barren mountain;
The sharp bleak winds pierc'd through my
shiv'ring frame,
And storms of hail, and sleet, and driving rains,
Beat with impetuous fury on my head,
Drenched my chill'd limbs, and poured a deluge
round me.

On one hand ever gentle Patience sate,
On whose calm bosom I reclin'd my head;
And on the other silent Contemplation.
At length to my unclos'd and watchful eyes,
That long had roll'd in darkness, dawn appear'd;
And I beheld a man, an utter stranger,
But of a graceful and exalted mien,
Who press'd with eager transport to embrace me.
I shunn'd his arms. But at some words he spoke,
Which I have now forgot, I turn'd again,
But he was gone. And oh! transporting sight!
Your son, my dearest Wilmot, fill'd his place.

Agn. If I regarded dreams, I should expect
Some fair event from yours.

Char. But what's to come,
Though more obscure, is terrible indeed
Methought, we parted soon, and when I sought
him,

You and his father—(yes, you both were there)—
Strove to conceal him from me: I pursued you
Both with my cries, and call'd on heaven and earth
To judge my wrongs, and force you to reveal
Where you had hid my love, my life, my Wil-
mot!—

Agn. Unless you mean t'affront me, spare the
rest.

'Tis just as likely Wilmot should return,
As we become your foes.

Char. Far be such rudeness
From Charlotte's thoughts; but when I heard your
name

Self-murder, it reviv'd the frightful image
Of such a dreadful scene.

Agn. You will persist!—

Char. Excuse me; I have done. Being a
dream,

I thought, indeed, it could not give offence

Agn. You could not think so, had you thought
at all:

But I take nothing ill from thee. Adieu;
I've tarried longer than I first intended,
And my poor husband mourns the while alone.

[*Exit.*]

Char. She's gone abruptly, and I fear displeas'd.
The least appearance of advice or caution
Sets her impatient temper in a flame.

When grief, that well might humble, swells our
pride,

And pride increasing, aggravates our grief,
The tempest must prevail 'till we are lost.
Heaven grant a fairer issue to her sorrows!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—The Town and Port of Penryn

Enter YOUNG WILMOT and EUSTACE, in Indian
habits.

Wil. Welcome, my friend! to Penryn: here
we're safe.

Eust. Then we're deliver'd twice; first from
the sea,

And then from savage men, who, more remorse-
less,

Prey on shipwrecked wretches, and spoil and
murder those

Whom fatal tempests and devouring waves,
In all their fury, spar'd.

Wil. It is a scandal,

Though malice must acquit the better sort,
The rude unpolish'd people here in Cornwall
Have long lain under, and with too much justice:
For 'tis an evil, grown almost invet'rate,
And asks a bold and skilful hand to cure.

Eust. Your treasure's safe, I hope.

Wil. 'Tis here, thank heaven!

Being in jewels, when I saw our danger,
I hid it in my bosom.

Eust. I observed you;

And wonder how you could command your
thoughts,

In such a time of terror and confusion.

Wil. My thoughts were then at home—O En-
gland! England!

Thou seat of plenty, liberty, and health,
With transport I behold thy verdant fields,
Thy lofty mountains rich with useful ore,
Thy numerous herds, thy flocks, and winding
streams!

After a long and tedious absence, Eustace,
With what delight we breathe our native air,

And tread the genial soil that bore us first !
 'Tis said, the world is ev'ry wise man's country ;
 Yet, after having view'd its various nations,
 I'm weak enough, still to prefer my own,
 To all I've seen beside.—You smile, my friend,
 And think, perhaps, 'tis instinct more than reason.
 Why, be it so. Instinct preceded reason,
 E'en in the wisest men, and may sometimes
 Be much the better guide. But, be it either,
 I must confess, that even death itself
 Appear'd to me with twice its native horrors,
 When apprehended in a foreign land.
 Death is, no doubt, in ev'ry place the same :
 Yet nature cast a look towards home, and most,
 Who have it in their power, choose to expire
 Where they first drew their breath.

Eust. Believe me, Wilmot,
 Your grave reflections were not what I smiled at ;
 I own the truth. That we're returned to Eng-

land,

Affords me all the pleasure you can feel.
 Yet I must think a warmer passion moves you ;
 Thinking of that, I smile'd.

Wil. O Eustace ! Eustace !
 Thou know'st, for I've confess'd to thee, I love ;
 But, having never seen the charming maid,
 Thou canst not know the fierceness of my flame.
 My hopes and fears, like the tempestuous seas
 That we have past, now mount me to the skies,
 Now hurl me down from that stupendous height,
 And drive me to the centre. Did you know
 How much depends on this important hour,
 You would not be surprised to see me thus.
 The sinking fortune of our ancient house
 Compell'd me, young, to leave my native country,
 My weeping parents, and my lovely Charlotte ;
 Who rul'd, and must for ever rule my fate.
 O ! should my Charlotte, doubtful of my truth,
 Or in despair ever to see me more,
 Have given herself to some more happy lover !—
 Distraction's in the thought !—Or should my
 parents,

Griev'd for my absence and oppressed with want,
 Have sunk beneath their burden, and expir'd,
 While I, too late, was flying to relieve them ;
 The end of all my long and weary travels,
 The hope that made success itself a blessing,
 Being defeated, and for ever lost,
 What were the riches of the world to me ?

Eust. The wretch who fears all that is possible,

Must suffer more than he who feels the worst
 A man can feel, who lives exempt from fear.
 A woman may be false, and friends are mortal ;
 And yet your aged parents may be living,
 And your fair mistress constant.

Wil. True, they may ;
 I doubt, but I despair not—No, my friend !
 My hopes are strong, and lively as my fears ;
 They tell me, Charlotte is as true as fair,
 That we shall meet, never to part again ;
 That I shall see my parents, kiss the tears
 From their pale hollow cheeks, cheer their sad
 hearts,

And drive that gaping phantom, meagre want,
 For ever from their board ; crown all their days
 To come, with peace, with pleasure and abundance ;

Receive their fond embraces and their blessings,
 And be a blessing to them.

Eust. 'Tis our weakness :—
 Blind to events, we reason in the dark,

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And fondly apprehend what none e'er found,
 Or ever shall, pleasure and pain unmix'd ;
 And flatter and torment ourselves by turns,
 With what shall never be.

Wil. I'll go this instant
 To seek my Charlotte, and explore my fate.

Eust. What ! in that foreign habit ?

Wil. That's a trifle,

Not worth my thoughts.

Eust. The hardships you've endur'd,
 And your long stay beneath the burning zone,
 Where one eternal sultry summer reigns,
 Have marr'd the native hue of your complexion ;
 Methinks, you look more like a sun-burnt Indian
 Than a Briton.

Wil. Well, 'tis no matter, Eustace !
 I hope my mind's not altered for the worse ;
 And for my outside—But inform me, friend,
 When I may hope to see you.

Eust. When you please :

You'll find me at the inn.

Wil. When I have learn'd my doom, expect me
 there.

'Till then farewell !

Eust. Farewell ! success attend you ! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—CHARLOTTE'S House.

CHARLOTTE enters, in thought ; and, soon after,
 SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, a stranger in a foreign habit
 Desires to see you.

Char. In a foreign habit—
 'Tis strange and unexpected—But admit him.

[*Exit SERVANT.*]

Who can this stranger be ? I know no foreigner.

WILMOT enters.

—Nor any man like this.

Wil. Ten thousand joys !
 [*Going to embrace her.*]

Char. Sir, you are too bold—forebear and let
 me know

What bus'ness brought you here ; or leave the
 place.

Wil. Perfidious maid ! am I forgot or scorn'd ?

Char. Can I forget a man I never knew ?

Wil. My fears are true : some other has her
 heart :

She's lost—My fatal absence has undone me.

[*Aside.*]
 O ! could thy Wilmot have forgot thee, Charlotte !

Char. Ha ! Wilmot ! say ! what do your words
 import ?

O gentle stranger ! ease my swelling heart :

What dost thou know of Wilmot ?

Wil. This I know.

When all the winds of heaven seem'd to conspire
 Against the stormy main, and dreadful peals
 Of rattling thunder deafen'd ev'ry ear,
 And drown'd th' affrighten'd mariners' loud cries ;
 When livid lightning spread its sulphurous flames
 Through all the dark horizon, and disclos'd
 The raging seas incens'd to his destruction ;
 When the good ship in which he was embark'd
 Broke, and, o'erwhelm'd by the impetuous surge,
 Sunk to the oozy bottom of the deep,
 And left him struggling with the warring waves
 In that dread moment, in the jaws of death,

When his strength fail'd, and every hope forsook him,

And his last breath press'd towards his trembling lips,

The neighbouring rocks, that echo'd to his moan, Return'd no sound articulate, but—Charlotte.

Char. The fatal tempest, whose description strikes

The hearer with astonishment, is ceas'd;
And Wilmot is at rest. The fiercer storm
Of swelling passion than o'erwhelms the soul,
And rages worse than the mad foaming seas
In which he perish'd, ne'er shall vex him more.

Wil. Thou seem'st to think he's dead; enjoy that thought;

Persuade yourself, that what you wish is true;
And triumph in your falsehood.—Yes, he's dead;
You were his fate. The cruel winds and waves,
That cast him pale and breathless on the shore,
Spar'd him for greater woes—To know his Charlotte,

Forgetting all her vows to him and heaven,
Had cast him from her thoughts—then, then he died;

But never must have rest. E'en now he wanders,
A sad, repining, discontented ghost,
The unsubstantial shadow of himself,
And pours his plaintive groans in thy deaf ears,
And stalks, unseen, before thee.

Char. 'Tis enough—

Detested falsehood now has done its worst.
And art thou dead?—And would'st thou die,
my Wilmot!

For one thou thought'st unjust?—thou soul of truth!

What must be done?—Which way shall I express

Unutterable woe? or how convince
Thy dear departed spirit of the love,
Th' eternal love, and never-failing faith,
Of thy much injur'd, lost, despairing Charlotte?

Wil. Be still, my flut'ring heart; hope not too soon:

Perhaps I dream, and this is all illusion.

Char. If, as some teach, the spirit after death,
Free from the bonds and ties of sordid earth,
Can trace us to our most conceal'd retreat,
See all we act, and read our very thoughts;
To thee, O Wilmot! kneeling, I appeal:—
If e'er I swerv'd in action, word, or thought,
Or ever wished to taste a joy on earth
That centred not in thee since last we parted,—
May we ne'er meet again, but thy loud wrongs
So close the ear of mercy to my cries,
That I may never see those bright abodes
Where truth and virtue only have admission,
And thou inhabit'st now!

Wil. Assist me, Heaven!

Preserve my reason, memory, and sense!
O moderate my fierce tumultuous joys,
Or their excess will drive me to distraction.
O Charlotte! Charlotte! lovely virtuous maid!
Can thy firm mind, in spite of time and absence,
Remain unshaken, and support its truth;
And yet thy frailer memory retain
No image, no idea, of thy lover?
Why dost thou gaze so wildly? look on me:
Turn thy dear eyes this way; observe me well.
Have scorching climates, time, and this strange habit,

So chang'd and so disguis'd thy faithful Wilmot,
That nothing in my voice, my face, or mien,

Remains, to tell my Charlotte I am he?

[After viewing him sometime, she approaches weeping, and gives him her hand; and then, turning towards him, sinks upon his bosom.]

Why dost thou weep? why dost thou tremble thus?

Why doth thy panting heart and cautious touch
Speak thee but half convinc'd? whence are thy fears?

Why art thou silent? canst thou doubt me still?

Char. No, Wilmot! no; I'm blind with too much light:

O'ercome with wonder, and oppress'd with joy;
This vast profusion of extreme delight,
Rising at once, and bursting from despair,
Defies the aid of words, and mocks description;
But for one sorrow, one sad scene of anguish,
That checks the swelling torrent of my joys,
I could not bear the transport.

Wil. Let me know it:

Give me my portion of thy sorrow, Charlotte!
Let me partake thy grief, or bear it for thee.

Char. Alas! my Wilmot! the sad tears are thine;

They flow for thy misfortunes. I am pierc'd
With all the agonies of strong compassion,
With all the bitter anguish you must feel,
When you shall hear your parents—

Wil. Are no more.

Char. You apprehend me wrong.

Wil. Perhaps I do.

Perhaps you mean to say, the greedy grave
Was satisfied with one, and one is left

To bless my longing eyes.—But which, my Charlotte?

Char. Afflict yourself no more with groundless fears:

Your parents both are living. Their distress,
The poverty to which they are reduc'd,
In spite of my weak aid, was what I mourn'd;
And that in helpless age, to them whose youth
Was crown'd with full prosperity, I fear,
Is worse, much worse, than death.

Wil. My joy's complete!

My parents living, and possessed of thee!—
From this bless'd hour, the happiest of my life,
I'll date my rest. My anxious hopes and fears,
My weary travels, and my dangers past,
Are now reward'd all: now I rejoice
In my success, and count my riches gain.
For know, my soul's best treasure! I have wealth

Enough to glut e'en avarice itself:
No more shall cruel want, or proud contempt,
Oppress the sinking spirits, or insult
The hoary heads of those, who gave me being.

Char. 'Tis now, O riches, I conceive your worth;

You are not base, nor can you be superfluous,
But when misplaced in base and sordid hands.
Fly, fly, my Wilmot! leave thy happy Charlotte!
Thy filial piety, the sighs and tears
Of thy lamenting parents, call thee hence.

Wil. I have a friend, the partner of my voyage,
Who in the storm last night, was shipwreck'd
with me.

Char. Shipwreck'd last night! O you immortal powers!

What have you suffered? How were you preserved?

Wil. Let that, and all my other strange escapes
And perilous adventures, be the theme
Of many a happy winter night to come.
My present purpose was t'intreat my angel,
To know this friend, this other better Wilmot;
And come with him this evening to my father's:
I'll send him to thee.

Char. I consent with pleasure.

Wil. Heavens! what a night! How shall I
bear my joy?

My parents, yours, my friends, all will be mine.
If such the early hopes, the vernal bloom,
The distant prospect of my future bliss,
Then what the ruddy autumn?—What the fruit,
The full possession of thy heavenly charms?

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Street in Penryn.

Enter RANDAL.

Ran. Poor! poor! and friendless! whither
shall I wander,
And to what point direct my views and hopes?
A menial servant!—No—What! shall I live,
Here in this land of freedom, live distinguish'd,
And mark'd the willing slave of some proud
subject,

'To swell his useless train for broken fragments;
The cold remains of his superfluous board;
I would aspire to something more and better.
Turn thy eyes then to the prolific ocean,
Whose spacious bosom opens to thy view:
There deathless honour, and unenvied wealth,
Have often crown'd the brave adventurer's toils.
This is the native uncontested right,
The fair inheritance of ev'ry Briton
That dares put in his claim. My choice is made:
A long farewell to Cornwall, and to England.
If I return—But stay, what stranger's this,
Who, as he views me, seems to mend his pace?

Enter WILMOT.

Wil. Randal! The dear companion of my
youth!
Sure lavish fortune means to give me all
I could desire or ask for, this bless'd day,
And leave me nothing to expect hereafter.

Ran. Your pardon, Sir! I know but one on
Could properly salute me by the title [earth
You're pleased to give me, and I would not think
That you are he—That you are Wilmot—

Wil. Why?

Ran. Because I could not bear the disappoint-
ment
Should I be deceiv'd.

Wil. I am pleased to hear it:
Thy friendly fears better express thy thoughts
Than words could do.

Ran. O! Wilmot! O! my master!
Are you returned?

Wil. I have not embrac'd
My parents—I shall see you at my father's.

Ran. No; I'm discharged from thence—O
Sir! such ruin.

Wil. I've heard it all, and hasten to relieve 'em,
Sure heaven hath blessed me to that very end:
I've wealth enough: nor shalt thou want a part.

Ran. I have a part already. I am bless'd
In your success, and share in all your joys.

Wil. I doubt it not. But, tell me, dost thou
think,

My parents not suspecting my return,
That I may visit them, and not be known?

Ran. 'Tis hard for me to judge. You are
already

Grown so familiar to me, that I wonder
I knew you not at first; yet it may be;
For you're much alter'd, and they think you dead.

Wil. This is certain; Charlotte beheld me long,
And heard my loud reproaches and complaints,
Without remembering she had ever seen me.

My mind at ease grows wanton: I would fain
Refine on happiness. Why may I not
Indulge my curiosity, and try
If it be possible, by seeing first
My parents as a stranger, to improve
Their pleasure by surprise?

Ran. It may indeed
Enhance your own, to see from what despair
Your timely coming and unhop'd success
Have given you power to raise them.

Wil. I remember,
E'er since we learned together, you excell'd
In writing fairly, and could imitate
Whatever hand you saw, with great exactness.
I therefore beg you'll write, in Charlotte's name
And character, a letter to my father,
And recommend me as a friend of hers
To his acquaintance.

Ran. Sir, if you desire it—
And yet—

Wil. Nay, no objections—'Twill save time,
Most precious with me now. For the deception,
If doing what my Charlotte will approve,
'Cause done for me, and with a good intent,
Deserves the name, I'll answer it myself.
If this succeeds, I purpose to defer
Discovering who I am 'till Charlotte comes.
And thou, and all who love me. Ev'ry friend
Who witnesses my happiness to night,
Will, by partaking, multiply my joys.

Ran. You grow luxurious in imagination.
Could I deny you aught, I would not write
This letter. To say tru, I ever thought
Your boundless curiosity a weakness.

Wil. What canst thou blame in this?

Ran. Your pardon, Sir!
Perhaps I spoke too freely;
I'm ready to obey your orders.

Wil. I am much thy debtor;
But I shall find a time to quit thy kindness.
O Randal! but imagine to thyself
The floods of transport, the sincere delight
That all my friends will feel, when I disclose
To my astonished parents, my return;
And then confess that I have well contriv'd
By giving others joy, to exalt my own.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Room in OLD WILMOT'S
House.

OLD WILMOT and AGNES.

O. Wil. Here, take this Seneca, this haughty
pedant

Who, governing the master of mankind,
And awing power imperial, prates of—patience;
And praises poverty—possess'd of millions;
Sell him, and buy us bread. The scantiest meal
The vilest copy of his book e'er purchas'd,
Will give us more relief in this distress,
Than all his boasted precepts. Nay, no tears;
Keep them to move compassion when you beg.

Agn. My heart may break, but never stoop to
that.

O. *Wil.* Nor would I live to see it—But, despatch. [*Exit* AGNES.
Where must I charge this length of misery,
That gathers force each moment as it rolls,
And must at last o'erwhelm me, but on hope :
Vain, flattering, delusive, groundless hope,
That has for years deceiv'd ? Had I thought
As I do now, as wise men ever think,
When first this hell of poverty o'ertook me,
That power to die implies a right to do it,
And should be used when life becomes a pain,
What plagues had I prevented ! True, my wife
Is still a slave to prejudice and fear.
I would not leave my better part, the dear [*Weeps.*
Faithful companion of my happier days,
To bear the weight of age and want alone.—
I'll try once more.

Enter AGNES, and after her YOUNG WILMOT.

O. *Wil.* Return'd, my life ! so soon ?
Agn. The unexpected coming of this stranger
Prevents my going yet.
Wil. You're, I presume,
The gentleman to whom this is directed.

[*Gives a letter.*
What wild neglect, the token of despair,
What indigence, what misery, appears
In this once happy house ! What discontent,
What anguish and confusion fill the faces
Of its dejected owners ! [*Aside.*

O. *Wil.* Sir, such welcome
As this poor house affords, you may command.
Our ever friendly neighbour—once we hoped
T' have called fair Charlotte by a dearer name—
But we have done with hope—I pray excuse
This incoherence—We had once a son. [*Weeps.*

Agn. That you are come from the dear vir-
tuous maid,
Revives in us the mem'ry of a loss,
Which though long since, we have not learned to
bear.

Wil. The joy to see them, and the bitter pain
It is to see them thus, touches my soul
With tenderness and grief, that will o'erflow.
They know me not,—and yet, I fear, I shall
Defeat my purpose, and betray myself. [*Aside.*

O. *Wil.* The lady calls you, here, her valued
friend ;
Enough, though nothing more should be implied,
To recommend you to our best esteem—
A worthless acquisition—May she find
Some means that better may express her kind-
ness !

But she, perhaps, hath purpos'd to enrich
You with herself, and end her fruitless sorrow
For one whom death alone can justify
For leaving her so long. If it be so,
May you repair his loss, and be to Charlotte
A second, happier Wilmot ! Partial nature,
Who only favours youth, as feeble age
Were not her offspring, or below her care,
Has sealed our doom : no second hopes shall spring
To dry our tears, and dissipate despair.

Agn. The last and most abandoned of our
kind !

By heaven and earth neglected, or despised !
The loathsome grave that robb'd us of our son,
And all our joys in him, must be our refuge.

Wil. Let ghosts unpardon'd, or devoted fiends
Fear without hope, and wail in such sad strains ;
But grace defend the living from despair.

The darkest hours precede the rising sun ;

And mercy may appear when least expected

O. *Wil.* This I have heard a thousand times
repeated,

And have, believing, been as oft deceiv'd.

Wil. Behold in me an instance of its truth.
At sea twice shipwreck'd, and as oft the prey
Of lawless pirates ; by the Arabs thrice
Surpris'd and robb'd on shore ; and once reduc'd
To worse than these, the sum of all distress
That the most wretched feel on this side hell,
E'en slavery itself : yet here I stand,
Except one trouble that will quickly end,
The happiest of mankind.

O. *Wil.* A rare example
Of fortune's changes ; apter to surprise
Or entertain, than comfort or instruct.
If you would reason from events, be just,
And count, when you escap'd, how many perish'd ;
And draw your inference thence.

Agn. Alas ! who knows,
But we were render'd childless by some storm,
In which you, though preserv'd, might bear a part ?
Wil. How has my curiosity betray'd me
Into superfluous pain ! I faint with fondness ;
And shall, if I stay longer, rush upon them,
Proclaim myself their son, kiss and embrace
them ;

Till their souls, transported with the excess
Of pleasure and surprise, quit their frail mansions,
And leave them breathless in my longing arms.
By circumstances then, and slow degrees,
They must be let into a happiness

Too great for them to bear at once, and live :
That Charlotte will perform : I need not feign
To ask an hour for rest. [*Aside.*] Sir, I entreat
The favour to retire, where, for a while,
I may repose myself. You will excuse
This freedom, and the trouble that I give you :
'Tis long since I have slept, and nature calls.

O. *Wil.* I pray, no more ; believe we're only
troubled,
That you should think any excuse were needful.

Wil. The weight of this is some incumbrance ;
[*Takes a casket out of his bosom, and gives
it to his mother.*

And its contents of value : if you please
To take the charge of it, till I awake,
I shall not rest the worse. If I should sleep
'Till I am ask'd for, as perhaps I may,
I beg that you would wake me.

Agn. Doubt it not :

Distacted as I am with various woes.

I shall remember that. [*Exit, with O. WIL.*

Wil. Merciless grief !

What ravage has it made ! how has it chang'd
Her lovely form and mind ! I feel her anguish,
And dread, I know not what, from her despair.
My father too—O grant them patience,
Heaven !

A little longer, a few short hours more,
And all their cares, and mine, shall end for ever.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The same.

AGNES enters alone, with the casket in her hand.

Agn. Who should this stranger be ! And then
this casket—

He says it is of value, and yet trusts it,
As if a trifle to a stranger's hand—

His confidence amazes me—Perhaps
It is not what he says—I'm strongly tempted
To open it and see—No, let it rest.
Why should my curiosity excite me
To search and pry into th' affairs of others,
Who have, t'employ my thoughts, so many cares
And sorrows of my own?—With how much ease
The spring gives way!—Surprising!
My eyes are dazzled, and my ravish'd heart
Leaps at the glorious sight—How bright's the
lustre,

How immense the worth of these fair jewels?
Ay, such a treasure would expel for ever
Base poverty, and all its abject train;
Famine; the cold neglect of friends;
The galling scorn or more provoking pity
Of an insulting world—Possess'd of these,
Plenty, content, and power might take their turn,
And lofty pride bare its aspiring head
At our approach, and once more bend before us.—
A pleasing dream! 'Tis past; and now I wake.
For sure it was a happiness to think,
Though but a moment, such a treasure mine.
Nay, it was more than thought—I saw and
touched

The bright temptation, and I see it yet—
'Tis here—'tis mine—I have it in possession—
Must I resign it? Must I give it back?
And I, in love with misery and want,
To rob myself, and court so vast a loss?—
Retain it then—But how?—There is a way—
Why sinks my heart? Why does my blood run
cold?

Why am I thrill'd with horror?—'Tis not choice,
But dire necessity, suggests the thought.

Enter OLD WILMOT.

O. Wil. The mind contented, with how little
pains

The wand'ring senses yield to soft repose,
And die to gain new life? He's fallen asleep
Already, happy man!—What dost thou think,
My Agnes, of our unexpected guest?
He seems to me a youth of great humanity:
Just ere he clos'd his eyes, that swam in tears,
He wrung my hand and press'd it to his lips;
And with a look that pierc'd me to the soul,
Begg'd me to comfort thee: and—dost thou
hear me?—

What art thou gazing on?—Fie, 'tis not well—
This casket was delivered to you closed:
Why have you open'd it? Should this be known,
How mean must we appear?

Agn. And who shall know it?

O. Wil. There is a kind of pride, a decent
dignity,
Due to ourselves; which, spite of our misfor-
tunes,

May be maintain'd, and cherish'd to the last.
To live without reproach and without leave
To quit the world, shows sovereign contempt,
And noble scorn of its relentless malice.

Agn. Shows sov'reign madness, and a scorn of
sense.

Pursue no farther this detested theme:
I will not die, I will not leave the world
For all that you can urge, until compell'd.

O. Wil. To chase a shadow, when the setting
sun,

Is darting his last rays, were just as wise,
As your anxiety for fleeting life,
Now the last means for its support are failing:
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Were famine not as mortal as the sword,
Your warmth might be excus'd—But take thy
choice;

Die how you will, you shall not die alone.

Agn. Nor live, I hope.

O. Wil. There is no fear of that.

Agn. Then, we'll live both.

O. Wil. Strange folly! where the means?

Agn. There those jewels—

O. Wil. Ah!—Take heed!—

Perhaps thou dost but try me; yet take heed—
There's nought so monstrous but the mind of
man

In some conditions may be brought t'approve;
Theft, sacrilege, treason, and parricide,
When flatt'ring opportunity entic'd,
And desperation drove, have been committed
By those who once would start to hear them
nam'd.

Agn. And add to these detested suicide,
Which, by a crime much less, we may avoid.

O. Wil. The inhospitable murder of our guest!—
How could'st thou form a thought so very damn-
ing,

So advantageous, so secure, and easy;

And yet so cruel, and so full of horror?

Agn. 'Tis less impiety, less against nature,
To take another's life than end our own.

O. Wil. No matter which, the less or greater
crime:

Howe'er we may deceive ourselves or others,
We act from inclination, not by rule,
Or none could act amiss.—And that all err,
None but the conscious hypocrite denies.

O! what is man, his excellence and strength,
When in an hour of trial and desertion,
Reason, his noblest power, may be suborn'd
To plead the cause of vile assassination.

Agn. You're too severe: reason may justly
plead

For our own preservation.

O. Wil. Rest contented:

Whate'er resistance I may seem to make,
I am betray'd within: my will's seduc'd,
And my whole soul infected. The desire
Of life returns, and brings with it a train
Of appetites, that rage to be supplied.
Whoever stands to parley with temptation,
Parleys to be o'ercome.

Agn. Then nought remains,
But the swift execution of a deed
That is not to be thought on or delay'd.

O. Wil. Generous, unhappy man! O! what
could move thee

To put thy life and fortune in the hands
Of wretches mad with anguish.

Agn. By what means
Shall we effect his death?

O. Wil. Why, what a fiend!—
How cruel, how remorseless, and impatient,
Have pride and poverty made thee?

Agn. Barbarous man!

Whose wasteful riots ruin'd our estates,
And drove our son, ere the first down had spread
His rosy cheeks, spite of my sad presages,
Earnest entreaties, agonies, and tears,
To seek his bread 'mongst strangers, and to perish
In some remote, inhospitable land—
The loveliest youth, in person and in mind,
That ever crown'd a groaning mother's pains!
Where was thy pity, where thy patience then,
Thou cruel husband! thou unnatural father!

Thou most remorseless, most ungrateful man !
To waste my fortune, rob me of my son ;
To drive me to despair, and then reproach me
For being what thou'st made me.

O. Wil. Dry thy tears :
I ought not to reproach thee. I confess
That thou hast suffer'd much : so have we both.
But chide no more ; I'm wrought up to thy purpose.
The poor, ill-fated, unsuspecting victim,
Ere he reclin'd him on the fatal couch,
From which he's ne'er to rise, took off the sash
And costly dagger that thou saw'st him wear ;
And thus, unthinking, furnish'd us with arms
Against himself. Steal to the door,
And bring me word, if he be still asleep.

[*Exit AGNES.*]
Or I'm deceived, or he pronounc'd himself
The happiest of mankind. Deluded wretch !
Thy thoughts are perishing, thy youthful joys,
Touch'd by the icy hand of grisly death,
Are with'ring in their bloom. But, thought ex-
tinguish'd,

He'll never know the loss, nor feel the bitter
Pangs of disappointment. Then I was wrong
In counting him a wretch : to die well pleas'd,
Is all the happiest of mankind can hope for.
To be a wretch, is to survive the loss
Of every joy, and even hope itself,
As I have done. Why do I mourn him then ?
For, by the anguish of my tortur'd soul,
He's to be envy'd, if compar'd with me. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Room, with YOUNG WILMOT
asleep upon a Bed, in the distance.

[*Enter OLD WILMOT and AGNES.*]

Agn. The stranger sleeps at present ; but so
restless
His slumbers seem, they can't continue long.
Here, I've secur'd his dagger.

O. Wil. O, Agnes ! Agnes ! if there be a hell,
'tis just
We should expect it.

[*Goes to take the dagger, lets it fall.*]

Agn. Shake off this panic, and be more your-
self.

O. Wil. What's to be done ? On what had
we determin'd ?

Agn. You're quite dismay'd.
[*Takes up the dagger.*]

O. Wil. Give me the fatal steel.
'Tis but a single murder :
Necessity, impatience and despair,
The three wide mouths of that true Cerberus,
Grim Poverty, demand ;—they shall be stopp'd.
Ambition, persecution, and revenge,
Devour their millions daily : and shall I—
But follow me, and see how little cause
You had to think there was the least remain
Of manhood, pity, mercy, or remorse,
Left in this savage breast.

[*Going the wrong way.*]
Agn. Where do you go ?
The street is that way.

O. Wil. True, I had forgot.
Agn. Quite, quite confounded.

O. Wil. Well, I recover.
I shall find the way. [*Retires towards the bed.*]

Agn. O, softly ! softly ! The least noise undoes
us.

What are we doing ? Misery and want
Are lighter ills than this ! I cannot bear it !—

Stop, hold thy hand !—Inconstant, wretched wo-
man !

What ! doth my heart recoil ?—O, Wilmot ! Wil-
mot !

What power shall I invoke to aid thee, Wilmot
[*Scene closes*]

SCENE III.—Another Room.

[*Enter CHARLOTTE, EUSTACE, and RANDAL.*]

Char. What strange neglect ! The doors are
all unbar'd,
And not a living creature to be seen.

[*Enter OLD WILMOT and AGNES.*]

Sir we are come to give and to receive
A thousand greetings.—Ha ! what can this mean ?
Why do you look with such amazement on us ?
Are these your transports for your son's return ?
Where is my Wilmot ? Has he not been here ?
Would he defer your happiness so long ;
Or, could a habit so disguise your son,
That you refus'd to own him ?

Agn. Heard you that ?
What prodigy of horror is disclosing,
To render murder venial !

O. Wil. Pr'ythee, peace :
The miserable damn'd suspend their howling,
And the swift orbs are fix'd in deep attention.

Ran. What mean these dreadful words and
frantic air !

That is the dagger my young master wore.

Eus. My mind misgives me. Do not stand to
gaze

On these dumb phantoms of despair and horror !
Let us search farther : Randal, show the way.

[*Reënt RANDAL, EUSTACE, and CHARLOTTE*]
Agn. Let life forsake the earth, and light the
sun,

And death and darkness bury in oblivion
Mankind and all their deeds, that no posterity
May ever rise to hear our horrid tale,
Or view the grave of such detested parricides.

O. Wil. Curses and deprecations are in vain.
The sun will shine and all things have their
course,

When we the curse and burden of the earth,
Shall be absorb'd and mingled with its dust.
Our guilt and desolation must be told,
From age to age, to teach desponding mortals,
How far beyond the reach of human thought
Heaven, when incens'd, can punish.—Die thou
first. [*Stabs AGNES.*]

I dare not trust thy weakness.

Agn. Ever kind,
But most in this !

O. Wil. I will not long survive thee.
Agn. Do not accuse thy erring mother, Wilmot !

With too much rigour, when we meet above.
To give thee life for life, and blood for blood,
Is not enough. Had I ten thousand lives,
I'd give them all to speak my penitence,
Deep, and sincere, and equal to my crime.
Oh, Wilmot ! oh, my son ! my son ! [*Dies.*]

[*Enter RANDAL and EUSTACE.*]

Eust. Oh, Wilmot ! Wilmot !
Are these the fruits of all thy anxious cares
For thy ungrateful parents ?—Cruel fiends !

O. Wil. What whining fool art thou, who
would'st usurp
My sovereign right of grief ?—Was he thy son ?—

Say! canst thou show thy hands reeking with
 blood,
 That flow'd, through purer channels, from thy
 loins?

Compute the sands that bound the spacious ocean,
 And swell their numbers with a single grain;
 Increase the noise of thunder with thy voice;
 Or, when the raging wind lays nature waste,
 Assist the tempest with thy feeble breath!
 But name not thy faint sorrow with the anguish
 Of a curs'd wretch, who only hopes for this

[*Stabs himself.*]

To change the scene, but not relieve his pain.

Ran. A dreadful instance of the last remorse!
 May all our woes end here!

O. Wil. O would they end

A thousand ages hence, I then should suffer
 Much less than I deserve. Yet let me say,
 You'll do but justice, to inform the world,
 This horrid deed, that punishes itself,
 Was not intended, thinking him our son;
 For that we knew not, 'till it was too late.
 Proud and impatient under our afflictions,
 While heaven was labouring to make us happy,
 We brought this dreadful ruin on ourselves.
 Mankind may learn—but—oh!— [Dies.]

Ran. Heaven grant they may!

And may thy penitence atone thy crime!

Tend well the hapless Charlotte, and bear hence

These bleeding victims of despair and pride;

Toll the death-bell! and follow to the grave

The wretched parents and ill-fated son. [*Exeunt.*]

THE GUARDIAN:

A COMEDY,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

REMARKS.

Mr. Garrick, perhaps the best judge of the drama that this or any other nation ever produced, has, in the following little piece, presented the theatrical world with a translation of M. Fagan's "*Pupille*," which was esteemed a very complete little comedy. He has, however, not confined himself to a mere translation, but has, with great judgment, made "such alterations from the original as the difference of the language and manners required." The success with which this piece was attended, so far exceeded the hopes of the author, that he availed himself of "an opportunity to return thanks to the public for their kind indulgence, and to the performers, for their great care."

Mr. Heartly the guardian, originally performed by Mr. Garrick himself, and Miss Harriot, his ward, by Miss Pritchard, are two finely-drawn characters, which were well supported.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.	COVENT GARDEN.
MR. HEARTLY,.....	Mr. Garrick.....	Mr. Murray.
SIR CHARLES CLACKIT.....	Mr. Yates.....	Mr. Munden.
MR. CLACKIT.....	Mr. O'Brien.....	Mr. Brunton.
SERVANT,.....		Mr. W. Murray.
MISS HARRIOT,.....	Miss Pritchard.....	Miss Taylor.
LUCY,.....	Mrs. Clive.....	Mrs. Matlocks.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Hall at Mr. HEARTLY'S.

Enter Sir C. CLACKIT, YOUNG CLACKIT, and SERVANT.

Sir C. Tell Mr. Heartly, his friend and neighbour, Sir Charles Clackit, would say three words to him.

Serv. I shall, Sir—

[Exit.
Sir C. Now nephew, consider once again, before I open the matter to my neighbour Heartly, what I am going to undertake for you.—Why don't you speak?

Young C. Is it proper and decent, uncle?

Sir C. Pshaw; don't be a fool—but answer me—don't you flatter yourself—What assurance have you that this young lady, my friend's ward, has a liking to you?

Young C. First then—Whenever I see her she never looks at me—That's a sign of love.—Whenever I speak to her she never answers

me—Another sign of love.—And whenever I speak to any body else she seems to be perfectly easy—That's a certain sign of love.

Sir C. The devil it is!

Young C. When I am with her, she's always grave; and the moment I get up to leave her, then the poor thing begins—"Stay, you agreeable runaway, stay, I shall soon overcome the fears your presence gives me."—I could say more—But a man of honour, uncle—

Sir C. What, and has she said all these things to you?

Young C. O yes, and ten times more—with her eyes.

Sir C. With her eyes! Eyes are very equivocal, Jack.—However, if the young lady has any liking to you, Mr. Heartly is too much a man of the world, and too much my friend, to oppose the match; so do you walk into the garden, and I will open the matter to him.

Young C. Is there any objection to my staying,

uncle : The business will soon be ended. You will propose the match, he will give his consent, I shall give mine, miss is sent for, and *l'affaire est fait*. [*Snapping his fingers.*]

Sir C. And so you think that a young beautiful heiress, with forty thousand pounds, is to be had with a scrap of French, and a snap of your finger ?—Pr'ythee, get away, and don't provoke me.

Young C. Well, well, I am gone, uncle.—When you come to the point, I shall be ready to make my appearance.—*Bon voyage !* [*Exit.*]

Sir C. The devil's in these young fellows, I think.—We send 'em abroad to cure their sheepishness, and they get above proof the other way.

Enter HEARTLY.

Good morrow to you, neighbour.

Heart. And to you, Sir Charles ; I am glad to see you so strong and healthy.

Sir C. I can return you the compliment, my friend—Without flattery, you don't look more than thirty-five ; and between ourselves, you are on the wrong side of forty—But, mum for that.

Heart. Ease and tranquillity keep me as you see.

Sir C. Why don't you marry, neighbour ? A good wife would do well for you.

Heart. For me ? you are pleased to be merry, Sir Charles.

Sir C. No, faith, I am serious, and had I a daughter to recommend to you, you should say me nay, more than once, I assure you, neighbour Heartly, before I would quit you.

Heart. I am much obliged to you.

Sir C. And now to my business.—You have no objection, I suppose, to tie up your ward, Miss Harriot, though you have slipped the collar yourself.—Ha, ha, ha !

Heart. Quite the contrary, Sir ; I have taken her some time from the boarding school, and brought her home, in order to dispose of her worthily with her own inclination.

Sir C. Her father, I have heard you say, recommended that particular care to you, when she had reached a certain age.

Heart. He did so—And I am the more desirous to obey him scrupulously in this circumstance, as she will be a most valuable acquisition to the person who shall gain her—for, not to mention her fortune which is the least consideration, her sentiments are worthy her birth ; she is gentle, modest, and obliging.—In a word, my friend, I never saw youth more amiable or discreet—but perhaps I am a little partial to her.

Sir C. No, no, she is a delicious creature, every body says so.—But I believe, neighbour, something has happened that you little think of.

Heart. What, pray, Sir Charles ?

Sir C. My nephew, Mr. Heartly—

Re-enter YOUNG CLACKIT.

Young C. Here I am at your service, Sir.—My uncle is a little unhappy in his manner ; but I'll clear the matter in a moment—Miss Harriot, Sir—your ward—

Sir C. Get away, you puppy !

Young C. Miss Harriot, sir, your ward, a most accomplished young lady, to be sure—

Sir C. Thou art a most accomplished coxcomb, to be sure.

Heart. Pray, Sir Charles, let the young gentleman speak.

Young C. You'll excuse me, Mr. Heartly—My uncle does not set up for an orator—a little confused or so, Sir—You see what I am—But I ought to ask pardon for the young lady and myself.—We are young, Sir.—I must confess we were wrong to conceal it from you—but my uncle, I see is pleased to be angry, and therefore I shall say no more at present.

Sir C. If you don't leave the room this moment, and stay in the garden till I call you—

Young C. I am sorry I have displeased you—I did not think it was *mal-a-propos* ; but you must have your way, uncle—You command—I submit—Mr. Heartly, yours. [*Exit.*]

Sir C. Puppy ! [*Aside.*] My nephew's a little unthinking, Mr. Heartly, as you see, and therefore I have been a little cautious how I have proceeded in this affair : but indeed he has persuaded me, in a manner, that your ward and he are not ill together.

Heart. Indeed ! This is the first notice I have had of it, and I cannot conceive why Miss Harriot should conceal it from me ; for I have often assured her that I would never oppose her inclination, though I might endeavour to direct it.

Sir C. You are right, neighbour.—But here she is.

Enter HARRIOT and LUCY.

Har. He is with company—I'll speak to him another time. [*Retires.*]

Lucy. Young, handsome, and afraid of being seen.—You are very particular, Miss.

[*Apart to HARRIOT.*]

Heart. Miss Harriot, you must not go.—[*HARRIOT returns.*] Sir Charles, give me leave to introduce you to this young lady.—[*Introduces her.*] You know, I suppose, the reason of this gentleman's visit to me ?

Har. Sir !

[*Confused.*]

Heart. Don't be disturb'd, I shall not reproach you with any thing but keeping your wishes a secret from me so long.

Har. Upon my word, Sir—Lucy !

Lucy. Well, and Lucy ! I'll lay my life 'tis a treaty of marriage.—Is that such a dreadful thing ? Oh, for shame, Madam ! Young ladies of fashion are not frightened at such things now-a-days.

Heart. [*To SIR CHARLES.*] We have gone too far, Sir Charles.—We must excuse her delicacy, and give her time to recover.—I had better talk with her alone ; we will leave her now.—Be persuaded that no endeavours shall be wanting on my part to bring this affair to a happy and speedy conclusion.

Sir C. I shall be obliged to you, Mr. Heartly.—Young lady, your servant.—What grace and modesty ! She is a most engaging creature, and I shall be proud to make her one of my family.

[*To HEARTLY.*]

Heart. You do us honour, Sir Charles.

[*Exeunt SIR CHARLES and HEARTLY.*]

Lucy. Indeed, Miss Harriot, you are very particular. You was tired of the boarding school, and yet seem to have no inclination to be married.—What can be the meaning of all this ? That smirking old gentleman is uncle to Mr. Clackit ; and, my life for it, he has made some proposals to your guardian.

Har. Pr'ythee, don't plague me about Mr. Clackit.

Lucy. But why not, Miss ? Though he is a

little fantastical, loves to hear himself talk, and is somewhat self-sufficient, you must consider he is young, has been abroad, and keeps good company.—The trade will soon be at an end, if young ladies and gentlemen grow over-nice and exceptionous.

Har. But if I can find one without these faults, I may surely please myself.

Lucy. Without these faults! and is he young, Miss!

Har. He is sensible, modest, polite, affable, and generous; with all his accomplishments, must have very little penetration not to have discovered his good fortune in your eyes.

Lucy. Upon my word!—but why have you kept this a secret so long? Your guardian is kind to you beyond conception.—What difficulties can you have to overcome?

Har. Why, the difficulty of declaring my sentiments.

Lucy. Leave that to me, Miss.—But your spark, with all his accomplishments, must have very little penetration not to have discovered his good fortune in your eyes.

Har. I take care that my eyes don't tell too much; and he has too much delicacy to interpret looks to his advantage. Besides he would certainly disapprove my passion; and if I should ever make the declaration, and meet with a denial, I should absolutely die with shame.

Lucy. I'll insure your life for a silver thimble.—But what can possibly hinder your coming together?

Har. His excess of merit.

Lucy. His excess of a fiddlestick!—But come, I'll put you in the way:—you shall trust me with the secret—I'll entrust it again to half a dozen friends; they shall entrust it to half a dozen more; by which means it will travel half the world over in a week's time: the gentleman will certainly hear of it, and then if he is not at your feet in the fetching of a sigh, I'll give up all my perquisites at your wedding.—What is his name, Miss?

Har. I cannot tell you his name—indeed I cannot: I am afraid of being thought too singular.—But why should I be ashamed of my passion? Is the impression which a virtuous character makes upon our hearts such a weakness that it may not be excused?

Lucy. By my faith, Miss, I can't understand you: you are afraid of being thought singular, and you really are so.—I would sooner renounce all the passions in the universe, than have one in my bosom beating and fluttering itself to pieces.

Re-enter HEARTLY.

Heart. Leave us, Lucy.

Lucy. There's something going forward—'tis very hard I can't be of the party. [*Aside, exit.*]

Heart. She certainly thinks, from the character of the young man, that I shall disapprove of her choice. [*Aside.*]

Har. What can I possibly say to him? I am as much ashamed to make the declaration, as he would be to understand it. [*Aside.*]

Heart. Don't imagine that I would know more of your thoughts than you desire I should; but the tender care which I have ever shown, and the sincere friendship which I shall always have for you, give me a right to inquire into every thing that concerns you.—Some friends have spoken to

me in particular.—But that is not all—I have lately found you thoughtful, absent, and disturbed.—Be plain with me—has not somebody been happy enough to please you?

Har. I cannot deny it, Sir—yes—somebody indeed has pleased me.—But I must entreat you not to give credit to any idle stories, or inquire further into the particulars of my inclination; for I cannot possibly have resolution enough to say more to you.

Heart. But have you made a choice my dear?

Har. I have, in my own mind, Sir, and 'tis impossible to make a better;—reason, honour, every thing must approve it.

Heart. And how long have you conceived this passion?

Har. Ever since I left the country to live with you. [*Sighs.*]

Heart. I see your confusion, and will relieve you from it immediately—I am informed of the whole—

Har. Sir!

Heart. Don't be uneasy, for I can with pleasure assure you that your passion is returned with equal tenderness.

Har. If you are not deceived—I cannot be more happy.

Heart. I think I am not deceived;—but after the declaration you have made, and the assurances which I have given you, why will you conceal it any longer? Have I not deserved a little more confidence from you?

Har. You have indeed deserved it, and should certainly have it, were I not well assured that you would oppose my inclinations.

Heart. I oppose 'em! Am I then so unkind to you, my dear Harriot?—Can you in the least doubt of my affection for you!—I promise you that I have no will but yours.

Har. Since you desire it then, I will endeavour to explain myself.

Heart. I am all attention—speak.

Har. And if I do, I feel I shall never be able to speak to you again.

Heart. I see your delicacy is hurt: but let me entreat you once more to confide in me.—Tell me his name, and the next moment I will go to him, and assure him that my consent shall confirm both your happiness.

Har. You will easily find him.—And when you have, pray tell him how improper it is for a young woman to speak first—persuade him to spare my blushes, and to release me from so terrible a situation.—I shall leave him with you—and hope that this declaration will make it impossible for you to mistake me any longer. [*Going.*]

Enter YOUNG CLACKIT.—HARRIOT remains on the Stage.

Heart. Are we not alone? what can this mean?

Young C. Apropos, faith! Here they are together.

Heart. I did not see him; but now the riddle's explained. [*Aside.*]

Har. What can he want now—This is the most spiteful interruption. [*Aside.*]

Young C. By your leave, Mr. Heartly—[*Crosses him to go to HARRIOT.*] Have I caught you at last, my divine Harriot?—Well, Mr. Heartly, *sans façon*—But what's the matter?—Things look a little gloomy here;—one mutters to himself and gives me no answer, and the other

turns her head and winks at me.—How the devil am I to interpret all this?

Har. I wink at you, Sir!—Did I, Sir?

Young C. Yes, you, my angel—but mum—Mr. Heartly, for heaven's sake, what is all this? Speak, I conjure you, is it life or death with me?

Har. What a dreadful situation I am in!

Young C. Hope for the best.—I'll bring matters about, I warrant you.

Heart. Miss Harriot's will is a law to me; and for you, Sir—the friendship which I have ever professed for your uncle is too sincere not to exert some of it on this occasion.

Har. I shall die with confusion! [*Aside.*]

Young C. I am alive again.—Dear Mr. Heartly, thou art a most adorable creature! What a happiness it is to have to do with a man of sense, who has no foolish prejudices, and can see when a young fellow has something tolerable about him!

Heart. Sir, not to flatter you, I must declare that it is from a knowledge of your friends and family, that I have hopes of seeing you and this young lady happy. I will go directly to your uncle, and assure him that every thing goes on to our wishes.— [*Going.*]

Har. Mr. Heartly—pray, Sir!

Heart. Poor Harriot, I see your distress, and am sorry for it; but it must be got over, and the sooner the better.—Mr. Clackit, my dear, will be glad of an opportunity to entertain you for the little time that I shall be absent. Poor Miss Harriot!

Young C. *Allez, allez, monsieur!*—I'll answer for that.—Well, Ma'am, I think every thing succeeds to our wishes.—Be sincere, my adorable—Don't you think yourself a very happy young lady?

Har. I shall be most particularly obliged to you, Sir, if you would inform me what is the meaning of all this.

Young C. Inform you, Miss?—The matter, I believe, is pretty clear:—our friends have understandings—we have affections—and a marriage follows of course.

Har. Marriage, Sir! Pray what relation or particular connection is there between you and me, Sir?

Young C. I may be deceived, faith;—but upon my honour, I always supposed that there was a little smattering of inclination between us.

Har. And have you spoke to my guardian upon this supposition, Sir?

Young C. And are you angry at it?—I believe not.

Har. Indeed, Sir, this behaviour of yours is most extraordinary.

Young C. Upon my soul this is very droll.—What! has not your guardian been here this moment, and expressed all imaginable pleasure at our intended union?

Har. He is in an error, Sir:—and had I not been too much astonished at your behaviour, I had deceived him long before now.

Young C. [*Hums a tune.*] But pray, Miss, what can be your intention in raising all this confusion in the family, and opposing your own inclinations?

Har. Opposing my own inclinations, Sir?

Young C. Ay, opposing your own inclinations, Madam.

Har. Be assured, Sir, I never in my life had the least thought about you.

Young C. Come, come, I know what I know—*Har.* Don't make yourself ridiculous, Mr. Clackit.

Young C. Don't you make yourself miserable, Miss Harriot?

Har. I am only so when you persist to torment me.

Young C. And you really believe that you don't love me? [*Smiles.*]

Har. Positively not.

Young C. And you are very sure now that you hate me? [*Conceitedly.*]

Har. Oh! most cordially.

Young C. Poor young lady! I do pity you from my soul.

Har. Then why don't you leave me?

Young C. "She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,
Feed on her damask cheek."

Take warning, Miss, when you once begin to pine in thought, 'tis all over with you; and be assured, since you are obstinately bent to give yourself airs, that if you once suffer me to leave this house in a pet—Do you mind me?—not all your sighing, whining, fits, vapours, and hysterics, shall ever move me to take the least compassion on you—*Coute qu'il coute.*

Re-enter HEARTLY and Sir CHARLES CLACKIT.

Sir C. There they are, the pretty doves! That is the age, neighbour Heartly, for happiness and pleasure.

Heart. I am willing, you see, to lose no time, which may convince you, Sir Charles, how proud I am of this alliance in our families.

Sir C. 'Gad, I will send for the fiddles, and take a dance myself, and a fig for the gout and rheumatism.—But hold, hold—the lovers methinks are a little out of humour with each other. What is the matter, Jack? Not pouting sure before your time?

Young C. A trifle, Sir—the lady will tell you. [*Hums a tune.*]

Heart. You seem to be troubled, Harriot!—what can this mean?

Har. You have been in an error, Sir, about me;—I did not deceive you, because I could not imagine that the consequences could have been so serious and so sudden;—but I am now forced to tell you that you have misunderstood me—that you have distressed me.

Heart. How, my dear?

Sir C. What do you say, Miss?

Young C. Mademoiselle is pleased to be out of humour; but I cant blame her; for, upon my honour, I think a little coquetry becomes her.

Sir C. Ay, ay, ay—oh, oh—Is that all? These little squalls seldom upset the lover's boat, but drive it the faster to port—ay, ay, ay—

Young C. Talk to her a little, Mr. Heartly. She is a fine lady, and has many virtues; but she does not know the world.

Heart. For heaven's sake, Miss Harriot, explain this riddle to me.

Har. I cannot, Sir.—I have discovered the weakness of my heart—I have discovered it to you, Sir;—but your unkind interpretations and reproachful looks convince me that I have already said too much. [*Exit; HEARTLY muses.*]

Sir C. Well, but harkye, nephew—this is going a little too far—What have you done to her?

Heart. I never saw her so agitated before.

Young C. Upon my soul, gentlemen, I am as much surprised at it as you can be—The little *brouillerie* between us arose upon her persisting that there was no passion, no *penchant* between us.

Sir C. I'll tell you what, Jack—There is a certain kind of impudence about you, that I don't approve of.

Young C. But what can the lady object to? I have offered to marry her; is not that a proof sufficient that I like her? A young fellow must have some affection that will go such lengths to indulge it. Ha, ha!

Sir C. Why really, friend Heartly, I don't see how a young man can well do more, or a lady desire more.—What say you neighbour?

Heart. Upon my word, I am puzzled about it—my thoughts upon the matter are so various and so confused.—Everything I see and hear is so contradictory—is so—She certainly cannot like any body else!

Young C. No, no, I'll answer for that.

Heart. Or she may be fearful then that your passion for her is not sincere; or, like other young men of the times, you may grow careless upon marriage, and neglect her.

Young C. Ha! 'Egad, you have hit it; nothing but a little natural, delicate sensibility—

[*Hums a tune.*]

Heart. If so, perhaps the violence of her reproaches may proceed from the lukewarmness of your professions.

Young C. *Je vous demande pardon*—I have sworn to her a hundred and a hundred times, that she should be the happiest of her sex.—But there is nothing surprising in all this; it is the misery of an over-fond heart, to be always doubtful of its happiness.

Heart. And if she marries thee, I fear that she'll be kept in a state of doubt as long as she lives.

[*Half aside.*]

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. Pray, gentlemen, which of you has affronted my mistress? She is in a most prodigious taking yonder, and vows to return into the country again.

Young C. Poor thing!

Heart. I must inquire further into this; her behaviour is too particular for me not to be disturbed at it.

Lucy. She desires that when she has recovered herself, she may talk with you alone, Sir.

[*To HEARTLY.*]

Heart. I shall with pleasure attend her.

[*Exit LUCY.*]

Sir C. I would give, old as I am, a leg or an arm to be beloved by that sweet creature as you are, Jack!

Young C. And throw your gout and rheumatism into the bargain, uncle?—Ha, ha, Divine Bacchus. La, la, la, &c.

[*Sings.*]

Sir C. I wonder what the devil is come to the young fellows of this age, neighbour Heartly?—Why a fine woman has no effect upon 'em.—Is there no method to make 'em less fond of themselves, and more mindful of the ladies?

Heart. Look ye, Mr. Clackit, if Miss Harriot's affections declare for you, she must not be treated with neglect or disdain—Nor could I bear it, Sir.—Any man must be proud of her partiality to him; and he must be fashionably insensible indeed, who would not make it his darling care to

defend from every inquietude the most delicate and tender of her sex.

Sir C. Most nobly and warmly said, Mr. Heartly.—Go to her, nephew directly,—throw yourself at her feet, and swear how much her beauty and virtue have captivated you, and don't let her go till you have set her dear little heart at rest.

Young C. Would you have me say the same thing over and over again?—I can't do it positively—It is my turn to be piqued now.

Sir C. Damn your conceit, Jack; I can bear it no longer.

Heart. I am very sorry to find that any young lady so near and dear to me, should bestow her heart where there is so little prospect of its being valued as it ought.—However, I shall not oppose my authority to her inclinations; and so—Who waits there?

Enter a SERVANT.

Let the young lady know that I shall attend her commands in the library. [*Exit SERVANT.*] Will you excuse me, gentlemen?

Sir C. Ay, ay—we'll leave you to yourselves; and pray convince her that I and my nephew are most sincerely her very humble servants.

Young C. O yes, you may depend upon me.

Heart. A very slender dependence truly.

[*Aside; Exit.*]

Young C. We'll be with you again to know what your tête à tête produces, and in the meantime I am hers—and yours—Adieu. Come uncle—Fal, la, la, la!

Sir C. I could knock him down with pleasure.

[*Aside; Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Library.

HEARTLY and a SERVANT discovered.

Heart. Tell Miss Harriot that I am here.—If she is indisposed, I will wait upon her in her own room. [*Exit SERVANT.*] However mysterious her conduct appears to me, yet still it is to be deciphered—This young gentleman has certainly touched her—There are some objections to him, and among so many young men of fashion that fall in her way, she certainly might have made a better choice: she has an understanding to be sensible of this; and, if I am not mistaken, it is a struggle between her reason and her passion that occasions all this confusion.—But here she is.

Enter HARRIOT.

Har. I hope you are not angry, Sir, that I left you so abruptly, without making any apology?

Heart. I am angry that you think an apology necessary.—The matter we were upon was of such a delicate nature, that I was more pleased with your confusion than I should have been with your excuses. You'll pardon me my dear.

Har. I have reflected that the person for whom I have conceived a most tender regard, may, from the wisest motives, doubt of my passion; and therefore I would endeavour to answer all his objections, and convince him how deserving he is of my highest esteem.

Heart. I have not yet apprehended what kind of dispute could arise between you and Mr

Clackit:—but I would advise you both to come to a reconciliation as soon as possible.

Har. He still continues in his error, and I cannot undeceive him. [Aside.

Heart. Shall I take the liberty of telling you, my dear?—[Takes her hand.]—You tremble, Harriot!—What is the matter with you?

Har. Nothing, Sir.—Pray go on.

Heart. I guess whence proceeds all your uneasiness.—You fear that the world will not be so readily convinced of this young gentleman's merit as you are: and indeed I could wish him more deserving of you; but your regard for him gives him a merit he otherwise would have wanted, and almost makes me blind to his failings.

Har. And would you advise me, Sir, to make choice of this gentleman?

Heart. I would advise you, as I always have done, to consult your own heart upon such an occasion.

Har. If that is your advice, I will most religiously follow it; and, for the last time, I am resolved to discover my real sentiments; but as a confession of this kind will not become me, I have been thinking of some innocent stratagem to spare my blushes, and, in part, to relieve me from the shame of a declaration.—Might I be permitted to write to him?

Heart. I think you may my dear, without the least offence to your delicacy: and indeed you ought to explain yourself; your late misunderstanding makes it absolutely necessary.

Har. Will you be kind enough to assist me?—Will you write it for me, Sir?

Heart. Oh, most willingly!—And as I am made a party it will remove all objections.

Har. I will dictate to you in the best manner I am able. [Sighs.

Heart. Here is pen, ink, and paper; and now, my dear, I am ready.—He is certainly a man of family, and though he has some little faults, time and your virtues will correct them.—Come, what shall I write? [Prepares to write.

Har. Pray give me a moment's thought;—'tis a terrible task, Mr. Heartly.

Heart. I know it is.—Don't hurry yourself—I shall wait with patience.—Come, Miss Harriot.

Har. [Dictating.] *It is in vain for me to conceal from one of your understanding, the secrets of my heart.*

Heart. *The secrets of my heart.* [Writes.

Har. *Though your humility and modesty will not suffer you to perceive it—*

Heart. Do you think that he is much troubled with those qualities?

Har. Pray indulge me, Sir.

Heart. I beg your pardon.—*Your humility and modesty will not suffer you to perceive it—* So.

Har. *Every thing tells you, that it is you that I love.*

Heart. Very well. [Writes.

Har. *Yes—you that I love.*—Do you understand me?

Heart. O! yes, yes—I understand you—that it is you that I love.—This is very plain, my dear.

Har. I would have it so.—*And though I am already bound in gratitude to you—*

Heart. In gratitude to Mr. Clackit?

Har. Pray write, Sir.

Heart. Well—in *gratitude to you*—I must write what she would have me. [Aside.

Har. *Yet my passion is a most disinterested one—*

Heart. *Most disinterested one.*

Har. *And to convince you, that you owe much more to my affections—*

Heart. And then?

Har. *I could wish that I had not experienced—*

Heart. Stay, stay: *Had not experienced—*

Har. *Your tender care of me in my infancy—*

Heart. What did you say?—Did I hear right, or am I in a dream? [Aside.

Har. Why have I declared myself? He'll hate me for my folly. [Aside.

Heart. Harriot!

Har. Sir!

Heart. To whom do you write this letter?

Har. To—Mr. Clackit—Is it not?

Heart. You must not mention then the care of your infancy: it would be ridiculous.

Har. It would indeed:—I own it:—It is improper.

Heart. Then I'll only finish your letter with the usual compliment and send it away.

Har. Yes—send it away—if you think I ought to send it.

Heart. [Troubled.] Ought to send it! Who's there?

Enter a Servant.

Carry this letter. [An action escapes from HARRIOT, as if to hinder the sending the letter.]—Is it not for Mr. Clackit?

Har. [Peevishly.] Who can it be for?

Heart. [To the Servant.] Here, take this letter to Mr. Clackit. [Gives the letter; exit Servant.

Har. He disapproves my passion, and I shall die with confusion. [Aside.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. The conversation is over, and I may appear. [Aside.]—Sir Charles is without, Sir, and is impatient to know your determination.—May he be permitted to see you?

Heart. I must retire, to conceal my weakness.

[Aside; Exit.

Lucy. Upon my word this is very whimsical.—What is the reason, Miss, that your guardian is gone away without giving me an answer.

Har. What a contempt he must have for me to behave in this manner! [Aside; Exit.

Lucy. Extremely well this, and equally foolish on both sides!—But what can be the meaning of it?—What a shame is this that I don't know more of this matter, a wench of spirit as I am, a favourite of my mistress, and as inquisitive as I ought to be? It is an affront to my character, and I must have satisfaction immediately.—[Going.] I will go directly to my young mistress, tease her to death till I am at the bottom of this; and if threatening, soothing, scolding, whispering, crying, and lying will not prevail, I will e'en give her warning—and go upon the stage. [Exit.

Re-enter HEARTLY.

Heart. The more I reflect upon what has passed, the more I am convinced that she did not intend writing to this young fellow.—What am I to think of it then?—Had not my reason made a little stand against my presumption, I might have interpreted some of Harriot's words in my own favour; but—Can it be possible that so young a creature should even cast a thought of that kind upon me?—Upon me!—No, no—

I will do her and myself the justice to acknowledge, that, for a very few slight appearances, there are a thousand reasons that destroy so ridiculous a supposition.

Enter SIR CHARLES CLACKIT.

Sir C. Well, Mr. Heartly, what are we to hope for?

Heart. Upon my word, Sir, I am still in the dark; we puzzle about indeed, but we don't get forward.

Sir C. What the devil is the meaning of all this? There never sure were lovers so difficult to bring together. But have you not been a little too rough with the lady? For as I passed by her but now, she seemed a little out of humour—And, upon my faith, not the less beautiful for a little pouting.

Heart. Upon my word, Sir Charles, what I can collect from her behaviour is, that your nephew is not so much in her good graces as he made you believe.

Sir C. 'Egad, like enough;—But hold, hold; this must be looked a little into—if it is so, I would be glad to know why and wherefore I have been made so ridiculous.—Eh, Master Heartly, does he take me for his fool, his beast, his merry Andrew? By the lord Harry—

Heart. He is of an age Sir Charles—

Sir C. Ay, of an age to be very impertinent; but I shall desire him to be less free with his uncle for the future, I assure him.

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. I have it, I have it gentlemen! you need not puzzle any more about the matter—I have got the secret.—I know the knotterrant that has wounded our distressed lady.

Sir C. Well, and who, and what, child?

Lucy. What! has she not told you Sir?

[*To HEARTLY.*]

Heart. Not directly.

Lucy. So much the better.—What pleasure it is to discover a secret, and then tell it to all the world!—I pressed her so much that she at last confessed.

Sir C. Well, what?

Lucy. That, in the first place, she did not like your nephew.

Sir C. And I told the puppy so.

Lucy. That she had a most mortal antipathy for the young men of this age; and that she had settled her affections upon one of riper years, and riper understanding.

Sir C. Indeed!

Lucy. And that she expected from a lover in his autumn more affection, more complaisance, more constancy, and discretion, of course.

Heart. This is very particular.

Sir C. Ay, but it is very prudent for all that.

Lucy. In short, as she had openly declared against the nephew, I took upon me to speak of his uncle.

Sir C. Of me, child?

Lucy. Yes, of you, Sir;—And she did not say me nay—But cast such a look, and fetched such a sigh—that if ever I looked and sighed in my life, I know how it is with her.

Sir C. What the devil!—Why surely—Eh, Lucy! You joke for certain—Mr. Heartly!—Eh!

Lucy. Indeed I do not, Sir.—'Twas in vain for me to say that nothing could be so ridiculous

as such a choice.—Nay, Sir, I went a little farther (you'll excuse me,) and told her—"Good God, madam," said I, "why he is old and gouty, asthmatic, rheumatic, sciatic, splenetic."—It signified nothing, she had determined.—

Sir C. But you need not have told her all that.—It can't be me.—No, no, it can't be me.

Lucy. But I tell you it is, Sir. You are the man.

Sir C. Say you so?—Why then, monsieur nephew, I shall have a little laugh with you—Ha, ha, ha!—Your betters must be served before you.—But here he comes.—Not a word, for your life.—We'll laugh at him most triumphantly—Ha, ha! but mum, mum.

Enter YOUNG CLACKIT.

Young C. Meeting by accident with some artists of the string, and my particular friends, I have brought 'em to celebrate Miss Harriot's and my approaching happiness. [*To HEARTLY.*]

Sir C. Do you hear the puppy? [*To LUCY.*]

Heart. It is time to clear up all mistakes.

Sir C. Now for it.

Heart. Miss Harriot, Sir was not destined for you.

Young C. What do you say, Sir?

Heart. That the young lady has fixed her affections upon another.

Young C. Upon another!

Sir C. Yes, Sir, another:—That is English, Sir; and you my translate it into French, if you like it better.

Young C. Very well, Sir, extremely well.

Sir C. And that other, Sir, is one to whom you owe great respect.

Young C. I am his most respectful humble servant.

Sir C. You are a fine youth, my sweet nephew, to tell me a story of a cock and a bull, of you and the young lady, when you have no more interest in her than the czar of Muscovy.

Young C. [*Smiles.*] But, my dear uncle, don't carry this jest too far—I shall begin to be uneasy: but whoever my precious rival is, he must prepare himself for a little humility; for, be he ever so mighty, my dear uncle, I have that in my pocket will lower his topsails for him.

[*Searching his pocket.*]

Sir C. Well, what's that?

Young C. A fourteen pounder only, my good uncle—A letter from the young lady.

[*Takes it out of his pocket.*]

Sir C. What! to you?

Young C. To me, Sir—This moment received, and overflowing with the tenderest sentiments.

Sir C. To you?

Young C. Most undoubtedly.—She reproaches me with my excessive modesty—there can be no mistake.

Sir C. What letter is this he chatters about?

[*To HEARTLY.*]

Heart. One written by me, and dictated by the young lady.

Sir C. What! sent by her to him?

Heart. I believe so.

Sir C. Well, but then—How the devil—Mrs. Lucy!—Eh!—What becomes of your fine story?

Lucy. I don't understand it.

Sir C. Nor I!

Heart. [*Hesitating.*] Nor—I—
 Young C. But I do—And so you will all presently.

Re-enter HARRIOT.

Har. Bless me, Mr. Heartly, what is all this music for in the next room?

Young C. I brought the gentlemen of the string, Mademoiselle, to convince you that I feel as I ought the honour you have done me.—[*Showing the letter.*]—But, for heaven's sake, be sincere a little with these good folks; they tell me here that I am nobody, and there is another happier than myself.

Har. To hesitate any longer would be injurious to my guardian, his friend, this young gentleman, and my own character. You have all been in an error.—My bashfulness may have deceived you—My heart never did.

Young C. *C'est vrai.*

Har. Therefore before I declare my sentiments, it is proper that I disavow any engagement:—But at the same time must confess—

Young C. Oh—ho!

Har. With fear and shame confess—

Young C. Courage, Mademoiselle!

Har. That another, not you, Sir, has gained a power over my heart.

[*To YOUNG CLACKIT.*]

Sir C. Another, not you; mind that, Jack. Ha, ha!

Har. It is a power indeed which he despises.—I cannot be deceived in his conduct.—Modesty may tie the tongue of our sex, but silence in him could proceed only from contempt.

Sir C. How prettily she reproaches me!—But I'll soon make it up with her.

[*Aside.*]

Har. As to that letter, Sir, your error there is excusable; and I own myself in that particular a little blameable.—But it was not my fault that it was sent to you; and the contents must have told you that it could not possibly be meant for you.

[*To YOUNG CLACKIT.*]

Sir C. Proof positive, Jack:—Say no more. Now is my time to begin.—Hem!—hem!—Sweet young lady!—hem!—whose charms are so mighty, so far transcending every thing that we read of in history or fable, how could you possibly think that my silence proceeded from contempt? was it natural or prudent, think you, for a man of sixty-five, nay, just entering into his sixty-sixth year—

Young C. *O misericorde!* what, is my uncle my rival? Nay then, I burst, by Jupiter!—Ha, ha, ha!

Har. Don't imagine, Sir, that to me your age is any fault.

Sir C. [*Bowing.*] You are very obliging, Madam.

Har. Neither is it, Sir, a merit of that extraordinary nature, that I should sacrifice to it an inclination which I have conceived for another.

Sir C. How is this?

Young C. Another! not you; mind that, uncle.

Lucy. What is the meaning of all this?

Young C. Proof positive, uncle—And very positive.

Sir C. I have been led into a mistake, Madam, which I hope you will excuse; and I have made myself very ridiculous, which I hope I shall forget:—And so, Madam, I am your humble servant.

Heart. What I now see, and the remembrance of what is past, force me to break silence.

Young C. Ay, now for it.—Hear him—hear him.—

Heart. O my Harriot!—I too must be disgraced in my turn.—Can you think that I have seen and conversed with you unmoved?—Indeed I have not.—The more I was sensible of your merit, the stronger were my motives to stifle the ambition of my heart.—But now I can no longer resist the violence of my passion, which casts me at your feet, the most unworthy indeed of all your admirers, but of all the most affectionate.

Har. I have refused my hand to Sir Charles and this young gentleman: the one accuses me of caprice, the other of singularity:—Should I refuse my hand a third time, [*smiling,*] I might draw upon myself a more severe reproach—and therefore I accept your favour, Sir, and will endeavour to deserve it.

Heart. And thus I seal my acknowledgements and from henceforth devote my every thought, and all my services, to the author of my happiness.

[*Kisses her hand.*]

Sir C. Well, my dear discreet nephew, are you satisfied with the fool's part you have given me, and played yourself in the farce?

Young C. What would you have me say, Sir? I am too much a philosopher to fret.

Heart. I hope, Sir Charles, that we shall still continue to live as neighbours and friends. For you, my Harriot, words cannot express my wonder or my joy; my future conduct must tell you what a sense I have of my happiness, and how much I shall endeavour to deserve it.

For ev'ry charm that ever yet bless'd youth,
 Accept compliance, tenderness, and truth;
 My friendly care shall change to grateful love,
 And the fond husband still the Guardian prove

[*Exeunt*]

THE LYING VALET:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

REMARKS.

This piece was first launched at the Theatre in Goodman's Fields; but Mr. Garrick, who soon quitted that place for the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, brought his Farce with him. It appears to be founded on an old English Comedy: but it has spirit, incident, and variety, with language well adapted to the characters.

Considerable success attended the numerous early repetitions of this diverting afterpiece, and it forms a useful addition to the stock-list of every Theatre in the kingdom.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.
SHARP.....	Mr. Garrick.
GAYLESS.....	Mr. Blakes.
JUSTICE GUTTLE.....	Mr. Taswell.
BEAU TRIPPET.....	Mr. Neal.
DICK.....	Mr. Yates.
MELISSA.....	Miss Bennet.
KITTY PRY.....	Mrs. Clive.
MRS. GADABOUT.....	Mrs. Cross.
MRS. TRIPPET.....	Mrs. Ridout.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—GAYLESS's Lodgings.

Enter GAYLESS and SHARP.

Sharp. How, Sir! shall you be married to-morrow? Eh, I'm afraid you joke with your poor humble servant.

Gay. I tell thee Sharp, last night Melissa consented, and fixed to-morrow for the happy day.

Sharp. 'Tis well she did, Sir, or it might have been a dreadful one for us, in our present condition: all your money spent, your moveables sold, your honour almost ruined, and your humble servant almost starved; we could not possibly have stood it two days longer. But if this young lady will marry you and relieve us, o'my conscience, I'll turn friend to the sex, and think of a wife myself.

Gay. And yet, Sharp, when I think how I

have imposed upon her, I am almost resolved to throw myself at her feet, tell her the real situation of my affairs, ask her pardon, and implore her pity.

Sharp. After marriage, with all my heart, Sir.

Gay. What, because I am poor, shall I abandon my honour?

Sharp. Yes, you must, Sir, or abandon me: so pray discharge one of us; for eat I must, and speedily too: and you know very well that that honour of yours will neither introduce you to a great man's table, nor get me credit for a single beef-steak.

Gay. What can I do?

Sharp. Nothing, while honour sticks in your throat: do gulp, master, and down with it.

Gay. Prythee, leave me to my thoughts.

Sharp. Leave you! No, not in such bad company, I assure you. Why you must certainly be a very great philosopher, Sir, to moralize and declaim so charmingly as you do, about honour

and conscience, when your doors are beset with bailiffs, and not one single guinea in your pocket to bribe the villains.

Gay. Don't be witty, and give your advice, Sirrah!

Sharp. Do you be wise and take it, Sir. But to be serious; you certainly have spent your fortune, and out-lived your credit, as your pockets and my belly can testify: your father has disowned you; all your friends forsook you, except myself, who am starving with you. Now, Sir, if you marry this young lady, who as yet, thank heaven, knows nothing of your misfortunes, and by that means procure a better fortune than that you squandered away, make a good husband, and turn economist, you still may be happy, may still be Sir William's heir, and the lady too no loser by the bargain. There's reason and argument, Sir.

Gay. 'Twas with that prospect I first made love to her.

Sharp. Pray then make no more objections to the marriage. You see I am reduced to my waistcoat already; and when necessity has undressed me from top to toe, she must begin with you; and then we shall be forced to keep house, and die by inches.—Look you, Sir, if you wont resolve to take my advice, while you have one coat to your back, I must e'en take to my heels, while I have strength to run, and something to cover me: so Sir, wishing you much comfort and consolation with your bare conscience, I am your most obedient and half-starved friend and servant.

[*Going.*]

Gay. Hold, Sharp, you won't leave me?

Sharp. I must eat, Sir; by my honour and appetite, I must!

Gay. Well then, I am resolved to favour the cheat; and as I shall quite change my former course of life, happy may be the consequences; at least of this I am sure—

Sharp. That you can't be worse than you are at present.

[*A knocking without.*]

Gay. Who's there?

Sharp. Some of your former good friends, who favoured you with money at fifty per cent. and helped you to spend it; and are now become daily mementoes to you of the folly of trusting rogues, and laughing at my advice.

Gay. Cease your impertinence!—to the door!—If they are duns, tell 'em my marriage is now certainly fixed, and persuade 'em still to forbear a few days longer. And do you hear Sharp, if it should be any body from Melissa, say I am not at home, lest the bad appearance we make here should make 'em suspect something to our disadvantage.

Sharp. I'll obey you, Sir; but I'm afraid they will easily discover the consumptive situation of our affairs by my chop-fallen countenance. [*Exit.*]

Gay. These very rascals, who are now continually dunning and persecuting me, were the very persons who led me to my ruin, partook of my prosperity, and professed the greatest friendship.

Sharp. [*Without.*] Upon my word, Mrs. Kitty, my master's not at home.

Kitty. [*Without.*] Lookye, Sharp, I must and will see him.

Gay. Ha, what do I hear? Melissa's maid!—She's coming up stairs. What must I do?—I'll get into this closet and listen. [*Exit.*]

Vol. I. . . . D

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Re-enter SHARP, with KITTY.

Kitty. I must know where he is, and will know too, Mr. Impertinence!

Sharp. Not of me you won't. [*Aside.*] He's not within, I tell you, Mrs. Kitty. I don't know myself. Do you think I can conjure?

Kitty. But I know you will lie abominably; therefore don't trifle with me. I come from my mistress, Melissa: you know, I suppose, what's to be done to-morrow morning?

Sharp. Ay, and to-morrow night too, girl!

Kitty. Not if I can help it. [*Aside.*] But come, where is your master? for see him I must.

Sharp. Pray Mrs. Kitty, what's your opinion of this match between my master and your mistress?

Kitty. Why, I have no opinion of it at all; and yet most of our wants will be relieved by it too; for instance now, your master will get a fortune, that's what I am afraid he wants; my mistress will get a husband, that's what she has wanted for some time; you will have the pleasure of my conversation, and I an opportunity of breaking your head for your impertinence.

Sharp. Madam, I'm your most humble servant! But I'll tell you what, Mrs. Kitty, I am positively against the match; for was I a man of my master's fortune,

Kitty. You'd marry if you could, and mend it ha, ha, ha!—Pray Sharp, where does your master's estate lie?

Sharp. Lie, lie!—why, it lies—'faith I can't name any particular place, it lies in so many; his effects are divided, some here and some there; his steward hardly knows himself.

Kitty. Scattered, scattered, I suppose. But harkye, Sharp, what's become of your furniture? You seem to be a little bare here at present.

Sharp. Why you must know, as soon as the wedding was fixed, my master ordered me to remove his goods to a friend's house, to make room for a ball which he designs to give here the day after the marriage.

Kitty. The luckiest thing in the world! for my mistress designs to have a ball and entertainment here to-night before the marriage; and that's my business with your master.

Sharp. The devil it is!

[*Aside.*]

Kitty. She'll not have it public; she designs to invite only eight or ten couple of friends.

Sharp. No more?

Kitty. No more: and she ordered me to desire your master not to order a great entertainment.

Sharp. Oh, never fear.

Kitty. Ten or a dozen little nice things, with some fruit, I believe, will be enough in all conscience.

Sharp. Oh, curse your conscience! [*Aside.*]

Kitty. And what do you think I have done of my own head?

Sharp. What?

Kitty. I have invited all my lord Stately's servants to come and see you, and have a dance in the kitchen: wont your master be surprised?

Sharp. Much so, indeed!

Kitty. Well, be quick and find out your master, and make what haste you can with your preparations: you have no time to lose. Prythee, Sharp, what's the matter with you? I have not seen you for some time, and you seem to look little thin.

Sharp. Oh, my unfortunate face! [*Aside.*] I'm in pure health, thank you, Mrs. Kitty; and I'll assure you I have a very good stomach, never better in all my life; and I am full of vigour, hussy!

[*Offers to kiss her.*]

Kitty. What, with that face!—Well, by by. [*Going.*]—Oh, Sharp, what ill-looking fellows are those, who were standing about your door when I came in? They want your master too, I suppose?

Sharp. Hum! Yes, they are waiting for him. They are some of his tenants out of the country, that want to pay him some money.

Kitty. Tenants! What, do you let his tenants stand in the street?

Sharp. They choose it; as they seldom come to town, they are willing to see as much of it as they can when they do: they are raw, ignorant honest people.

Kitty. Well, I must run home—farewell!—But do you hear? Get something substantial for us in the kitchen: a ham, a turkey, or what you will. We'll be very merry. And be sure to remove the tables and chairs away there too, that we may have room to dance. I can't bear to be confined in my French dances—tal, la, la. [*Dances.*] Well, adieu! Without any compliment, I shall die, if I don't see you soon. [*Exit.*]

Sharp. And, without any compliment, I pray heaven you may!

Re-enter GAYLESS; they look for some time sorrowfully at each other.

Gay. Oh, Sharp!

Sharp. Oh, master!

Gay. We are certainly undone!

Sharp. That's no news to me.

Gay. Eight or ten couple of dancers—ten or a dozen little nice dishes, with some fruit—my lord Stately's servants—ham and turkey!

Sharp. Say no more; the very sound creates an appetite: and I am sure, of late, I have had no occasion for whetters and provocatives.

Gay. Cursed misfortune! what can we do?

Sharp. Hang ourselves; I see no other remedy; except you have a receipt to give a ball and a supper without meat or music.

Gay. Melissa has certainly heard of my bad circumstances, and has invented this scheme to distress me, and break off this match.

Sharp. I don't believe it, Sir; begging your pardon.

Gay. No! why did her maid then make so strict an inquiry into my fortune and affairs?

Sharp. For two very substantial reasons; the first to satisfy a curiosity natural to her as a woman: the second, to have the pleasure of my conversation, very natural to her as a woman of taste and understanding.

Gay. Pr'ythee be more serious: is not our all at stake?

Sharp. Yes, Sir; and yet that all of ours is of so little consequence, that a man with a very small share of philosophy, may part from it without much pain or uneasiness. However, Sir, I'll convince you, in half an hour, that Mrs. Melissa knows nothing of your circumstances. And I'll tell you what too, Sir; she shan't be here to-night, and yet you shall marry her to-morrow morning.

Gay. How, how, dear Sharp?

Sharp. 'Tis here, here, Sir! warm, warm; and delays will cool it; therefore I'll away to her, and

do you be as merry as love and poverty will permit you.

Would you succeed, a faithful friend depute,
Whose head can plan, and front can execute.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE II.—MELISSA'S Lodgings.

Enter MELISSA and KITTY.

Mel. You surprise me, Kitty! the master not at home, the man in confusion, no furniture in the house, and ill-looking fellows about the doors! 'Tis all a riddle.

Kitty. But very easy to be explained.

Mel. Pr'ythee explain it then, nor keep me longer in suspense.

Kitty. The affair is this, Madam: Mr. Gayless is over head and ears in debt; you are over head and ears in love: you'll marry him to-morrow; the next day your whole fortune goes to his creditors, and you and your children are to live comfortably upon the remainder.

Mel. I cannot think him base.

Kitty. But I know they are all base. You are very young, and very ignorant of the sex; I am young too, but have more experience: you never was in love before; I have been in love with a hundred, and tried 'em all; and know 'em all to be a parcel of barbarous, perjured, deluding bewitching devils.

Mel. The low wretches you have had to do with, may answer the character you give 'em; but Mr. Gayless—

Kitty. Is a man, Madam.

Mel. I hope so, Kitty, or I would have nothing to do with him.

Kitty. With all my heart. I have given you my sentiments upon the occasion, and shall leave you to your own inclinations.

Mel. Oh, Madam, I am much obliged to you for your great condescension; ha, ha, ha! However, I have so great a regard for your opinion, that had I certain proofs of his villany—

Kitty. Of his poverty you may have a hundred; I am sure I have had none to the contrary.

Mel. Oh, there the shoe pinches. [*Aside.*]

Kitty. Nay, so far from giving me the usual perquisites of my place, he has not so much as kept me in temper with little endearing civilities; and one might reasonably expect, when a man is deficient one way, that he should make it up in another. [*A knocking.*]

Mel. See who's at the door. [*Exit KITTY.*] I must be cautious how I hearken too much to this girl; her bad opinion of Mr. Gayless seems to arise from his disregard of her.

Re-enter KITTY and SHARP.

So, Sharp, have you found your master? Will things be ready for the ball and entertainment?

Sharp. To your wishes, Madam. I have just now bespoke the music and the supper, and wait now for your ladyship's further commands.

Mel. My compliments to your master, and let him know I and my company will be with him by six; we design to drink tea, and play at cards, before we dance.

Kitty. So shall I and my company, Mr. Sharp. [*Aside.*]

Sharp. Mighty well, Madam!

Mel. Pr'ythee, Sharp, what makes you come without your coat? 'Tis too cool to go so airy, sure.

Kitty. Mr. Sharp, Madam, is of a very hot constitution; ha, ha, ha!

Sharp. If it had been ever so cool, I have had enough to warm me since I came from home, I'm sure; but no matter for that. [*Sighs.*]

Mel. What d'y'e mean?

Sharp. Pray don't ask me Madam; I beseech you don't: let me change the subject.

Kitty. Insist upon knowing it Madam.—My curiosity must be satisfied, or I shall burst. [*Aside.*]

Mel. I do insist upon knowing; on pain of my displeasure, tell me!

Sharp. If my master should know—I must not tell you, madam, indeed.

Mel. I promise you, upon my honour, he never shall.

Sharp. But can your ladyship insure secrecy from that quarter?

Kitty. Yes, Mr. Jackanapes, for any thing you can say.

Mel. I engage for her.

Sharp. Why then, in short, Madam—I cannot tell you.

Mel. Don't trifle with me.

Sharp. Then since you will have it, Madam, I lost my coat in defence of your reputation.

Mel. In defence of my reputation?

Sharp. I will assure you, Madam, I've suffered very much in defence of it; which is more than I would have done for my own.

Mel. Prythee explain.

Sharp. In short, Madam, you was seen, about a month ago, to make a visit to my master, alone.

Mel. Alone! my servant was with me.

Sharp. What, Mrs. Kitty? So much the worse; for she was looked upon as my property; and I was brought in guilty, as well as you and my master.

Kitty. What, your property, jackanapes?

Mel. What is all this?

Sharp. Why, madam, as I came out but now to make preparation for you and your company to-night, Mrs. Pryabout, the attorney's wife at next door, calls to me: "Harkye, fellow!" says she, "do you and your modest master know that my husband shall indict your house, at the next parish meeting, for a nuisance?"

Mel. A nuisance!

Sharp. I said so—"A nuisance! I believe none in the neighbourhood live with more decency and regularity than I and my master;" as is really the case.—"Decency and regularity!" cries she, with a sneer—"why, Sirrah, does not my window look into your master's bed-chamber? And did not he bring in a certain lady, such a day?" describing you, Madam,— "And did not I see—"

Mel. See! O scandalous! What?

Sharp. Modesty requires my silence.

Mel. Did not you contradict her?

Sharp. Contradict her! Why, I told her I was sure she lied: "for zounds!" said I, for I could not help swearing, "I am so well convinced of the lady's and my master's prudence, that I am sure had they a mind to amuse themselves, they would certainly have drawn the window-curtains."

Mel. What, did you say nothing else? Did not you convince her of her error and impertinence?

Sharp. She swore to such things, that I could do nothing but swear and call names: upon which, out bolts her husband upon me, with a fine taper crab in his hand, and fell upon me with such

violence, that, being half delirious I made a full confession.

Mel. A full confession! What did you confess?

Sharp. That my master loved fornication: that you had no aversion to it; that Mrs. Kitty was a bawd, and your humble servant a pimp.

Kitty. A bawd! a bawd! Do I look like a bawd, Madam?

Sharp. And so, Madam, in the scuffle, my coat was torn to pieces, as well as your reputation.

Mel. And so you joined to make me infamous!

Sharp. For heaven's sake, Madam, what could I do? His proofs fell so thick upon me, as witness my head, [*Shows his head, plastered.*] that I would have given up all the reputations in the kingdom rather than have my brains beat to a jelly.

Mel. Very well!—But I'll be revenged. And did not you tell your master of this?

Sharp. Tell him! No, madam. Had I told him, his love is so violent for you, that he would certainly have murdered half the attorneys in town by this time.

Mel. Very well!—But I'm resolved not to go to your master's to-night.

Sharp. Heavens, and my impudence be praised!

Kitty. Why not, Madam? If you are not guilty, face your accusers. [*Aside.*]

Sharp. Oh, the devil! ruined again! [*Aside.*]

To be sure, face 'em by all means, Madam: they can but be abusive, and break the windows a little. Besides, Madam, I have thought of a way to make this affair quite diverting to you: I have a fine blunderbuss, charged with half a hundred slugs, and my master has a delicate, large Swiss broad-sword; and between us, Madam, we shall so pepper and slice 'em, that you will die with laughing.

Mel. What, at murder?

Kitty. Don't fear, Madam, there will be no murder if Sharp's concerned.

Sharp. Murder, Madam! 'Tis self-defence: besides in these sort of skirmishes, there are never more than two or three killed: for, supposing they bring the whole body of militia upon us, down but with a brace of them, and away fly the rest of the covey.

Mel. Persuade me ever so much, I wont go; that's my resolution.

Kitty. Why then, I'll tell you what, Madam; since you are resolved not to go to the supper, suppose the supper was to come to you: 'tis great pity such great preparations as Mr. Sharp has made should be thrown away.

Sharp. So it is, as you say, Mrs. Kitty; but I can immediately run back and unbespeak what I have ordered; 'tis soon done.

Mel. But then what excuse can I send to your master? he'll be very uneasy at my not coming.

Sharp. Oh terribly so!—But I have it: I'll tell him that you were suddenly taken with the vapours, or qualms, or what you please, Madam.

Mel. I'll leave it to you, Sharp, to make my apology; and there's half-a-guinea for you to help your invention.

Sharp. Half-a-guinea!—'Tis so long since I had any thing to do with money, that I scarcely know the current coin of my own country. Oh, Sharp, what talents hast thou! to secure thy master, deceive his mistress, out-lie her chamber-maid, and yet be paid for thy honesty.—But my

joy will discover me. [*Aside.*] Madam, you have eternally fixed Timothy Sharp, your most obedient, humble servant.—Oh, the delights of impudence and a good understanding!

[*Aside, and exit.*
Kitty. Ha, ha, ha! Was there ever such a lying varlet! with his slugs and his broad-swords, his attorneys and broken heads and nonsense!—Well, Madam, are you satisfied now? Do you want more proofs?

Mel. Of your modesty I do; but I find you are resolved to give me none.

Kitty. Madam!

Mel. I see through your little mean artifice: you are endeavouring to lessen Mr. Gayless in my opinion, because he has not paid you for services he had no occasion for.

Kitty. Pay me, Madam! I am sure I have very little occasion to be angry with Mr. Gayless for not paying me, when, I believe, 'tis his general practice.

Mel. 'Tis false! He's a gentleman, and a man of honour; and you are—

Kitty. Not in love, I thank heaven!

[*Courtesies.*

Mel. You are a fool.

Kitty. I have been in love, but I'm much wiser now.

Mel. Hold your tongue, impertinence!

Kitty. That's the severest thing she has said yet. [*Aside.*

Mel. Leave me.

Kitty. Oh, this love, this love, is the devil!

[*Exit.*

Mel. We discover our weakness to our servants, make them our confidants, put 'em upon an equality with us, and so they become our advisers. Sharp's behaviour, though I seemed to disregard it, makes me tremble with apprehensions; and though I have pretended to be angry with Kitty for her advice, I think it of too much consequence to be neglected.

Re-enter KITTY.

Kitty. May I speak, Madam?

Mel. Don't be a fool. What do you want?

Kitty. There is a servant, just come out of the country, says he belongs to Sir William Gayless, and has got a letter for you, from his master, upon very urgent business.

Mel. Sir William Gayless! What can this mean? Where is the man?

Kitty. In the little parlour, Madam.

Mel. I'll go to him.—My heart flutters strangely. [*Exit.*

Kitty. O woman, woman, foolish woman! She'll certainly have this Gayless: nay, were she as well convinced of his poverty as I am, she'd have him. Here is she going to throw away fifteen thousand pounds—upon what? He's a man and that's all; and, heaven knows, mere man is but a small consolation now-a-days! [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I

Enter GAYLESS and SHARP.

Gay. Pr'ythee be serious, Sharp: hast thou really succeeded?

Sharp. To our wishes, Sir. In short, I have managed the business with such skill and dex-

terity, that neither your circumstances, nor my veracity are suspected.

Gay. But how hast thou excused me from the ball and entertainment?

Sharp. Beyond expectation, Sir. But in that particular, I was obliged to have recourse to truth, and declare the real situation of your affairs. I told her we had so long disused ourselves to dressing either dinners or suppers, that I was afraid we should be but awkward in our preparations. In short, Sir, at that instant a cursed gnawing seized my stomach, that I could not help telling her, that both you and myself seldom made a good meal, now-a-days, once in a quarter of a year.

Gay. Hell and confusion! have you betrayed me, villain? Did you not tell me, this moment, she did not in the least suspect my circumstances?

Sharp. No more she did, Sir, till I told her.

Gay. Very well!—And was this your skill and dexterity?

Sharp. I was going to tell you, but you won't hear reason. My melancholy face and piteous narration had such an effect upon her generous bowels, that she freely forgives all that's past.

Gay. Does she Sharp?

Sharp. Yes, and desires never to see your face again; and, as a further consideration for so doing, she has sent you half-a-guinea.

[*Shows the money.*

Gay. What do you mean?

Sharp. To spend it, spend it, Sir, and regale.

Gay. Villain, you have undone me!

Sharp. What, by bringing you money, when you are not worth a farthing in the whole world? Well, well, then to make you happy again, I'll keep it myself; and wish somebody would take it in their head to load me with such misfortunes.

[*Puts up the money.*

Gay. Do you laugh at me, rascal?

Sharp. Who deserves more to be laughed at? ha, ha, ha!—Never for the future, Sir, dispute the success of my negotiations, when even you, who know me so well, can't help swallowing my hook. Why, Sir, I could have played with you backwards and forwards, at the end of my line, till I had put your senses into such a fermentation, that you should not have known, in an hour's time, whether you was a fish or a man.

Gay. Why what is all this you have been telling me?

Sharp. A downright lie, from beginning to end.

Gay. And have you really excused me to her?

Sharp. No, Sir; but I have got this half-guinea to make her excuses to you; and instead of a confederacy between you and me to deceive her, she thinks she has brought me over to put the deceit upon you.

Gay. Thou excellent fellow.

Sharp. Don't lose time, but slip out of the house immediately—the back way, I believe, will be the safest for you—and to her as fast as you can; pretend vast surprise and concern that her indisposition has debarred you the pleasure of her company here to-night. You need know no more—away!

Gay. But what shall we do, Sharp? Here's her maid again.

Sharp. The devil she is! I wish I could poison her: for I'm sure while she lives I can never prosper.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Your door was open, so I did not stand upon ceremony.

Gay. I am sorry to hear your mistress is taken so suddenly—

Kitty. Vapours, vapours only, Sir; a few matrimonial omens, that's all: but I suppose Mr. Sharp has made her excuses.

Gay. And tells me I can't have the pleasure of her company to-night. I had made a small preparation; but 'tis no matter: Sharp shall go to the rest of the company, and let them know 'tis put off.

Kitty. Not for the world, Sir: my mistress was sensible you must have provided for her, and the rest of the company; so she is resolved, though she can't, the other ladies and gentlemen shall partake of your entertainment.—She's very good-natured.

Sharp. I had better run and let 'em know 'tis deferred.

Kitty. [*Stops him.*] I have been with 'em already, and told them my mistress insists upon their coming; and they have already promised to be here: so pray don't be under any apprehensions that your preparations will be thrown away.

Gay. But as I can't have her company, Mrs. Kitty, 'twill be a great pleasure to me, and a greater compliment to her, to defer our mirth; besides, I can't enjoy any thing at present, and she not partake of it.

Kitty. Oh, no, to be sure; but what can I do? My mistress will have it so! and Mrs. Gadabout, and the rest of the company, will be here in a few minutes: there are two or three coachfuls of 'em.

Sharp. Then my master must be ruined, in spite of my parts.

Gay. 'Tis all over, Sharp.

Sharp. I know it, Sir.

Gay. I shall go distracted! what shall I do?

Sharp. Why, Sir, as our rooms are a little out of furniture at present, take 'em into the captain's, that lodges here, and set 'em down to cards: if he should come in the mean time, I'll excuse you to him.

Kitty. I have disconcerted their affairs, I find. I'll have some sport with them. [*Aside.*] Pray, Mr. Gayless, don't order too many things: they only make you a friendly visit; the more ceremony, you know, the less welcome. Pray, Sir, let me entreat you not to be profuse. If I can be of service, pray command me; my mistress has sent me on purpose. While Mr. Sharp is doing the business without doors, I may be employed within. If you'll lend me the keys of your side-board, I'll dispose of your plate to the best advantage.

Sharp. Thank you Mrs. Kitty; but it is disposed of already.

Kitty. Bless me the company's come! I'll go to the door and conduct them into your presence.

Sharp. If you'd conduct them into a horse-pond, and wait on them there yourself, we should be more obliged to you.

Gay. I can never support this!

Sharp. Rouse your spirits, and put on an air of gayety, and I don't despair of bringing you off yet.

Gay. Your words have done it effectually.

Re-enter KITTY, with MRS. GADABOUT, her Daughter, and Niece; JUSTICE GUTTLE, TRIPPET, and MRS. TRIPPET.

Mrs. G. Ah, my dear Mr. Gayless!

Gay. My dear widow! [*Kisses him.*]

Mrs. G. We are come to give you joy, Mr. Gayless; and here's Mr. Guttle come to give you joy.—Mr. Gayless, Justice Guttle.

Sharp. Oh, destruction! one of the quorum.

Just. G. Hem! though I had not the honour of any personal knowledge of you, yet, at the instigation of Mrs. Gadabout, I have, without any previous acquaintance with you, thrown aside all ceremony, to let you know that I joy to hear the solemnization of your nuptials is so near at hand.

Gay. Sir, though I cannot answer you with the same elocution, however, Sir, I thank you with the same sincerity.

Mrs. G. Mr. and Mrs. Trippet, Sir; the properest lady in the world for your purpose, for she'll dance for four-and-twenty hours together.

Trip. My dear Charles, I am very angry with you, faith: so near marriage, and not let me know! 'twas barbarous. You thought, I suppose, I should rally you upon it; but dear Mrs. Trippet here has long ago eradicated all my anti-matrimonial principles.

Kitty. Pray ladies, walk into the next room; Mr. Sharp can't lay his cloth till you are set down to cards.

Mrs. G. One thing I had quite forgot: Mr. Gayless, my nephew, who you never saw, will be in town from France presently; so I left word to send him here immediately, to make one.

Gay. You do me honour, Madam.

Sharp. Do the ladies choose cards or supper first?

Gay. Supper! What does the fellow mean?

Just. G. Oh, the supper by all means; for I have eat nothing to signify since dinner.

Sharp. Nor I, since last Monday was a fortnight.

Gay. Pray, ladies, walk into the next room.—Sharp get things ready for supper, and call the music.

Sharp. Well said, master.

Mrs. G. Without ceremony, ladies.

[*Exit GAYLESS, TRIPPET, and LADIES.*]

Kitty. I'll to my mistress; and let her know every thing is ready for her appearance.

Just. G. Pray Mr.—what's your name, don't be long with supper:—but harkye, what can I do in the mean time? suppose you get me a pipe and some good wine; I'll try to divert myself that way till supper's ready.

Sharp. Or suppose, Sir, you was to take a nap till then: there's a very easy couch in that closet.

Just. G. The best thing in the world! I'll take your advice; but be sure to wake me when supper is ready.

Sharp. Pray heaven, you may not wake till then!—What a fine situation my master is in at present! I have promised him my assistance; but his affairs are in so desperate a way, that I am afraid 'tis out of my skill to recover them. Well, "Fools have fortune," says an old proverb, and a

very true one it is; for my master and I are two of the most unfortunate mortals in the creation.

Re-enter GAYLESS.

Gay. Well, Sharp, I have set them down to cards; and now what have you to propose?

Sharp. I have one scheme left, which in all probability may succeed. The good citizen, overloaded with his last meal, is taking a nap in that closet, in order to get him an appetite for yours. I'll pick his pocket, and provide us a supper with the booty.

Gay. Monstrous! for, without considering the villany of it, the danger of waking him makes it impracticable.

Sharp. If he wakes, I'll smother him, and lay his death to indigestion: a very common death among the justices.

Gay. Pr'ythee, be serious; we have no time to lose. Can you invent nothing to drive them out of the house?

Sharp. I can fire it.

Gay. Shame and confusion so perplex me, I cannot give myself a moment's thought.

Sharp. I have it; did not Mrs. Gadabout say her nephew would be here?

Gay. She did.

Sharp. Say no more, but in to your company. If I don't send them out of the house for the night, I'll at least frighten their stomachs away; and if this stratagem fails, I'll relinquish politics, and think my understanding no better than my neighbours.

Gay. How shall I reward thee, Sharp?

Sharp. By your silence and obedience. Away to your company, Sir. [*Exit GAYLESS.*] Now, dear Madam Fortune, for once open your eyes, and behold a poor unfortunate man of parts addressing you. Now is your time to convince your foes you are not that blind, whimsical whore they take you for; but let them see, by your assisting me, that men of sense, as well as fools, are sometimes entitled to your favour and protection.— [*Goes aside, and cries out*] Help, help, help, master! gentlemen, ladies! murder, fire, brimstone! help, help, help!

Re-enter GAYLESS, TRIPPET, and the LADIES, with Cards in their hands, and SHARP enters running, and meets them.

Gay. What's the matter?

Sharp. Matter, Sir! If you don't run this minute with that gentleman, this lady's nephew will be murdered. I am sure 'twas he; he was set upon at the corner of the street by four; he has killed two; and if you don't make haste, he'll be either murdered or took to prison.

Mrs. G. For heaven's sake, gentlemen, run to his assistance. How I tremble for Melissa! this frolic of her's may be fatal. [*Aside.*]

Gay. Draw, Sir, and follow me.

[*Exeunt all but SHARP.*]

Re-enter JUSTICE GUTTLE, disordered, as from sleep.

Just. G. What noise and confusion is this?

Sharp. Sir, there's a man murdered in the street.

Just. G. Is that all? Zounds! I was afraid you had thrown the supper down. A plague of your noise! I shan't recover my stomach this half hour.

Re-enter GAYLESS, TRIPPET, and MRS. GADABOUT, with MELISSA, in boys' clothes, dressed in the French manner.

Mrs. G. Well, but my dear Jemmy, you are not hurt, sure?

Mel. A little, with riding post only.

Mrs. G. Mr. Sharp alarmed us all, with an account of your being set upon by four men; that you had killed two, and was attacking the other when he came away; and when we met you at the door, we were running to your rescue.

Mel. I had a small rencounter with half a dozen villains; but finding me resolute they were wise enough to take to their heels. I believe I scratched some of them.

[*Lays her hand to her sword.*]

Sharp. His vanity has saved my credit. I have a thought come into my head may prove to our advantage, provided Monsieur's ignorance bears any proportion to his impudence. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. G. Now my fright is over, let me introduce you, my dear, to Mr. Gayless. Sir, this is my nephew.

Gay. Sir, I shall be proud of your friendship.

[*Salutes her.*]

Mel. I don't doubt but we shall be better acquainted in a little time.

Just. G. Pray, Sir, what news in France?

Mel. Faith, very little that I know of in the political way; I had no time to spend among the politicians. I was—

Gay. Among the ladies, I suppose?

Mel. Too much indeed. Faith I have not philosophy enough to resist their solicitations. You take me? [*Apart to GAYLESS.*]

Gay. Yes, to be a most incorrigible fop. [*Aside.*] 'Sdeath! this puppy's impertinence is an addition to my misery. [*Apart to SHARP.*]

Mel. Poor Gayless! to what shifts is he reduced! I cannot bear to see him much longer in this condition; I shall discover myself.

[*Apart to MRS. GADABOUT.*]

Mrs. G. Not before the end of the play; besides, the more his pain now, the greater his pleasure when relieved from it. [*Apart.*]

Trip. Shall we return to our cards? I have a *sans prendre* here, and must insist you play it out.

Ladies. With all my heart.

Mel. *Alons donc.*

[*As they go out, SHARP pulls MELISSA by the Sleeve.*]

Sharp. Sir, sir, shall I beg leave to speak with you? Pray did you find a bank-note in your way hither?

Mel. What between here and Dover, do you mean?

Sharp. No, Sir, within twenty or thirty yards of this house.

Mel. You are drunk, fellow.

Sharp. I am undone, Sir, but not drunk, I'll assure you.

Mel. What is all this?

Sharp. I'll tell you, Sir: a little while ago my master sent me out, to change a note of twenty pounds; but I unfortunately hearing a noise in the street of "damme, Sir!" and clashing of swords, and "rascal" and "murder!" I runs up to the place, and saw four men upon one; and having heard you was a mettlesome young gentleman I immediately concluded it must be you

so ran back to call my master; and when I went to look for the note, to change it, I found it gone, either stole or lost: and if I don't get the money immediately, I shall certainly be turned out of my place, and lose my character.

Mel. I shall laugh in his face. [*Aside.*] Oh, I'll speak to your master about it, and he will forgive you at my intercession.

Sharp. Ah, Sir! you don't know my master.

Mel. I'm very little acquainted with him, but I have heard he's a very good natured man.

Sharp. I have heard so too, but I have felt it otherwise; he has so much good nature, that if I could compound for one broken head a day, I should think myself very well off.

Mel. Are you serious, friend?

Sharp. Lookye, Sir, I take you for a man of honour; there is something in your face that is generous, open, and masculine; you don't look like a foppish, effeminate tell-tale; so I'll venture to trust you. See here, Sir, these are the effects of my master's good nature. [*Shows his head.*]

Mel. Matchless impudence! [*Aside.*] Why do you live with him then, after such usage?

Sharp. He's worth a great deal of money; and when he's drunk, which is commonly once a day, he's very free, and will give me any thing! but I design to leave him when he's married, for all that.

Mel. Is he going to be married then?

Sharp. To-morrow, Sir; and between you and I, he'll meet with his match, both for humour and something else too.

Mel. What, she drinks too?

Sharp. Damnably, Sir; but mum. You must know this entertainment was designed for Madam to-night; but she got so very gay after dinner, that she could not walk out of her own house; so her maid, who was half gone too, came here with an excuse, that Mrs. Melissa had got the vapours; and so she had indeed violently, here, here, Sir.

[*Points to his head.*]

Mel. This is scarcely to be borne. [*Aside.*] Melissa! I have heard of her: they say she's very whimsical.

Sharp. A very woman, and please your honour; and between you and I, none of the mildest and wisest of her sex. But to return, Sir, to the twenty pounds.

Mel. I am surprised, you, who have got so much money in his service, should be at a loss for twenty pounds, to save your bones at this juncture.

Sharp. I have put all my money out at interest; I never keep above five pounds by me; and if your honour would lend me the other fifteen, and take my note for it— [*A knocking.*]

Mel. Somebody's at the door.

Sharp. I can give very good security.

[*A knocking.*]

Mel. Don't let the people wait, Mr.—

Sharp. Ten pounds will do. [*A knocking.*]

Mel. Allez vous en.

Sharp. Five, Sir.

[*A knocking.*]

Mel. Je ne puis pas.

Sharp. Je ne puis pas. I find we shan't understand one another; I do but lose time; and if I had any thought, I might have known these young fops return from their travels generally with as little money as improvement. [*Exit.*]

Mel. Ha, ha, ha! What lies does this fellow invent, and what rogueries does he commit, for

his master's service. There never sure was a more faithful servant to his master, or a greater rogue to the rest of mankind. But here he comes again. The plot thickens. I'll in and observe Gayless. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter SHARP, before several Persons with Dishes in their hands, and a Cook, drunk.

Sharp. Fortune, I thank thee; the most lucky accident! [*Aside.*] This way, gentlemen, this way.

Cook. I am afraid I have mistook the house. Is this Mr. Treatwell's?

Sharp. The same, the same. What, don't you know me?

Cook. Know you?—Are you sure there was a supper bespoke here?

Sharp. Yes; upon my honour, Mr. Cook: the company is in the next room, and must have gone without had not you brought it. I'll draw a table. I see you have brought a cloth with you; but you need not have done that, for we have a very good stock of linen—at the pawnbroker's. [*Aside, and exit; but returns immediately, drawing in a table.*] Come, come, my boys, be quick. The company begin to be very uneasy; but I knew my old friend Licksplit here would not fail us.

Cook. Licksplit! I am no friend of yours, so I desire less familiarity.—Licksplit too!

Re-enter GAYLESS.

Gay. What is all this?

[*Apart to Sharp.*]
Sharp. Sir, if the sight of the supper is offensive, I can easily have it removed. [*Apart.*]

Gay. Pr'ythee, explain thyself Sharp. [*Apart.*]

Sharp. Some of our neighbours, I suppose, have bespoke this supper; but the cook has drank away his memory, forgot the house, and brought it here: however, Sir, if you dislike it, I'll tell him of his mistake, and send him about his business. [*Apart.*]

Gay. Hold, hold, necessity obliges me against my inclination to favour the cheat, and feast at my neighbour's expense. [*Apart.*]

Cook. Hark you, friend, is that your master?

[*To SHARP.*]

Sharp. Ay, and the best master in the world.

Cook. I'll speak to him then.—Sir, I have, according to your commands, dressed as genteel a supper as my art and your price would admit of.

[*To GAY.*]

Sharp. Good again, Sir! 'tis paid for.

[*Apart to GAY.*]

Gay. I don't in the least question your abilities, Mr. Cook; and I am obliged to you for your care.

Cook. Sir, you are a gentleman; and if you would but look over the bill, and approve it, you will over and above return the obligation.

[*Pulls out a bill.*]

Sharp. Oh, the devil!

Gay. [*Looks on the bill.*] Very well, I'll send my man to pay you to-morrow.

Cook. I'll spare him that trouble, and take it with me, Sir. I never work but for ready money.

Gay. Ha!

Sharp. Then you wont have our custom. [*Aside.*] My master is busy now, friend. Do you think he wont pay you?

Cook. No matter what I think; either my meat or my money.

Sharp. 'Twill be very ill-convenient for him to pay you to-night.

Cook. Then I'm afraid it will be ill-convenient to pay me to-morrow; so, d'ye hear——

Re-enter MELISSA.

Gay. Pr'ythee, be advised.—'Sdeath, I shall be discovered! [*Takes the COOK aside.*]

Mel. What's the matter? [*To SHARP.*]

Sharp. The cook has not quite answered my master's expectations about the supper, Sir, and he's a little angry at him; that's all.

Mel. Come, come, Mr. Gayless, don't be uneasy; a bachelor cannot be supposed to have things in the utmost regularity; we don't expect it.

Cook. But I do expect it, and will have it.

Mel. What does this drunken fool say?

Cook. That I will have my money, and I wont stay till to-morrow, and——and——

Sharp. Hold, hold! what are you doing? are you mad? [*Runs and stops his mouth.*]

Mel. What do you stop the man's breath for?

Sharp. Sir, he was going to call you names. Don't be abusive, cook; the gentleman is a man of honour, and said nothing to you. Pray be pacified. You are in liquor.

Cook. I will have my——

Sharp. [*Still holding.*] Why, I tell you, fool, you mistake the gentleman; he is a friend of my master's, and has not said a word to you.—Pray, good Sir, go into the next room. The fellow's drunk, and takes you for another. [*To MELISSA.*] You'll repent this when you are sober, friend.—Pray, Sir, don't stay to hear his impertinence.

Gay. Pray, Sir, walk in. He's below your anger. [*To MELISSA.*]

Mel. Damn the rascal! what does he mean by affronting me?—Let the scoundrel go; I'll polish his brutality, I warrant you. Here's the best reformer of manners in the universe. [*Draws his sword.*] Let him go, I say.

Sharp. So, so, you have done finely now.—Get away as fast as you can. He's the most courageous, mettlesome man in all England. Why, if his passion was up, he could eat you.—Make your escape you fool.

Cook. I wont.—Eat me! He'll find me damned hard of digestion, though.

Sharp. Pr'ythee, come here; let me speak with you. [*Takes COOK aside.*]

Re-enter KITTY.

Kitty. Gad's me! Is supper on the table already?—Sir, pray defer it for a few minutes; my mistress is much better, and will be here immediately.

Gay. Will she, indeed? Bless me, I did not expect—but however—Sharp!

Kitty. What success, Madam?

[*Apart to MELISSA.*]

Mel. As we could wish, girl: but he is in such pain and perplexity, I can't hold it out much longer.

Kitty. Ay, and that holding out is the ruin of half our sex.

Sharp. I have pacified the cook; and if you can but borrow twenty pieces of that young prig, all may go well. You may succeed, though I could not. Remember what I told you.—About it straight, Sir. [*Apart to GAYLESS.*]

Gay. Sir, sir, I beg to speak a word with you. [*To MELISSA.*] My servant, Sir, tells me he has had the misfortune, Sir, to lose a note of mine of

twenty pounds, which I sent him to receive; and the bankers' shops being shut up, and having very little cash by me, I should be very much obliged to you, if you would favour me with twenty pieces till to-morrow.

Mel. Oh, Sir, with all my heart: [*Takes out her purse.*] and as I have a small favour to beg of you, Sir, the obligation will be mutual.

Gay. How may I oblige you, Sir?

Mel. You are to be married, I hear, to Melissa!

Gay. To-morrow, Sir.

Mel. Then you'll oblige me, Sir, by never seeing her again.

Gay. Do you call this a small favour, Sir?

Mel. A mere trifle, Sir. Breaking of contracts, suing for divorces, committing adultery, and such like are all reckoned trifles now-a-days; and smart young fellows, like you and myself, Gayless, should be never out of fashion.

Gay. But pray, Sir, how are you concerned in this affair?

Mel. Oh, Sir, you must know I have a very great regard for Melissa, and indeed she for me; and, by the by, I have a most despicable opinion of you; for, *entre nous*, I take you, Charles, to be a very great scoundrel.

Gay. Sir!

Mel. Nay, don't look fierce, Sir, and give yourself airs—damme, Sir, I shall be through your body else in the snapping of a finger.

Gay. I'll be as quick as you, villain.

[*Draws, and makes at MELISSA.*]

Kitty. Hold, hold, murder! you'll kill my mistress—the young gentleman, I mean.

Gay. Ah! her mistress! [*Drops his sword.*]

Sharp. How! Melissa! Nay, then drive away, cart; all's over now.

Enter all the Company, laughing.

Mrs. G. What, Mr. Gayless, engaging with Melissa before your time? Ha, ha, ha!

Kitty. Your humble servant, good Mr. Politician. [*To SHARP.*] This is, gentlemen and ladies, the most celebrated and ingenious Timothy Sharp, schemer-general and redoubted squire to the most renowned and fortunate adventurer, Charles Gayless, knight of the woeful countenance—ha, ha, ha!—Oh that dismal face, and more dismal head of yours! [*Strikes SHARP upon the head.*]

Sharp. 'Tis cruel in you to disturb a man in his last agonies.

Mel. Now, Mr. Gayless!—What, not a word? You are sensible I can be no stranger to your misfortunes, and I might reasonably expect an excuse for your ill treatment of me.

Gay. No, Madam, silence is my only refuge; for to endeavour to vindicate my crimes, would show a greater want of virtue, than even the commission of them.

Mel. Oh, Gayless! 'twas poor to impose upon a woman, and one that loved you too.

Gay. Oh, most unpardonable; but my necessities—

Sharp. And mine, Madam, were not to be matched, I'm sure, o'this side starving.

Mel. His tears have softened me at once. [*Aside.*] Your necessities, Mr. Gayless, with such real contrition, are too powerful motives not to affect the breast already prejudiced in your favour.—You have suffered too much already for your extravagance; and as I take part in your

sufferings, 'tis easing myself to relieve you: know, therefore, all that's past I freely forgive.

Gay. You cannot mean it, sure! I am lost in wonder!

Mel. Prepare yourself for more wonder. You have another friend in masquerade here. Mr. Cook, pray throw aside your drunkenness, and make your sober appearance.—Don't you know that face, Sir?

Cook. Ay, master; what! you have forgot your friend, Dick, as you used to call me?

Gay. More wonder indeed! Don't you live with my father?

Mel. Just after your hopeful servant there had left me, comes this man from Sir William, with a letter to me; upon which (being by that wholly convinced of your necessitous condition) I invented, by the help of Kitty and Mrs. Gadabout, this little plot, in which your friend Dick there has acted miracles, resolving to tease you a little, that you might have a greater relish for a happy turn in your affairs. Now, Sir, read that letter, and complete your joy.

Gay. [Reads.] *Madam, I am father to the unfortunate young man, who, I hear, by a friend of mine (that by my desire has been a continual spy upon him) is making his addresses to you. If he is so happy as to make himself agreeable to you, whose character I am charmed with, I shall own him with joy for my son, and forget his former follies.—I am, madam, your most humble servant,*

WILLIAM GAYLESS.

P. S.—I will be soon in town myself to congratulate his reformation and marriage.

Oh, Melissa, this is too much! Thus let me show my thanks and gratitude; for here 'tis only due.

[Kneels; she raises him.]

Sharp. A reprieve! a reprieve! a reprieve!

Kitty. I have been, Sir, a most bitter enemy to you; but since you are likely to be a little more

conversant with cash than you have been, I am now, with the greatest sincerity, your most obedient friend, and humble servant.

Gay. Oh, Mrs. Pry, I have been too much indulged with forgiveness myself, not to forgive lesser offences in other people.

Sharp. Well then, Madam, since my master has vouchsafed pardon to your handmaid Kitty, I hope you'll not deny it to his footman Timothy.

Mel. Pardon! for what?

Sharp. Only for telling you about ten thousand lies, Madam; and, among the rest, insinuating that your ladyship would—

Mel. I understand you; and can forgive any thing Sharp, that was designed for the service of your master; and if Pry and you will follow our example, I'll give her a small fortune, as a reward for both your fidelities.

Sharp. I fancy, Madam, 'twould be better to halve the small fortune between us, and keep us both single; for as we shall live in the same house, in all probability we may taste the comforts of matrimony and not be troubled with its inconveniences. What say you, Kitty?

Kitty. Do you hear, Sharp; before you talk of the comforts of matrimony, take the comforts of a good dinner, and recover your flesh a little; do puppy.

Sharp. The devil backs her, that's certain, and I am no match for her at any weapon.

[Aside.]

Gay. Behold, Melissa, as sincere a convert as ever truth and beauty made. The wild, impetuous sallies of my youth are now blown over, and a most pleasing calm of perfect happiness succeeds.

Thus Ætna's flames the verdant earth consume,
But milder heat makes drooping nature bloom;
So virtuous love affords us springing joy,
Whilst vicious passions, as they burn, destroy.

Exeunt.

THE GRECIAN DAUGHTER:

A TRAGEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY.

REMARKS.

THIS tragedy was produced at Drury Lane in 1772. A picture of the Roman Charity, which Mr. Murphy noticed at the house of a celebrated painter, wherein the centinel bursts into tears at "The pious fraud of charity and love," first suggested the idea to our author.

"Perhaps, of all the events recorded in history, that filial piety, on which the fable of this play is founded, may be classed amongst the most affecting—yet it was one of the most hazardous for a dramatist to adopt; for nothing less than complete skill could have given to this singular occurrence effectual force, joined to becoming delicacy. In this arduous effort, Mr. Murphy has evinced the most exact judgment, and the nicest execution."— *Inchbald*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted, 1772.

DRURY LANE, 1813.

DIONYSIUS.....	<i>Mr. Palmer</i>	<i>Mr. Raymond</i>
EVANDER.....	<i>Mr. Barry</i>	<i>Mr. Pope</i>
PHILOTAS.....	<i>Mr. Reddish</i>	<i>Mr. Rae</i>
MELANTHON.....	<i>Mr. Aickin</i>	<i>Mr. Powel</i>
PHOCION.....	<i>Mr. J. Aickin</i>	<i>Mr. Holland</i>
ARCAS.....	<i>Mr. Hurst</i>	<i>Mr. J. Wallack</i>
GREEK HERALD.....	<i>Mr. Packer</i>	<i>Mr. R. Phillips</i>
CALIPPUS.....	<i>Mr. Inchbald</i>	<i>Mr. Elrington</i>
GREEK SOLDIER.....	<i>Mr. Davies</i>	<i>Mr. Carr</i>
OFFICER.....	<i>Mr. Wheeler</i>	<i>Mr. Waldegrave</i>
EUPHRASIA.....	<i>Mrs. Barry</i>	<i>Miss Smith</i>
ERIXENE.....	<i>Miss Platt</i>	<i>Miss Tidswell</i>

SCENE—Syracuse.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter MELANTHON and PHILOTAS.

Mel. Yet, a moment; hear, Philotas, hear me.

Phil. No more; it must not be.

Mel. Obdurate man!

Thus wilt thou spurn me, when a king distress'd,
A good, a virtuous, venerable king,
The father of his people, from a throne,
Which long with every virtue he adorn'd,
Torn by a ruffian, by a tyrant's hand,

Groans in captivity? In his own palace
Lives a sequester'd pris'ner? Oh! Philotas,
If thou hast not renounc'd humanity,
Let me behold my sovereign; once again
Admit me to his presence; let me see
My royal master.

Phil. Urge thy suit no further;
Thy words are fruitless; Dionysius' orders
Forbid access; he is our sov'reign now;
'Tis his to give the law, mine to obey.

Mel. Thou canst not mean it: his to give the
law!

Detested spoiler!—his! a vile usurper!

Have we forgot the elder Dionysius;
Surnam'd the Tyrant? To Sicilia's throne
The monster waded through whole seas of blood.
Sore groan'd the land beneath his iron rod,
Till rous'd at length, Evander came from Greece;
Like freedom's genius came, and sent the tyrant,
Stripp'd of the crown, and to his humble rank
Once more reduc'd, to roam, for vile subsistence,
A wand'ring sophist, through the realms of Greece.

Phil. Whate'er his right, to him in Syracuse
All bend the knee; his the supreme dominion,
And death and torment wait his sovereign nod.

Mel. But soon that power shall cease; behold
his walls

Now close encircled by the Grecian bands;
Timoleon leads them on; indignant Corinth
Sends her avenger forth, array'd in terror,
To hurl ambition from a throne usurp'd,
And bid all Sicily resume her rights.

Phil. Thou wert a statesman once, Melanthon;
now,

Grown dim with age, thy eye pervades no more
The deep-laid schemes which Dionysius plans.
Know, then, a fleet from Carthage even now
Stems the rough billow; and, ere yonder sun,
That, now declining, seeks the western wave,
Shall to the shades of night resign the world,
Thou'lt see the Punic sails in yonder bay,
Whose waters wash the walls of Syracuse.

Mel. Art thou a stranger to Timoleon's name?
Intent to plan, and circumspect to see
All possible events, he rushes on
Resistless in his course! Your boasted master
Scarce stands at bay; each hour the strong block-
ade

Hems him in closer, and ere long thou'lt view
Oppression's iron rod to fragments shiver'd!
The good Evander then—

Phil. Alas, Evander

Will ne'er behold the golden time you look for!

Mel. How! not behold it! Say, Philotas, speak;
Has the fell tyrant, have his felon murderers—

Phil. As yet, my friend, Evander lives.

Mel. And yet

Thy dark, half-hinted purpose—lead me to him;
If thou hast murdered him—

Phil. By heaven, he lives.

Mel. Then bless me with one tender interview.
Thrice has the sun gone down since last these eyes
Have seen the good old king; say, why is this?
Wherefore debar'd his presence? Thee, Philotas,
The troops obey, that guard the royal pris'ner;
Each avenue to thee is open; thou
Canst grant admittance; let me, let me, see him.

Phil. Entreat no more; the soul of Dionysius
Is ever wakeful; rent with all the pangs
That wait on conscious guilt.

Mel. But when dun night—

Phil. Alas it cannot be: but mark my words.
Let Greece urge on her general assault.

Despatch some friend, who may o'erleap the walls,
And tell Timoleon, the good old Evander
Has liv'd three days, by Dionysius' order,
Lock'd up from every sustenance of nature,
And life now wearied out, almost expires.

Mel. If any spark of virtue dwells within thee,
Lead me, Philotas, lead me to his prison.

Phil. The tyrant's jealous care hath mov'd him
thence.

Mel. Ha! mov'd him, say'st thou?

Phil. At the midnight hour,
Silent convey'd him up the steep ascent,

To where the elder Dionysius form'd;
On the sharp summit of the pointed rock,
Which overhangs the deep, a dungeon drear;
Cell within cell, a labyrinth of horror;
Deep cavern'd in the cliff, where many a wretch,
Unseen by mortal eye, has groan'd in anguish,
And died obscure, unpitied and unknown.

Mel. Clandestine murderer! Yes; there's the
scene

Of horrid massacre. Full oft I've walk'd,
When all things lay in sleep and darkness hush'd.
Yes, oft I've walk'd the lonely sullen beach,
And heard the mournful sound of many a corse
Plung'd from the rock into the wave beneath,
That murmurs on the shore. And means he thus
To end a monarch's life? Oh grant my prayer;
My timely succour may protect his days:
The guard is yours—

Phil. Forbear; thou plead'st in vain;
And though I feel soft pity throbbing here,
Though each emotion prompts the gen'rous deed,
I must not yield; it were assur'd destruction.
Farewell, despatch a message to the Greeks;
I'll to my station; now thou know'st the worst.

[*Exit.*

Mel. Oh, lost Evander! Lost Euphrasia too!
How will her gentle nature bear the shock
Of a dear father, thus in ling'ring pangs
A prey to famine, like the veriest wretch
Whom the hard hand of misery hath grip'd?
In vain she'll rage with impotence of sorrow;
Perhaps provoke her fate: Greece arms in vain;
All's lost; Evander dies!

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. Where is the king?

Our troops, that sallied to attack the foe,
Retire disorder'd: to the eastern gate
The Greeks pursue: Timoleon rides in blood,
Arm, arm, and meet their fury.

Mel. To the citadel

Direct thy footsteps: Dionysius there
Marshals a chosen band.

Cal. Do thou call forth

Thy hardy veterans; haste, or all is lost!

[*Exit; warlike music.*

Mel. Now, ye just gods, now look propitious
down;

Now give the Grecian sabre tenfold edge,
And save a virtuous king! [*Warlike music.*

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Euph. War on, ye heroes,
Ye great assertors of a monarch's cause!
Let the wild tempest rage. Melanthon, ha!
Didst thou not hear the vast tremendous roar?
Down tumbling from its base the eastern tower
Burst on the tyrant's ranks, and on the plain
Lies an extended ruin.

Mel. Still new horrors

Increase each hour, and gather round our heads.

Euph. The glorious tumult lifts my tow'ring
soul.

Once more, Melanthon, once again, my father
Shall mount Sicilia's throne.

Mel. Alas! that hour

Would come with joy to every honest heart;

But no such hour in all the round of time,
I fear the fates, averse, will e'er lead on.

Euph. And still Melanthon, still does pale de
spair

Depress thy spirit? Lo! Timoleon comes

Arm'd with the power of Greece; the brave, the
just,

God-like Timoleon! ardent to redress,
He guides the war, and gains upon his prey.
A little interval shall set the victor
Within our gates triumphant.

Mel. Still my fears
Forebode for thee. Would thou hadst left this
place,

When hence your husband, the brave Phocion,
fled;

Fled with your infant son!

Euph. In duty fix'd,
Here I remain'd, while my brave, gen'rous Phocion
Fled with my child, and from his mother's arms
Bore my sweet little one. Full well thou know'st
The pangs I suffer'd in that trying moment.
Did I not weep? Did I not rave and shriek,
And by the roots tear my dishevell'd hair?
Did I not follow to the sea-beat shore,
Resolved, with him and with my blooming boy,
To trust the winds and waves?

Mel. The pious act, whate'er the fates intend,
Shall merit heart-felt praise.

Euph. Yes, Phocion, go,
Go with my child, torn from this matron breast,
This breast that still should yield its nurture to
him,

Fly with my infant to some happier shore.
If he be safe, Euphrasia dies content.
Till that sad close of all, the task be mine
To tend a father with delighted care,
To smooth the pillow of declining age,
See him sink gradual into mere decay,
On the last verge of life watch every look,
Explore each fond unutterable wish,
Catch his last breath, and close his eyes in peace.

Mel. I would not add to thy afflictions; yet
My heart misgives; Evander's fatal period—

Euph. Still is far off: the gods have sent relief,
And once again I shall behold him king.

Mel. Alas! those glittering hopes but lend a
ray

To gild the clouds, that hover o'er your head,
Soon to rain sorrow down, and plunge you deeper
In black despair.

Euph. The spirit-stirring virtue,
That glows within me, ne'er shall know despair.
No, I will trust the gods. Desponding man!
Hast thou not heard with what resistless ardour
Timoleon drives the tumult of the war?
Hast thou not heard him thund'ring at our gates?
The tyrant's pent up in his last retreat;
Anon thou'lt see his battlements in dust,
His walls, his ramparts, and his towers, in ruin;
Destruction pouring in on ev'ry side,
Pride and oppression at their utmost need,
And nought to save him in his hopeless hour.

[*Flourish of Trumpets.*]

Mel. Ha! the fell tyrant comes—Beguile his
rage,

And o'er your sorrows cast a dawn of gladness.

Enter DIONYSIUS, CALIPPUS, OFFICERS, &c.

Dion. The vain presumptuous Greek! his
hopes of conquest,
Like a gay dream, are vanish'd into air.
Proudly elate, and flush'd with easy triumph
O'er vulgar warriors, to the gates of Syracuse
He urg'd the war, till Dionysius' arm
Let slaughter loose, and taught his dastard train
To seek their safety by inglorious flight.

Euph. O Dionysius, if distracting fears
Alarm this throbbing bosom, you will pardon
A frail and tender sex. Till the fury
Of war subside, the wild, the horrid interval
In safety let me soothe to dear delight
In a lov'd father's presence: from his sight,
For three long days, with specious feign'd excuse
Your guards debarr'd me. Oh! while yet he
lives,

Indulge a daughter's love; worn out with age,
Soon must he seal his eyes in endless night,
And with his converse charm my ears no more.

Dion. Afflicted fair,
Thy couch invites thee. When the tumult's o'er,
Thou'lt see Evander with redoubled joy.
Though now unequal to the cares of empire
His age sequester him, yet honours high
Shall gild the evening of his various day.—
Perdiccas, ere the morn's revolving light
Unveil the face of things, do thou despatch
A well-oar'd galley to Hamilcar's fleet;
At the north point of yonder promontory
Let some select officer instruct him
To moor his ships, and issue on the land.
Then may Timoleon tremble: vengeance then
Shall overwhelm his camp, pursue his bands
With fatal havoc to the ocean's margin,
And cast their limbs to glut the vulture's famine,
In mangled heaps upon the naked shore. [*Exit*]

Euph. What do I hear? Melanthon, can it be?
If Carthage comes, if her perfidious sons
List in his cause, the dawn of freedom's gone.

Mel. Woe, bitt'rest woe, impends; thou
would'st not think—

Euph. How?—Speak! unfold!

Mel. My tongue denies its office.

Euph. How is my father? Say, Melanthon—

Mel. He,
I fear to shock thee with the tale of horror!
Perhaps he dies this moment.—Since Timoleon
First form'd his lines round this beleaguerr'd city,
No nutriment has touch'd Evander's lips.
In the deep caverns of the rock imprison'd,
He pines in bitterest want.

Euph. Well, my heart,
Well do your vital drops forget to flow!

Mel. Despair, alas! is all the sad resource
Our fate allows us now.

Euph. Yet why despair?

Is that the tribute to a father due?
Blood is his due.

Melanthon, come; my wrongs will lend me force;
The weakness of my sex is gone; this arm
Feels tenfold strength; this arm shall do a deed
For heaven and earth, for men and gods to won-
der at!

This arm shall vindicate a father's cause.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A wild romantic scene amidst over-
hanging Rocks; a Cavern on one side.

Enter ARCAS, with a Spear in his hand.

Arc. The gloom of night sits heavy on the
world;
And o'er the solemn scene such stillness reigns,
As 'twere a pause of nature; on the beach
No murmur'ing billow breaks; the Grecian tents
Lie sunk in sleep; no gleaming fires are seen;
All Syracuse is hush'd: no stir abroad,

Save ever and anon the dashing oar,
That beats the sullen wave; And hark!—Was
that

The groan of anguish from Evander's cell,
Piercing the midnight gloom?—It is the sound
Of bustling prows, that cleave the briny deep.
Perhaps at this dead hour Hamilcar's fleet
Rides in the bay.

Enter PHILOTAS, from the Cavern.

Phil. What, ho! brave Arcas! ho!

Arc. Why thus desert thy couch?

Phil. Methought the sound
Of distant uproar chas'd affrighted sleep.

Arc. At intervals the oar's resounding stroke
Comes echoing from the main. Save that report,
A death-like silence through the wide expanse
Broods o'er the dreary coast.

Phil. Do thou retire,
And seek repose; the duty of thy watch
Is now perform'd; I take thy post.

Arc. How fares

Your royal pris'ner?

Phil. Arcas, shall I own
A secret weakness? My heart inward melts
To see that suffering virtue. On the earth,
The cold, damp earth, the royal victim lies;
And, while pale famine drinks his vital spirit,
He welcomes death, and smiles himself to rest.
Oh! would I could relieve him! Thou withdraw;
Thy wearied nature claims repose; and now
The watch is mine.

Arc. May no alarm disturb thee. *[Exit.*

Phil. Some dread event is lab'ring into birth.
At close of day the sullen sky held forth
Unerring signals. With disastrous glare
The moon's full orb rose crimson'd o'er with blood;
And, lo! athwart the gloom a falling star
Trails a long tract of fire!—What daring step
Sounds on the flinty rock? Stand there; what,
ho!

Speak, ere thou dar'st advance. Unfold thy purpose:

Who and what art thou?

Euph. *[Behind the scenes.]* Thou need'st not
fear,

It is a friend approaches.

Phil. Ha! what mean

Those plaintive notes?

Euph. Here is no ambush'd Greek,
No warrior to surprise thee on the watch.
An humble suppliant comes.—Alas, my strength
Exhausted quite forsakes this weary frame.

Phil. What voice thus piercing through the
gleam of night—

What art thou? what thy errand? quickly say
What wretch, with what intent, at this dread
hour—

Wherefore alarm'st thou thus our peaceful watch?
[Exit.]

Re-enter PHILOTAS, with EUPHRASIA.

Euphrasia!—

Why, princess, thus anticipate the dawn?
Still sleep and silence wrap the weary world,
The stars in mid career usurp the pole;
The Grecian bands, the winds, the waves, are
hush'd;

All things are mute around us; all but you
Rest in oblivious slumber from their cares.

Euph. Yes, all; all rest: the very murder'
sleeps;

Guilt is at rest: I only wake to misery.

Phil. How didst thou gain the summit of the
rock?

Euph. Give me my father; here you hold him
fetter'd;

Oh! give him to me;—if ever

The touch of nature throb'd within your breast,
Admit me to Evander; in these caves
I know he pines in want; let me convey
Some charitable succour to a father.

Phil. Alas! Euphrasia, would I dare comply.

Euph. It will be virtue in thee. Thou, like me,
Wert born in Greece:—Oh! by our common pa-
rent—

Nay, stay; thou shalt not fly; Philotas, stay;
You have a father too; think, were his lot
Hard as Evander's; if by felon hands
Chain'd to the earth, with slow-consuming pangs
He felt sharp want, and with an asking eye
Implor'd relief, yet cruel men deny'd it,
Would'st thou not burst through adamant gates,
Through walls and rocks, to save him? Think,

Philotas,

Of thy own aged sire, and pity mine.
Think of the agonies a daughter feels,
When thus a parent wants the common food,
The bounteous hand of nature meant for all.

Phil. 'Twere best withdraw thee, princess;
thy assistance

Evander wants not; it is fruitless all;
Thy tears, thy wild entreaties, are in vain.

Euph. Ha!—thou hast murder'd him; he is
no more;—

I understand thee;—butchers, you have shed
The precious drops of life; yet, e'en in death,
Let me behold him; let a daughter close
With duteous hand a father's beamless eyes;
Print her last kisses on his honour'd hand,
And lay him decent in the shroud of death.

Phil. Alas! this frantic grief can nought avail.
Retire, and seek the couch of balmy sleep,
In this dead hour, this season of repose.

Euph. And dost thou then, inhuman that thou
art,

Advise a wretch like me to know repose?
This is my last abode: these caves, these rocks,
Shall ring for ever with Euphrasia's wrongs;
All Sicily shall hear me; yonder deep
Shall echo back an injur'd daughter's cause;
Here will I dwell, and rave, and shriek, and give
These scatter'd locks to all the passing winds;
Call on Evander lost; and, pouring curses,
And cruel gods, and cruel stars invoking,
Stand on the cliff in madness and despair.

Phil. Yet calm this violence; reflect, Euphrasia,
With what severe enforcement Dionysius
Exacts obedience to his dread command.
If here thou'rt found—

Euph. Here is Euphrasia's mansion. *[Falls]*
Her fix'd eternal home;—inhuman savages,
Here stretch me with a father's murder'd corpse.

Phil. By heaven,
My heart in pity bleeds.
Her vehemence of grief o'erpowers me quite.
My honest heart condemns the barb'rous deed,
And if I dare—

Euph. And if you dare!—Is that
The voice of manhood? Honest, if you dare
'Tis the slave's virtue! 'tis the utmost limit
Of the base coward's honour.—Not a wretch,
There's not a villain, not a tool of power,
But, silence interest, extinguish fear,
And he will prove benevolent to man

The gen'rous heart does more : will dare do all
That honour prompts.—How dost thou dare to
murder?

Respect the gods, and know no other fear.

Phil. No other fear assails this warlike breast.
I pity your misfortunes ; yes, by heaven,
My heart bleeds for you. Gods ! you've touch'd
my soul !

The gen'rous impulse is not given in vain.
I feel thee, nature, and I dare obey.
Oh ! thou hast conquer'd.—Go, Euphrasia, go,
Behold thy father.
Yet mark my words ; if aught of nourishment
Thou would'st convey, my partners of the watch
Will ne'er consent.

Euph. I will observe your orders :

On any terms, oh ! let me, let me, see him.

Phil. Yon lamp will guide thee through the
cavern'd way.

Euph. My heart runs o'er in thanks ; the pi-
ous act

Timoleon shall reward ; the bounteous gods,
And thy own virtue, shall reward the deed.

[*Enters the cave.*]

Phil. Prevailing, powerful virtue !—Thou sub-
duest

The stubborn heart, and mould'st it to thy purpose.
Would I could save them !—But though not for
me

The glorious power to shelter innocence,
Yet for a moment to assuage its woes,
Is the best sympathy, the purest joy,
Nature intended for the heart of man,
When thus she gave the social gen'rous tear.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The inside of the Cavern.

Enter ARCAS and EUPHRASIA.

Arc. No ; on my life, I dare not.
Euph. But a small,
A wretched pittance ; one poor cordial drop
To renovate exhausted drooping age.
I ask no more.

Arc. Not the smallest store
Of scanty nourishment must pass these walls.
Our lives were forfeit else : a moment's parley
Is all I grant ; in yonder cave he lies.

Evan. [*Within the Cell.*] Oh, struggling na-
ture ! let thy conflict end.

Oh ! give me, give me, rest.

Euph. My father's voice !
It pierces here ! it cleaves my very heart.
I shall expire, and never see him more.

Arc. Repose thee, princess, here, [*Draws a
couch*] here rest thy limbs.

Fill the returning blood shall lend thee firmness.

Euph. The caves, the rocks, re-echo to his
groans !

And is there no relief ?

Arc. All I can grant
You shall command. I will unbar the dungeon,
Unloose the chain that binds him to the rock,
And leave your interview without restraint.

[*Opens a Cell in the back scene.*]

Euph. Hold, hold, my heart ! Oh ! how shall
I sustain

The agonizing scene ? [*Rises.*] I must behold him ;
Nature, that drives me on, will lend me force.
Is that my father ?

Arc. Take your last farewell.
His vigour seems not yet exhausted quite.

You must be brief, or ruin will ensue. [*Exit.*]

Evan. [*Raising himself.*] Oh ! when shall I get
free !—These ling'ring pangs—
Despatch me, pitying gods, and save my child !
I burn, I burn ; alas ! no place of rest :

[*Comes out.*]

A little air ; once more a breath of air ;
Alas ! I faint ; I die.

Euph. Heart-piercing sight !

Let me support you, Sir.

Evan. Oh ! lend your arm.

Whoe'er thou art, I thank thee ; that kind breeze
Comes gently o'er my senses—lead me forward :
And is there left one charitable hand
To reach its succours to a wretch like me ?

Euph. Well may'st thou ask it. Oh, my
breaking heart !

The hand of death is on him.

Evan. Still a little,

A little onward to the air conduct me ;
'Tis well ;—I thank thee ; thou art kind and good,
And much I wonder at this gen'rous pity

Euph. Do you not know me, Sir ?

Evan. Methinks, I know

That voice ; art thou—alas ! my eyes are dim !
Each object swims before me—No, in truth,
I do not know thee.

Euph. Not your own Euphrasia ?

Evan. Art thou my daughter ?

Euph. Oh, my honour'd sire !

Evan. My daughter, my Euphrasia ! come to
close

A father's eyes ! Given to my last embrace !
Gods ! do I hold her once again ? Your mercies
Are without number. [*Falls on the couch.*]

I would pour my praise ;
But, oh, your goodness overcomes me quite !
You read my heart ; you see what passes there.

Euph. Alas, he faints ; the gushing tide of
transport

Bears down each feeble sense : restore him, hea-
ven !

Evan. All, my Euphrasia, all will soon be well.
Pass but a moment, and this busy globe,
Its thrones, its empires, and its bustling millions,
Will seem a speck in the great void of space.
Yet while I stay, thou darling of my age !
Nay, dry those tears.

Euph. I will, my father.

Evan. Where—

I fear to ask it, where is virtuous Phocion ?

Euph. Fled from the tyrant's power.

Evan. And left thee here

Expos'd and helpless ?

Euph. He is all truth and honour :
He fled to save my child.

Evan. My young Evander !

Your boy is safe, Euphrasia ?—Oh ! my heart !

Alas ! quite gone ; worn out with misery ;

Oh, weak, decay'd, old man !

Euph. Inhuman wretches !

Will none relieve his want ? A drop of water
Might save his life ; and even that's denied him.

Evan. These strong emotions—Oh ! that eager
air—

It is too much—assist me ; bear me hence ;
And lay me down in peace.

Euph. His eyes are fix'd ;

And those pale quiv'ring lips ! He clasps my
hand :

What, no assistance ! Monsters, will you thus
Let him expire in these weak, feeble arms ?

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Those wild, those piercing shrieks, will give th' alarm.

Euph. Support him; bear him hence; 'tis all I ask.

Evan. [*As he is carried off.*] O death! where art thou? Death, thou dread of guilt, Thou wish of innocence, affliction's friend, Tir'd nature calls thee; come, in mercy come. And lay me pillow'd in eternal rest. My child, where art thou? give me; reach thy hand;

Why dost thou weep? My eyes are dry—Alas! Quite parch'd my lips—quite parch'd, they cleave together. [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter ARCAS.

Arc. The gray of morn breaks through yon eastern clouds.

'Twere time this interview should end: the hour Now warns Euphrasia hence: what man could dare,

I have indulg'd—Philotas!—ha! the cell Left void!—Evander gone!—What may this mean? Philotas, speak!

Re-enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Oh, vile, detested lot, Here to obey the savage tyrant's will, And murder virtue, that can thus behold Its executioner, and smile upon him. That piteous sight!

Arc. She must withdraw, Philotas; Delay undoes us both. The restless main Glows with the blush of day. The time requires, Without her further pause, or vain excuse, That she depart this moment.

Phil. Arcas, yes; My voice shall warn her of th' approaching danger. [*Exit.*]

Arc. Would she had ne'er adventur'd to our guard.

I dread th' event; and hark!—the wind conveys In clearer sound the uproar of the main. The fates prepare new havoc; on th' event Depends the fate of empire. Wherefore thus Delays Euphrasia?—Ha! what means, Philotas, That sudden haste; that pale disorder'd look?

Re-enters PHILOTAS.

Phil. O! I can hold no more at such a sight, E'en the hard heart of tyranny would melt To infant softness. Arcas, go, behold The pious fraud of charity and love; Behold that unexampled goodness; see Th' expedient sharp necessity has taught her; Thy heart will burn, will melt, will yearn to view A child like her.

Arc. Ha!—Say what mystery Wakes these emotions?

Phil. Wonder-working virtue! The father foster'd at his daughter's breast! O, filial piety!—The milk design'd For her own offspring, on the parent's lip Allays the parching fever. All her laws Inverted quite, great nature triumphs still.

Arc. The tale unmans my soul.

Phil. Ye tyrants, hear it, And learn, that, while your cruelty prepares Unheard-of torture, virtue can keep pace

With your worst efforts, and can try new modes To bid men grow enamour'd of her charms.

Arc. Philotas, for Euphrasia, in her cause I now can hazard all. Let us preserve Her father for her.

Phil. Oh! her lovely daring Transcends all praise. By heaven, he shall not die. *Arc.* And yet we must be wary. I'll go forth, And first explore each avenue around, Lest the fix'd sentinel obstruct your purpose. [*Exit.*]

Phil. I thank thee, Arcas; we will act like men Who feel for others' woes—She leads him forth, And tremblingly supports his drooping age.

Re-enter EUPHRASIA and EVANDER.

Evan. Euphrasia, oh, my child! returning life Glows here about my heart. Conduct me forward! At the last gasp preserv'd! Ha! dawning light; Let me behold; in faith, I see thee now; I do indeed: the father sees his child.

Euph. I have reliev'd him—Oh, the joy's too great;

'Tis speechless rapture!

Evan. Blessings, blessings on thee!

Euph. My father still shall live. Alas! Philotas,

Could I abandon that white, hoary head, That venerable form?—Abandon him To perish here in misery and famine?

Phil. Thy tears, thou miracle of goodness! Have triumph'd o'er me. Take him, take your father;

Convey him hence; I do release him to you.

Evan. What said Philotas? Do I fondly dream? Indeed, my senses are imperfect; yet Methought I heard him! Did he say, release me?

Phil. Thou art my king, and now no more my pris'ner:

Go with your daughter, with that wondrous pattern

Of filial piety to after times.

Yes, princess, lead him forth; I'll point the path, Whose soft declivity will guide your steps To the deep vale, which these o'erhanging rocks Encompass round. You may convey him thence To some safe shelter. Yet a moment's pause; I must conceal your flight from ev'ry eye.

Yes, I will save, or perish in their cause. [*Exit.*]

Evan. Whither, oh! whither shall Evander go? I'm at the goal of life; if in the race Honour has follow'd with no ling'ring step, But there sits smiling with her laurel'd wreath To crown my brow, there would I fain make halt, And not inglorious lay me down to rest.

Euph. And will you then refuse, when thus the gods

Afford a refuge to thee?

Evan. Oh! my child, There is no refuge for me.

Euph. Pardon, Sir:

Euphrasia's care has form'd a safe retreat; There may'st thou dwell; it will not long be wanted.

Soon shall Timoleon, with resistless force, Burst yon devoted walls.

Evan. Timoleon!

Euph. Yes,

The brave Timoleon with the power of Greece; Another day shall make the city his.

Evan. Timoleon come to vindicate my rights! Oh! thou shalt reign in Sicily! my child

Shall grace her father's throne. Indulgent heaven !
Pour down your blessings on this best of daughters ;

To her and Phocion give Evander's crown ;
Let them, oh ! let them both in virtue wear it,
And in due time transmit it to their boy !

Re-enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. All things are apt ; the drowsy sentinel
Lies hush'd in sleep ; I'll marshal thee the way
Down the steep rock.

Euph. Oh ! let us quickly hence.

Evan. The blood but loiters in these frozen
veins.

Do you, whose youthful spirit glows with life,
Do you go forth, and leave this mould'ring corpse.
To me had heaven decreed a longer date,
It ne'er had suffer'd a fell monster's reign,
Nor let me see the carnage of my people.
Farewell, Euphrasia ; in one lov'd embrace
To these remains pay the last obsequies,
And leave me here to sink to silent dust.

Euph. And will you then, on self-destruction
bent,

Reject my prayer, nor trust your fate with me ?

Evan. Trust thee ! Euphrasia ? Trust in thee,
my child ?

Though life's a burden I could well lay down,
Yet I will prize it, since bestow'd by thee,
Oh ! thou art good ; thy virtue soars a flight
For the wide world to wonder at ; in thee,
Hear it all nature, future ages hear it,
The father finds a parent in his child. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Rampart near the Harbour.

Enter DIONISIUS and Officers.

Dion. Base deserters !
Curse on their Punic faith ! Did they once dare
To grapple with the Greek ? Ere yet the main
Was ting'd with blood, they turn'd their ships
averse.

May storms and tempests follow in their rear,
And dash their fleet upon the Libyan shore !

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. My liege, Timoleon, where the harbour
opens,
Has storm'd the forts, and even now his fleet
Pursues its course, and steers athwart the bay.
Through ev'ry street
Despair and terror fly. A panic spreads
From man to man, and superstition sees
Jove arm'd with thunder, and the gods against us.

Dion. With sacred rites their wrath must be
appeas'd.

Let instant victims at the altar bleed ;
Let incense roll its fragrant clouds to heaven,
And pious matrons and the virgin train,
In slow procession to the temple bear
The image of their gods.
The solemn sacrifice, the virgin throng,
Will gain the popular belief, and kindle
In the fierce soldiery religious rage.
Away, my friends, prepare the sacred rites.

[*Exit CAL.*]

Enter PHILOTAS.

Philotas, how fares your prisoner ?
Has he yet breath'd his last ?

Phil. Life ebbs apace ;

To-morrow's sun sees him a breathless corpse.

Dion. Curse on his ling'ring pangs ! Sicilia's
crown

No more shall deck his brow ; and if the sand
Still loiter in the glass, thy hand, my friend,
May shake it thence.

Phil. It shall, dread Sir ; that task
Leave to thy faithful servant.

Dion. Oh ! Philotas,

Thou little know'st the cares, the pangs of empire.
The ermin'd pride, the purple that adorns
A conqueror's breast, but serves, my friend, to
hide

A heart that's torn, that's mangled with remorse :
Even victory itself plants anguish here,
And round my laurels the fell serpent twines.

Phil. Would Dionysius abdicate his crown,
And sue for terms of peace ?

Dion. Detested thought !

No, though ambition teem with countless ills,
It still has charms of power to fire the soul.

Though horrors multiply around my head,
I will oppose them all. The pomp of sacrifice,
But now ordain'd, is mockery to heaven.

'Tis vain, 'tis fruitless ; then let daring guilt
Be my inspirer, and consummate all.

Where are those Greeks, the captives of my sword,
Whose desp'rate valour rush'd within our walls,
Fought near our person, and the pointed lance
Aim'd at my breast ?

Phil. In chains they wait their doom.

Dion. Give me to see 'em ; bring the slaves be-
fore me.

Phil. What, ho ! Melanthon, this way lead
your prisoners.

*Enter MELANTHON, with GREEK SOLDIERS, and
PHOCION.*

Dion. Assassins, and not warriors ! do ye come,
When the wide range of battle claims your sword,
Thus do you come against a single life
To wage the war ? did not our buckler ring
With all your darts in one collected volley
Shower'd on my head ? did not your swords at
once

Point at my breast, and thirst for regal blood ?

Greek Off. We sought thy life. I am by birth
a Greek.

An open foe in arms, I meant to slay
The foe of humankind. With rival ardour
We took the field : one voice, one mind, one heart,
All leagu'd, all covenanted : in yon camp
Spirits there are who aim, like us, at glory.
Whene'er you sally forth, whene'er the Greeks
Shall scale your walls, prepare thee to encounter
A like assault. By me the youth of Greece
Thus notify the war they mean to wage.

Dion. Thus then I warn them of my great re-
venge.

Whoe'er in battle shall become our pris'n'r,
In torments meets his doom.

Greek Off. Then wilt thou see
How vile the body to a mind that pants
For genuine glory. Twice three hundred Greeks
Have sworn, like us, to hunt thee through the
ranks ;

Ours the first lot ; we've fail'd ; on yonder plain
Appear in arms, the faithful band will meet thee.

Dion. Vile slave, no more. Melanthon, drag
'em hence

To die in misery. Impall'd alive,

The winds shall parch them on the craggy cliff
Selected from the rest, let one depart
A messenger to Greece, to tell the fate
Her chosen sons, her first adventurers, met.

[*Exit.*

Mel. Unhappy men! how shall my care protect
Your forfeit lives? Philotas, thou conduct them
To the deep dungeon's gloom. In that recess,
'Midst the wild tumult of eventful war,
We may ward off the blow. My friends farewell;
That officer will guide your steps.

[*All but PHOCION follow PHILOTAS.*

Pho. Disguis'd
Thus in a soldier's garb, he knows me not.

[*Aside.*

Melanthon!

Mel. Ha!—those accents!—Phocion here?

Pho. Yes, Phocion here! speak, quickly tell
me, say,

How fares Euphrasia?

Mel. Euphrasia lives, and fills the anxious moments

With every virtue. Wherefore venture hither?
Why with rash valour penetrate our gates?

Pho. Could I refrain? Oh! could I tamely wait

Th' event of ling'ring war? with patience count
The lazy-pacing hours, while here in Syracuse
The tyrant keeps all that my heart holds dear?
For her dear sake all danger sinks before me;
For her I burst the barriers of the gate,
Where the deep cavern'd rock affords a passage.
A hundred chosen Greeks pursu'd my steps:
We forc'd an entrance; the devoted guard
Fell victims to our rage; but in that moment
Down from the walls superior numbers came.
The tyrant led them on. We rush'd upon him,
If we could reach his heart, to end the war.
But heaven thought otherwise. Melanthon, say,
I fear to ask it, lives Evander still?

Mel. Alas! he lives imprison'd in the rock.
Thou must withdraw thee hence; regain once more

Timoleon's camp; alarm his slumb'ring rage;
Assail the walls; thou with thy phalanx seek
The subterraneous path; that way at night
The Greeks may enter, and let in destruction
On the astonish'd foe.

Pho. Would'st thou have me
Basely retreat while my Euphrasia trembles
Here on the ridge of peril?

Mel. Yet hear the voice
Of sober age. Should Dionysius' spies
Detect thee here, ruin involves us all:
Thy voice may rouse Timoleon to th' assault,
And bid him storm the works.

Pho. By heaven, I will;
My breath shall wake his rage; this very night,
When sleep sits heavy on the slumb'ring city,
Then Greece unsheaths her sword, and great re-venge

Shall stalk with death and horror o'er the ranks
Of slaughter'd troops, a sacrifice to freedom!
But first let me behold Euphrasia.

Mel. Hush

Thy pent-up valour: to a secret haunt
I'll guide thy steps: there dwell, and in apt time
I'll bring Euphrasia to thy longing arms.

Pho. Oh! lead me to her; that exalted virtue
With firmer nerve shall bid me grasp the jav'lin,
Shall bid my sword, with more than lightning's
swiftness

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Blaze in the front of war, and glut its rage
With blows repeated in the tyrant's veins.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Temple, with a Monument in the middle.

Enter EUPHRASIA, ERIXENE, and other Female Attendants.

Euph. This way my virgins, this way bend your steps.

Lo! the sad sepulchre, where, hears'd in death,
The pale remains of my dear mother lie.
There, while the victims at your altar bleed,
And with your prayers the vaulted roof resounds,
There let me pay the tribute of a tear,
A weeping pilgrim o'er Eudocia's ashes.

Erix. Forbear, Euphrasia, to renew your sorrows.

Euph. My tears have dried their source; then let me here

Pay this sad visit to the honour'd clay,
That moulders in the tomb. These sacred viands
I'll burn, an off'ring to a parent's shade,
And sprinkle with this wine the hallow'd mould.
That duty paid, I will return, my virgins.

[*Goes into the Tomb.*

Erix. Look down, propitious powers! behold that virtue,
And heal the pangs that desolate her soul.

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Mourn, mourn, ye virgins; rend your scatter'd garments;
Some dread calamity hangs o'er your heads.
In vain the tyrant would appease with sacrifice
Th' impending wrath of ill-requested heaven.
Ill omens hover over us: at the altar
The victim dropp'd, ere the diviner seer
Had gor'd his knife. The brazen statues tremble,
And from the marble, drops of blood distil.

Erix. Now, ye just gods, if vengeance you prepare,
Now find the guilty head.

Re-enter EUPHRASIA from the Tomb.

Euph. Virgins, I thank you—Oh! more lightly now
My heart expands; the pious act is done,
And I have paid my tribute to a parent.
Ah! wherefore does the tyrant bend his way?

Phil. He flies the altar; leaves the unfinished rites.

No god there smiles propitious on his cause.
Fate lifts the awful balance; weighs his life,
The lives of numbers, in the trembling scale.

Euph. Despair and horror mark his haggard looks,
His wild, disorder'd step—Do you retire.

[*To Attendants.*

Retire, Philotas; let me here remain,
And give the moments of suspended fate
To pious worship and to filial love.

Phil. Alas! I fear to yield:—awhile I'll leave thee,
And at the temple's entrance wait thy coming.

[*Exit.*

Euph. Now then, Euphrasia, now thou may'st indulge
The purest ecstasy of soul. Come forth,
Thou man of wo, thou man of every virtue

Enter EVANDER from the Monument.

Evân. And does the grave thus cast me up again

With a fond father's love to view thee? thus
To mingle rapture in a daughter's arms?

Euph. How fares my father now?

Evan. Thy aid, Euphrasia,
Has given new life. Thou from this vital stream
Deriv'st thy being; with unheard-of duty
Thou hast repaid it to thy native source.

Euph. Sprung from Evander; if a little portion
Of all his goodness dwell within my heart,
Thou wilt not wonder. Oh! my father,
How didst thou bear thy long, long sufferings?

how
Endure their barbarous rage?

Evan. My foes but did
To this old frame, what nature's hand must do.

I was but going hence by mere decay
To that futurity which Plato taught,
But thou recall'st me; thou!

Euph. Timoleon too

Invites thee back to life.

Evan. And does he still
Urge on the siege?

Euph. His active genius comes
To scourge a guilty race. The Punic fleet
Half lost is swallow'd by the roaring sea.
The shatter'd refuse seek the Libyan shore,
To bear the news of their defeat to Carthage.

Evan. These are thy wonders, heaven! abroad,
thy spirit

Moves o'er the deep, and mighty fleets are van-
ish'd.

Euph. Ha!—Hark!—what noise is that? It
comes this way.

Some busy footstep beats the hollow'd pavement.
Oh! Sir, retire—Ye powers!—Philotas!—ha!

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. For thee, Euphrasia, Dionysius calls.
Some new suspicion goads him. At yon gate
I stopp'd Calippus, as with eager haste
He bent this way to seek thee. Oh! my sovereign,
My king, my injur'd master, will you pardon
The wrongs I've done thee?

[*Kneels to EVANDER.*]

Evan. Virtue such as thine,
From the fierce trial of tyrannic power
Shines forth with added lustre.

Phil. Oh; forgive
My ardent zeal; there is no time to waste.
You must withdraw; trust to your faithful friends.
Pass but another day, and Dionysius
Falls from a throne usurp'd.

Evan. But ere he pays
The forfeit of his crimes, what streams of blood
Shall flow in torrents round! Methinks, I might
Prevent this waste of nature—I'll go forth,
And to my people show their rightful king.

Euph. Banish that thought; forbear; the rash
attempt

Were fatal to our hopes; oppress'd, dismay'd,
The people look aghast, and, wan with fear,
None will espouse your cause.

Evan. Yes, all will dare
To act like men;—their king, I gave myself
To a whole people. I made no reserve;
My life was theirs; each drop about my heart
Pledg'd to the public cause; devoted to it;
That was my compact; is the subject's less?

If they are all debas'd, and willing slaves,
The young but breathing to grow gray in bondage,
And the old sinking to ignoble graves,
Of such a race no matter who is king.
And yet I will not think it; no! my people
Are brave and gen'rous; I will trust their valour.

Euph. Yet stay; yet be advis'd.

Phil. As yet, my liege,

No plan is fix'd, and no concerted measure.
Trust to my truth and honour. Witness, gods,
Here in the temple of Olympian Jove
Philotas swears—

Evan. Forbear: the man like thee,
Who feels the best emotions of the heart,
Truth, reason, justice, honour's fine excitements,
Acts by those laws, and wants no other sanction.

Euph. Again, th' alarm approaches; sure destruction

To thee, to all, will follow:—hark! a sound
Comes hollow murmur'ing through the vaulted aisle.
It gains upon the ear. Withdraw, my father;
All's lost if thou art seen.

Phil. And, lo! Calippus

Darts with the lightning's speed across the aisle.

Evan. Thou at the senate-house convene my
friends.

Melantho, Dion, and their brave associates,
Will show that liberty has leaders still.

Anon I'll meet 'em there: [*Exit PHILOTAS.*] my
child farewell:

Thou shalt direct me now. [*Exit into the Tomb.*]

Euph. [*Coming forward.*] How my distracted
heart throbs wild with fear!

What brings Calippus? wherefore? Save me,
heav'n!

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. This sullen musing in these drear abodes
Alarms suspicion: the king knows thy plottings,
Thy rooted hatred to the state and him.
His sov'reign will commands thee to repair
This moment to his presence.

Euph. Ha! what means
The tyrant?—I obey. [*Exit CALIPPUS.*] And, oh!
ye powers,

Ye ministers of heaven! defend my father;
Support his drooping age; and when anon
Avenging justice shakes her crimson steel,
Oh! be the grave at least a place of rest;
That from his covert, in the hour of peace,
Forth he may come to bless a willing people,
And be your own just image here on earth.

[*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Citadel.

Enter DIONYSIUS, CALIPPUS, and others.

Dion. And means the Greek to treat of terms
of peace?

By heaven, this panting bosom hop'd to meet
His boasted phalanx on th' embattled plain.
And doth he now, on peaceful councils bent,
Despatch his herald!—Let the slave approach.

Enter HERALD.

Now speak thy purpose; what doth Greece im-
part?

Her. Timoleon, Sir, whose great renown in
arms

Is equall'd only by the softer virtues
Of mild humanity that sway his heart,

Sends me his delegate to offer terms,
On which even foes may well accord; on which
The fiercest nature, though it spurn at justice,
May sympathize with his.

Dion. Unfold thy mystery;
Thou shalt be heard.

Her. The gen'rous leader sees,
With pity sees the wild, destructive havoc
Of ruthless war; he hath survey'd around
The heaps of slain that cover yonder field,
And, touch'd with gen'rous sense of human wo,
Weeps o'er his victories.

Dion. Your leader weeps!
Then let the author of those ills thou speak'st of,
Let th' ambitious factor of destruction,
Timely retreat, and close the scene of blood.
Why doth affrighted peace behold his standard
Uprear'd in Sicily? and wherefore here
The iron ranks of war, from which the shepherd
Retires appall'd, and leaves the blasted hopes
Of half the year, while closer to her breast
The mother clasps her infant?

Her. 'Tis not mine
To plead Timoleon's cause; not mine the office
To justify the strong, the righteous, motives
To urge him to the war: the only scope
My deputation aims at, is to fix
An interval of peace, a pause of horror,
That they, whose bodies on the naked shore
Lie weltring in their blood, from either host
May meet the last sad rites to nature due,
And decent lie in honourable graves.

Dion. Go tell your leader his pretexes are vain.
Let him, with those that live, embark for Greece,
And leave our peaceful plains; the mangled limbs
Of those he murder'd, from my tender care
Shall meet due obsequies.

Her. The hero, Sir,
Wages no war with those who bravely die.
'Tis for the dead I supplicate; for them
We sue for peace; and to the living too
Timoleon would extend it, but the groans
Of a whole people have unsheath'd his sword.
A single day will pay the funeral rites.
To-morrow's sun may see both armies meet
Without hostility, and all in honour;
You to inter the troops who bravely fell;
We, on our part, to give an humble sod
To those who gain'd a footing on the isle,
And by their death have conquer'd.

Dion. Be it so;
I grant thy suit; soon as to-morrow's dawn
Illumes the world, the rage of warring war
In vain shall thirst for blood: and now farewell.
Some careful officer conduct him forth.

[*Exit HERALD.*
By heaven the Greek hath offer'd to my sword
An easy prey; a sacrifice to glut
My great revenge. Away, my friends, disperse.
Philotas, wait Euphrasia as we order'd?

Phil. She's here at hand.

Dion. Admit her to our presence.
Rage and despair, a thousand warring passions,
All rise by turns, and piecemeal rend my heart;
Yet ev'ry means, all measures must be tried.
To sweep the Grecian spoiler from the land,
And fix the crown unshaken on my brow.

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Euph. What sudden cause requires Euphrasia's
presence?

Dion. Approach, fair mourner, and dispel thy
fears.

'Thy grief, thy tender duty to thy father,
Has touch'd me nearly. In his lone retreat,
Respect, attendance, ev'ry lenient care
To soothe affliction, and extend his life,
Evander has commanded.

Euph. Vile dissembler!
Detested homicide! [*Aside.*] And has thy heart
Felt for the wretched?

Dion. Urgencies of state
Abridg'd his liberty; but to his person
All honour hath been paid.

Euph. The righteous gods
Have mark'd thy ways, and will in time repay
Just retribution.

Dion. If to see thy father,
If here to meet him in a fond embrace,
Will calm thy breast, and dry those beauteous
tears,

A moment more shall bring him to your presence.

Euph. Ha! lead him hither! Sir, to move him
now,

Aged, infirm, worn out, with toil and years—
No, let me seek him rather—If soft pity
Has touch'd your heart, oh! send me, send me,
to him.

Dion. Control this wild alarm; with prudent
care

Philotas shall conduct him; here I grant
The tender interview.

Euph. Disastrous fate!
Ruin impends!—This will discover all;
I'll perish first; provoke his utmost rage. [*Aside.*
Though much I languish to behold my father,
Yet now it were not fit—the sun goes down;
Night falls apace; soon as returning day—

Dion. This night, this very hour, you both must
meet.

Together you may serve the state and me.
Thou seest the havoc of wide-wasting war;
And more, full well you know, are still to bleed.
Thou may'st prevent their fate.

Euph. Oh! give the means,
And I will bless thee for it.

Dion. From a Greek
Torments have wrung the truth. Thy husband,
Phocion—

Euph. Oh! say, speak of my Phocion.

Dion. He; 'tis he
Hath kindled up this war; with treach'rous arts
Inflam'd the states of Greece, and now the traitor
Comes with a foreign aid to wrest my crown.

Euph. And does my Phocion share Timoleon's
glory?

Dion. With him invests our walls, and bids
rebellion

Erect her standard here.

Euph. Oh! bless him, gods!

Where'er my hero treads the paths of war,
List on his side; against the hostile jav'lin
Uprear his mighty buckler; to his sword
Lend the fierce whirlwind's rage, that he may
come

With wreaths of triumph, and with conquests
crown'd,

And a whole nation's voice
Applaud my hero with a love like mine!

Dion. Ungrateful fair! Has not our sov'reign
will

On thy descendants fix'd Sicilia's crown?
Have I not vow'd protection to your boy?

Euph. From thee the crown! From thee!
Euphrasia's children

Shall on a nobler basis found their rights,
On their own virtue, and a people's choice.

Dion. Misguided woman!

Euph. Ask of thee protection!
The father's valour shall protect his boy.

Dion. Rush not on sure destruction; ere too late

Accept our proffer'd grace. The terms are these:
Instant send forth a message to your husband;
Bid him draw off his Greeks, unmoor his fleet,
And measure back his way. Full well he knows
You and your father are my hostages;
And for his treason both may answer.

Euph. Think'st thou then
So meanly of my Phocion?—Dost thou deem him
Poorly wound up to a mere fit of valour,
To melt away in a weak woman's tear?
Oh! thou dost little know him; know'st but little
Of his exalted soul. With gen'rous ardour
Still will he urge the great, the glorious plan,
And gain the ever honour'd, bright reward
Which fame entwines around the patriot's brow,
And bids for ever flourish on his tomb,
For nations freed, and tyrants laid in dust.

Dion. By heaven, this night Evander breathes
his last.

Euph. Better for him to sink at once to rest,
Than linger thus beneath the gripe of famine,
In a vile dungeon, scoop'd with barb'rous skill
Deep in the flinty rock; a monument
Of that fell malice and that black suspicion
That mark'd your father's reign.

Dion. Obdurate woman! obstinate in ill!
Here ends all parley. Now your father's doom
Is fix'd, irrevocably fix'd.

Euph. Thy doom, perhaps,
May first be fix'd: the doom that ever waits
The fell oppressor, from a throne usurp'd
Hurl'd headlong down. Think of thy father's
fate

At Corinth, Dionysius!

Dion. Ha! this night
Evander dies; and thou, detested fair!
Thou shalt behold him, while inventive cruelty
Pursues his wearied life through every nerve.
I scorn all dull delay. This very night
Shall sate my great revenge. [Exit.

Euph. This night perhaps
Shall whelm thee down, no more to blast creation.
My father, who inhabit'st with the dead,
Now let me seek thee in the lonely tomb,
And tremble there with anxious hope and fear. [Exit.

SCENE II.—The inside of the Temple.

Enter PHOCION and MELANTHON.

Mel. Summon all
Thy wonted firmness; in that dreary vault
A living king is number'd with the dead.
I'll take my post, near where the pillar'd aisle
Supports the central dome, that no alarm
Surprise you in the pious act. [Exit.

Pho. If here
They both are found, if in Evander's arms
Euphrasia meets my search, the fates atone
For all my suff'rings, all afflictions past.
Yes, I will seek them—ha!—the gaping tomb
Invites my steps—now be propitious, heaven!
[Enters the Tomb.

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Euph. All hail, ye caves of horror!—In this
gloom
Divine content can dwell, the heartfelt tear,
Which, as it falls, a father's trembling hand
Will catch, and wipe the sorrows from my eye.
Who's there?—Evander?—Answer—tell me—
speak—

Re-enter PHOCION, from the Tomb.

Pho. What voice is that?—Melanthon!

Euph. Ha! Those sounds—
Speak of Evander; tell me that he lives,
Or lost Euphrasia dies.

Pho. Heart-swelling transport!
Art thou Euphrasia? 'tis thy Phocion, love;
Thy husband comes.

Euph. Support me; reach thy hand.

Pho. Once more I clasp thee in this fond embrace.

Euph. What miracle has brought thee to me?

Pho. Love

Inspir'd my heart, and guided all my ways.

Euph. Oh! thou dear wand'rer! But wherefore here?

Why in this place of woe? My tender little one,
Say, is he safe? oh! satisfy a mother;
Speak of my child, or I grow wild at once.
Tell me his fate, and tell me all thy own.

Pho. Your boy is safe, Euphrasia; lives to reign
In Sicily; Timoleon's gen'rous care
Protects him in his camp; dispel thy fears;
The gods once more will give him to thy arms.

Euph. My father lives, sepulchred ere his time
Here in Eudocia's tomb; let me conduct thee

Pho. I came this moment thence.

Euph. And saw Evander?

Pho. Alas! I found him not.

Euph. Not found him there?

And have they then—have the fell murd'ers—
Oh! [Faints.

Pho. I've been too rash; revive, my love, revive!
Thy Phocion calls; the gods will guard Evander,
And save him to reward thy matchless virtue.

Re-enter MELANTHON, with EVANDER.

Evan. Lead me, Melanthon; guide my aged
steps:

Where is he? let me see him.

Pho. My Euphrasia,

Thy father lives;—thou venerable man!
Behold—I cannot fly to thy embrace.

Evan. Euphrasia! Phocion too! Yes, both are
here:

Oh! let me thus, thus, strain you to my heart.

Euph. Why, my father,
Why thus adventure forth? The strong alarm
O'erwhelm'd my spirits.

Evan. I went forth, my child,
When all was dark, and awful silence round,
To throw me prostrate at the altar's foot,
And crave the care of heaven for thee and thine.
Melanthon there—

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Inevitable ruin hovers o'er you:
The tyrant's fury mounts into a blaze;
Unsafe yet with blood, he calls aloud
For thee, Evander; thee his rage hath order'd
This moment to his presence.

Evan. Lead me to him:

His presence hath no terror for Evander.

Euph. Horror! it must not be.

Phil. No; never, never:

I'll perish rather. His policy has granted
A day's suspense from arms; yet even now
His troops prepare, in the dead midnight hour,
With base surprise, to storm Timoleon's camp.

Evan. And doth he grant a false insidious truce,
To turn the hour of peace to blood and horror?

Euph. I know the monster well: when specious seeming

Becalms his looks, the rankling heart within
Teems with destruction;
Mountains hurl'd up in air, and moulten rocks,
And all the land with desolation cover'd.

Mel. Now, Phocion, now on thee our hope depends.

Fly to Timoleon; I can grant a passport:
Rouse him to vengeance; on the tyrant turn
His own insidious arts, or all is lost.

Pho. Evander, thou; and thou, my best Euphrasia,

Both shall attend my flight.

Mel. It were in vain;

Th' attempt would hazard all.

Euph. Together here

We will remain, safe in the cave of death;
And wait our freedom from thy conqu'ring arm.

Evan. Oh! would the gods roll back the stream
of time,

And give this arm the sinew that it boasted
At Tauromenium, when its force resistless
Mow'd down the ranks of war; I then might
guide

The battle's rage, and, ere Evander die,
Add still another laurel to my brow.

Euph. Enough of laurel'd victory your sword
Hath reap'd in earlier days.

Evan. And shall my sword,
When the great cause of liberty invites,
Remain inactive, unperforming quite?

Youth, second youth, rekindles in my veins:

Though worn with age, this arm will know its
office;

Will show that victory has not forgot
Acquaintance with this hand.—And yet—O
shame!

It will not be: the momentary blaze
Sinks and expires: I have surviv'd it all:
Surviv'd my reign, my people, and myself.

Euph. Fly, Phocion, fly! Melanthon will conduct thee.

Mel. And when th' assault begins, my faithful cohorts

Shall form their ranks around this sacred dome.

Pho. And my poor captive friends, my brave companions

Taken in battle, wilt thou guard their lives?

Phil. Trust to my care: no danger shall assail them.

Pho. By heaven, the glorious expectation swells
This panting bosom! Yes, Euphrasia, yes;
While I leave you to the care of heaven.

Fell Dionysius, tremble! ere the dawn
Timoleon thunders at your gates; the rage,
The pent-up rage, of twenty thousand Greeks,
Shall burst at once; and the tumultuous roar
Alarm the astonish'd world.

Evan. Yet, ere thou go'st, young man,
Attend my words: though guilt may oft provoke,
As now it does, just vengeance on its head,
In mercy punish it. The rage of slaughter
Can add no trophy to the victor's triumph;

Conquest is proud, inexorable, fierce;
It is humanity ennobles all.

Pho. Farewell; the midnight hour shall give
you freedom.

[*Exit with MELANTHON and PHILOTAS.*]

Euph. Ye guardian deities, watch all his ways.

Evan. Come, my Euphrasia,

Together we will pour

Our hearts in praise, in tears of adoration,

For all the wondrous goodness lavish'd on us.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter DIONYSIUS and CALIPPUS.

Dion. Ere the day clos'd, while yet the busy eye
Might view their camp, their stations, and their
guards,

Their preparations for approaching night,
Didst thou then mark the motions of the Greeks?

Cal. From the watch-tower I saw them: all
things spoke

A foe secure, and discipline relax'd.

Dion. Their folly gives them to my sword: are
all

My orders issued?

Cal. All.

Dion. The troops retir'd

To gain recruited vigour from repose?

Cal. The city round lies hush'd in sleep.

Dion. Anon,

Let each brave officer, of chosen valour,

Meet at the citadel. An hour at furthest

Before the dawn, 'tis fixed to storm their camp;

Haste, Calippus,

Fly to thy post, and bid Euphrasia enter.

[*Exit CAL.*]

Evander dies this night: Euphrasia too
Shall be dispos'd of. Curse on Phocion's fraud,
That from my power withdrew their infant boy.
In him the seed of future kings were crush'd,
And the whole hated line at once extinguish'd.

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Dion. Once more approach and hear me; 'tis
not now

A time to waste in the vain war of words.

A crisis big with horror is at hand.

I meant to spare the stream of blood, that soon

Shall deluge yonder plains. My fair proposals

Thy haughty spirit has with scorn rejected.

And now, by heaven! here in thy very sight,

Evander breathes his last.

Euph. If yet there's wanting

A crime to fill the measure of thy guilt,

Add that black murder to the dreadful list;

With that complete the horrors of thy reign.

Dion. Woman, beware: Philotas is at hand,

And to our presence leads Evander. All

Thy dark complottings, and thy treach'rous arts,

Have prov'd abortive.

Euph. Ha!—What new event!

And is Philotas false?—Has he betray'd him?

[*Aside.*]

Dion. What, ho! Philotas.

Enter PHILOTAS.

Euph. How my heart sinks within me!

Dion. Where's your pris'ner?

Phil. Evander is no more.

Dion. Ha!—Death has robb'd me
Of half my great revenge.

Phil. Worn out with anguish,
I saw life ebb apace. With studied art
We gave each cordial drop, alas! in vain;
He heav'd a sigh; invok'd his daughter's name,
Smil'd, and expir'd.

Dion. Bring me his hoary head.

Phil. You'll pardon, Sir, my over-hasty zeal.
I gave the body to the foaming surge,
Down the steep rock despis'd.

Dion. Now then thou feel'st my vengeance.

Euph. Glory in it;
Exult and triumph. Thy worst shaft is sped,
Yet still the unconquer'd mind with scorn can
view thee;

With the calm sunshine of the breast can see
Thy power unequal to subdue the soul,
Which virtue form'd, and which the gods protect.

Dion. Philotas, bear her hence, she shall not
live;

This moment bear her hence; you know the rest;
Go, see our will obey'd; that done, with all
A warrior's speed attend me at the citadel;
There meet the heroes whom this night shall lead
To freedom, victory, to glorious havoc,
And the destruction of the Grecian name. [*Exit.*]

Euph. Accept my thanks, Philotas; gen'rous
man!

These tears attest th' emotions of my heart.

But, oh! should Greece defer—

Phil. Dispel thy fears;

Phocion will bring relief; or, should the tyrant
Assault their camp, he'll meet a marshall'd foe.
Let me conduct thee to the silent tomb.

Euph. Ah! there Evander, naked and disarm'd,
Defenceless quite, may meet some ruffian stroke.

Phil. Lo! here a weapon; bear this dagger to
him.

In the drear monument should hostile steps
Dare to approach him, they must enter singly;
This guards the passage; man by man they die.
There may'st thou dwell amidst the wild commo-
tion.

Euph. Ye pitying gods, protect my father
there! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—The Citadel.

Enter DIONYSIUS, CALIPPUS, and several Officers.

Dion. Ye brave associates, who so oft have
shar'd

Our toil and danger in the field of glory,
My fellow-warriors, what no god could promise,
Fortune has given us. In his dark embrace,
Lo! sleep envelops the whole Grecian camp.
Against a foe, the outcasts of their country,
Freebooters, roving in pursuit of prey,
Success, by war or covert stratagem,
Alike is glorious. Then, my gallant friends,
What need of words? The gen'rous call of
freedom.

Your wives, your children, your invaded rights,
All that can steel the patriot breast with valour,
Expands and rouses in the swelling heart.
Follow the impulsive ardour; follow me,
Your king, your leader; in the friendly gloom
Of night assault their camp: your country's love
And fame eternal shall attend the men
Who march'd through blood and horror, to redeem
From th' invader's power their native land.

Cal. Lead to the onset; Greece shall find we
bear

Hearts prodigal of blood, when honour calls
Resolv'd to conquer or to die in freedom.

Dion. Thus I've resolv'd: when the declining
moon

Hath veil'd her orb, our silent march begins.
The order thus: Calippus, thou lead forth
Iberia's sons with the Numidean bands,
And line the shore—Perdicas, be it thine
To march thy cohorts to the mountain's foot,
Where the wood skirts the valley; there make
halt

Till brave Amyntor stretch along the vale:
Ourselves, with the embodied cavalry
Clad in their mail'd cuirass, will circle round;
To where their camp extends its farthest line;
Unnumber'd torches there shall blaze at once,
The signal of the charge; then, oh! my friends,
On every side let the wild uproar loose,
Bid massacre and carnage stalk around,
Unsparing, unrelenting; drench your swords
In hostile blood, and riot in destruction.

Enter an OFFICER.

Ha! speak; unfold thy purpose.

Off. Instant arm;
To arms, my liege; the foe breaks in upon us;
The subterraneous path is theirs; that way
Their band invades the city, sunk in sleep.

Dion. Treason's at work; detested, treach'rous
villains!

Is this their promis'd truce? Away, my friends,
Rouse all the war: fly to your several posts,
And instant bring all Syracuse in arms.

[*Exeunt; warlike music.*]

SCENE III.—The inside of the Temple; a Monument in the middle.

Enter EUPHRASIA, ERIXENE, and Female At-
tendants.

Euph. Which way, Erixene, which way, my
virgins,
Shall we direct our steps? What sacred altar
Clasp on our knees?

Erix. Alas! the horrid tumult
Spreads the destruction wide! On every side
The victor's shouts, the groans of murder'd
wretches,

In wild confusion rise. Once more descend
Eudotia's tomb; there thou may'st find a shelter.

Euph. Anon, Erixene, I mean to visit,
Perhaps for the last time, a mother's urn.
This dagger there, this instrument of death,
Should fortune prosper the fell tyrant's arms,
This dagger then may free me from his power,
And that drear vault entomb us all in peace.

[*Flourish.*]

Erix. Hark!

Euph. The din
Of arms with clearer sound advances. Hark!
That sudden burst! Again! They rush upon us!
The portal opens; lo! see there; behold!
War, horrid war, invades the sacred fane;
No altar gives a sanctuary now. [*Warlike music.*]

Enter DIONYSIUS and CALIPPUS, with several
Soldiers.

Dion. Here will I mock their siege; here stand
at bay,
And brave 'em to the last.

Euphrasia here! Detested, treach'rous woman,
For my revenge preserv'd! By heaven, 'tis well;
Vengeance awaits thy guilt, and this good sword
Thus sends thee to atone the bleeding victims
This night has massacred.

Cal. [*Holding Dionysius' arm.*] My liege forbear;
Her life preserv'd may plead your cause with
Greece,

And mitigate your fate.

Dion. Presumptuous slave!
My rage is up in arms; by heaven, she dies.

Enter EVANDER from the Tomb.

Evan. Horror! forbear! Thou murderer, hold
thy hand!

The gods behold thee, horrible assassin!
Restrain the blow; it were a stab to heaven;
All nature shudders at it! Will no friend
Arm in a cause like this a father's hand?
Strike at his bosom rather. Lo! Evander,
Prostrate and grovelling on the earth before thee;
He begs to die; exhaust the scanty drops
That lag about his heart; but spare my child.

Dion. Evander!—Do my eyes once more be-
hold him?

May the fiends seize Philotas! Treach'rous slave!
'Tis well thou liv'st; thy death were poor revenge
From any hand but mine. [*Offers to strike.*]

Euph. No, tyrant, no;

[*Rushing before EVANDER.*]
I have provok'd your vengeance; through this bo-
som

Open a passage; first on me, on me,
Exhaust your fury; every power above
Commands thee to respect that aged head;
His wither'd frame wants blood to glut thy rage;
Strike here; these veins are full; here's blood
enough;

The purple tide will gush to glad thy sight.

[*A flourish of trumpets.*]
Dion. Ha! the fierce tide of war
This way comes rushing on.

[*Exit, with Officers.*]
Euph. [*Embracing EVANDER.*] Oh! thus, my
father,

We'll perish thus together.

Dion. [*Without.*] Bar the gates;
Close ev'ry passage, and repel their force.

Evan. And must I see thee bleed? Oh! for a
sword!

Bring, bring, me daggers!

Euph. Ha!

Re-enter DIONYSIUS.

Dion. Guards seize the slave,
And give him to my rage.

Evan. [*Seized by the Guards.*] Oh! spare her,
spare her,
Inhuman villains!

Euph. Now, one glorious effort!

Dion. Let me despatch; thou traitor, thus my
arm—

Euph. A daughter's arm, fell monster, strikes
the blow.

[*Stabs him; he falls and dies.*]
Behold, all Sicily, behold!—The point
Glows with the tyrant's blood. Ye slaves, [*To
the Guards.*] look there;

Kneel to your rightful king: the blow for freedom
Gives you the rights of men! And, oh! my father,
My ever honour'd sire, it gives thee life.

Evan. My child; my daughter! sav'd again
by thee! [*Embraces her.*]

*A flourish of Trumpets. Enter PHOCION,
MELANTHON, &c.*

Pho. Now let the monster yield. My best
Euphrasia!

Euph. My lord! my Phocion! welcome to my
heart.

Lo! there the wonders of Euphrasia's arm!

Pho. And is the proud one fallen? The dawn
shall see him

A spectacle for public view. Euphrasia!

Evander too! Thus to behold you both—

Evan. To her direct thy looks; there fix thy
praise,

And gaze with wonder there. The life I gave her,
Oh, she has us'd it for the noblest ends!
To fill each duty; make her father feel
The purest joy, the heart dissolving bliss,
To have a grateful child. But has the rage
Of slaughter ceas'd?

Pho. It has.

Evan. Where is Timoleon?

Pho. He guards the citadel; there gives his
orders

To calm the uproar, and recall from carnage
His conqu'ring troops.

Euph. Oh! once again, my father,
Thy sway shall bless the land. Not for himself
Timoleon conquers; to redress the wrongs
Of bleeding Sicily the hero comes.

Thee, good Melanthon, thee, thou gen'rous man,
His justice shall reward. Thee too, Philotas,
Whose sympathizing heart could feel the touch
Of soft humanity, the hero's bounty,
His brightest honours, shall be lavish'd on thee.
Evander too will place thee near his throne;
And show mankind, even on this shore of being
That virtue still shall meet its sure reward.

Phil. I am rewarded; feelings such as mine
Are worth all dignities; my heart repays me.

Evan. Come, let us seek Timoleon; to his care
I will commend ye both: for now, alas!

Thrones and dominions are no more for me.
To thee I give my crown: yes, thou, Euphrasia,
Shalt reign in Sicily. And, oh! ye powers,
In that bright eminence of care and peril,
Watch over all her ways; conduct and guide
The goodness you inspir'd; that she may prove,

If e'er distress like mine invade the land,
A parent to her people; stretch the ray
Of filial piety to times unborn,

That men may hear her unexampled virtue,
And learn to emulate the Grecian Daughter!

[*Exeunt.*]

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

THE *Grecian Daughter's* compliments to all;
Begg that for epilogue you will not call;
For leering, giggling, would be out of season,
And hopes by me, you'll hear a little reason,
A father rais'd from death! a nation sav'd!
A tyrant's crimes by female spirit brav'd!
That tyrant stab'd, and by her nerveless arm,
While virtue's spell surrounding guards could
charm!

Can she, this sacred tumult in her breast,
 Turn father, freedom, virtue, all to jest?
 Wake you, ye fair ones, from your sweet repose,
 As wanton zephyrs wake the sleeping rose?
 Dispel those clouds which o'er your eye-lids crept,
 Which our wise bard mistook, and swore you
 wept?

Shall she to *macaronies* life restore,
 Who yawn'd, half dead, and curs'd the tragic
bore?

Dismiss *em* smirking to their nightly haunt,
 Where dice and cards their moon-struck minds
 enchant?

Some, muffled like the witches in Mackbeth,
 Brood o'er the magic circle, pale as death!
 Others the caldron go about—about!
 And *ruin* enters, as the *fates* run out.

Bubble, bubble,
 Toil and trouble,
 Passions burn,
 And bets are double!
 Double, double!
 Toil and trouble,
 Passions burn,
 And all is bubble. •

But jest apart, for scandal forms these tales;
 Falsehood be mute; let justice hold the scales.
 Britons were ne'er enslav'd by evil powers:
 To peace and wedded love they give the midnigh
 hours.

From slumbers pure no rattling dice can wake
 'em:

Who *make* the laws, were never known to *break*
 'em.

'Tis false, ye fair, whatever spleen may say,
 That you down folly's tide are borne away.
 You never wish at deep distress to sneer:
 For eyes, though *bright*, are *brighter* through a
tear.

Should it e'er be this nation's wretched fate,
 To laugh at all that's good, and wise, and great;
 Let *genius* rouse, the friend of humankind,
 To break those spells which charm and sink the
 mind:

Let *comedy*, with pointed ridicule,
 Pierce to the quick, each knave and vicious fool:
 Let *tragedy*—a warning to the times,
 Lift high her dagger at exalted crimes;
 Drive from the heart each base, unmanly passion,
 Till *virtue* triumph in despite of *fashion*.

THE MAN OF THE WORLD:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY CHARLES MACKLIN.

REMARKS.

This play was performed in Ireland, 1764, under the title of "*The True-born Scotsman*," and received the applause due to its great merit. It was not till 1781 that official permission was obtained for its representation in London, where it has ever since eminently increased the delights of the rational and legitimate drama. Mr. Macklin sustained the character of Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, which was considered an unequalled performance, till the appearance in it of the late Mr. Cooke, who is generally thought to have exceeded our author in his delineation of this arduous character.

Mr. Macklin's biographer says:—"Beside the merit of this piece in plot, character, sentiment, and diction, it is critically constructed in respect to the three unities of time, place, and action.—If many of our modern dramatic writers (as they are so pleased to call themselves) would consult this comedy as a model, they would be ashamed of dragging so many heterogeneous characters together, so irrelevant to the general business of the scene, and which give the stage more the appearance of a *caricature-shop*, than a faithful representation of life and manners."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN.

LORD LUMBERCOURT, Mr. Waddy.
SIR PERTINAX MACSYCO-
PHANT, Mr. Cooke.
EGERTON, Mr. C. Kemble.
MELVILLE, Mr. Murray.
SERGEANT EITHERSIDE, Mr. Davenport.
COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE, Mr. Beverley.
SIDNEY, Mr. Brunton.
TOMLINS, Mr. Abbott.

SAM, Mr. Freeman.
JOHN, Mr. Atkins.
LADY RUDOLPHA LUMBER-
COURT, Mrs. H. Johnstone.
LADY MACSYCOPHANT, ... Miss Leserve.
CONSTANTIA, Miss Brunton.
BETTY HINT, Mrs. Matlocks.
NANNY, Miss Cox.

SCENE.—Sir Pertinax Macsycophant's House, ten miles from London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter BETTY and FOOTMAN.

Bet. The postman is at the gate, Sam; pray step and take in the letters.

Sam. John the gardener is gone for them, Mrs. Betty.

Bet. Bid John bring them to me, Sam; tell him, I'm here in the library.

Sam. I will send him to your ladyship in a crack, Madam. [*Exit SAM.*]

Enter NANNY.

Nan. Miss Constantia desires to speak to you, Mistress Betty.

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Bet. How is she now, Nanny? Any better?
Nan. Something—but very low spirited still. I verily believe it is as you say.

Bet. Nay, I would take my oath of it; I cannot be deceived in that point, Nanny. Ay, she is certainly breeding, depend upon it.

Nan. Why, so the housekeeper thinks too.

Bet. Oh, if she is not, there is no bread in nine loaves; nay, I know the father, the man that ruined her.

Nan. The deuce you do!

Bet. As sure as you are alive, Nanny, or I am greatly deceived—and yet I can't be deceived neither.—Was not that the cook that came galloping so hard over the common just now?

Nan. The same: how very hard he galloped: he has been but three quarters of an hour, he says, coming from Hyde-park-corner!

Bet. And what time will the family be down?

Nan. He has orders to have dinner ready by five. There are to be lawyers, and a great deal of company here—He fancies there is to be a private wedding to-night between our young master Charles, and lord Lumbercourt's daughter, the Scotch lady; who, he says, is just come from Bath, on purpose to be married to him.

Bet. Ay, Lady Rodolpha! nay, like enough, for I know it has been talked of a good while—Well, go tell Miss Constantia that I will be with her immediately.

Nan. I shall, Mrs. Betty.

[*Exit.*]

Bet. So! I find they all begin to suspect her condition; that's pure: it will soon reach my lady's ears, I warrant.

Enter JOHN, with Letters.

Well, John, ever a letter for me?

John. No, Mrs. Betty; but here's one for Miss Constantia.

Bet. Give it me—hum—My lady's hand.

John. And here is one, which the postman says is for my young master—But it is a strange direction. [*Reads*] *To Charles Egerton, Esq.*

Bet. Oh, yes, yes! that is for Master Charles, John; for he has dropped his father's name of Maccyphont, and has taken up that of Egerton. The parliament has ordered it.

John. The parliament! Pr'ythee, why so, Mrs. Betty?

Bet. Why, you must know, John, that my lady, his mother, was an Egerton by her father; she stole a match with our old master. Sir Stanley Egerton, that you just mentioned, dying an old bachelor, and mortally hating our old master, and the whole gang of the Maccyphonts—he left his whole estate to master Charles, who was his godson; but on condition though, that he should drop his father's name of Maccyphont, and take up that of Egerton; and that is the reason, John, why the parliament has made him change his name.

John. I am glad that master Charles has got the estate, however; for he is a sweet tempered gentleman.

Bet. As ever lived—But come, John, as I know you love Miss Constantia, and are fond of being where she is, I will make you happy. You shall carry her letters to her.

John. Shall I, Mrs. Betty? I am very much obliged to you. Where is she?

Bet. In the housekeeper's room, settling the dessert.—Give me Mr. Egerton's letter, and I will leave it on the table in his dressing-room.—I see it is from his brother Sandy. So, now go and deliver your letter to your sweetheart, John.

John. That I will; and I am much beholden to you for the favour of letting me carry it to her; for though she would never have me, yet I shall always love her, and wish to be near her, she is so sweet a creature—Your servant, Mrs. Betty.

[*Exit.*]

Bet. Your servant, John; ha! ha! ha! poor fellow, he perfectly doats on her; and daily follows her about with nosegays and fruit—and the first of every thing in the season—Ay, and my young master, Charles, too, is in as bad a way as the gardener—in short, every body loves her, and that is one reason why I hate her—for my part, I won-

der what the deuce the men see in her—A creature that was taken in for charity! I am sure she is not so handsome. I wish she was out of the family once; if she was, I might then stand a chance of being my lady's favourite myself. Ay, and perhaps of getting one of my young masters for a sweetheart, or at least the chaplain—but as to him, there would be no such great catch, if I should get him. I will try for him, however: and my first step shall be to let the doctor know all I have discovered about Constantia's intrigues with her spark at Hadley—Yes, that will do; for the doctor loves to talk with me, and always smiles and jokes with me, and he loves to hear me talk—And I verily believe, he! he! he! that he has a sneaking kindness for me, and this story I know will make him have a good opinion of my honesty—And that, I am sure, will be one step towards—Oh! bless me, here he comes, and my young master with him. I'll watch an opportunity to speak with him, as soon as he is alone; for I will blow her up, I am resolved, as great a favourite, and as cunning as she is. [*Exit.*]

Enter EGERTON and SIDNEY.

Eger. I have done, Sir. You have refused. I have nothing more to say upon the subject—I am satisfied.

Sid. Come, come, correct this warmth, it is the only weak ingredient in your nature, and you ought to watch it carefully. From your earliest youth, your father has honoured me with the care of your education, and the general conduct of your mind; and however singular and morose his behaviour may be towards others, to me he has ever been respectful and liberal. I am now under his roof too; and because I will not abet an unwarrantable passion, in direct opposition to your father's hopes and happiness, you blame—you angrily break from me, and call me unkind.

Eger. Dear Sidney, for my warmth I stand condemned, but for my marriage with Constantia, I think I can justify it upon every principle of filial duty, honour, and worldly prudence.

Sid. Only make that appear, Charles, and you know you may command me.

Eger. I am sensible how unseemly it appears in a son, to descant on the unamiable passions of a parent; but as we are alone, and friends, I cannot help observing in my own defence, that when a father will not allow the use of reason to any of his family—when his pursuit of greatness makes him a slave abroad only to be a tyrant at home—and when, merely to gratify his own ambition, he would marry his son into a family he detests—sure, Sidney, a son thus circumstanced (from the dignity of human nature, and the feelings of a loving heart) has a right not only to protest against the blindness of the parent, but to pursue those measures that virtue and happiness point out.

Sid. The violent temper of Sir Pertinax, I own, cannot on many occasions be defended; but still your intended alliance with lord Lumbercourt—

Eger. Oh! contemptible! a trifling, quaint, debauched, voluptuous, servile fool; the mere lackey of party and corruption; who, for a mean, slavish, factious prostitution of near thirty years, and the ruin of a noble fortune, has had the despicable satisfaction, and the infamous honour, of being kicked up and kicked down—kicked in and out—just as the insolence, compassion, or the

conveniency of leaders, predominated; and now—being forsaken by all parties,—his whole political consequence amounts to the power of franking a letter, and the right honourable privilege of not paying a tradesman's bill.

Sid. Well, but dear Charles, you are not to wed my lord, but his daughter.

Eger. Who is as disagreeable for a companion, as her father is for a friend or an ally.

Sid. [*Laughing.*] What, her Scotch accent, I suppose, offends you?

Eger. No;—upon my honour—not in the least. I think it entertaining in her—but were it otherwise—in decency—and indeed in national affection (being a Scotsman myself) I can have no objection to her on that account—besides, she is my near relation.

Sid. So I understand. But, pray, Charles, how came Lady Rodolpha, who I find was born in England, to be bred in Scotland?

Eger. From the dotation of an old, formal, obstinate, stiff, rich, Scotch grandmother; who upon promise of leaving this grandchild all her fortune, would have the girl sent to her to Scotland, when she was but a year old; and there has she been bred up ever since, with this old lady, in all the vanity, splendour, and unlimited indulgence, that fondness and admiration could bestow on a spoiled child, a fancied beauty, and a pretended wit. And is this a woman fit to make my happiness? this, the partner Sidney would recommend me for life? to you, who best know me, I appeal.

Sid. Why, Charles, it is a delicate point, unfit for me to determine—besides, your father has set his heart upon the match—

Eger. All that I know—But still I ask and insist upon your candid judgment—Is she the kind of woman that you think could possibly contribute to my happiness? I beg you will give me an explicit answer.

Sid. The subject is disagreeable—but since I must speak, I do not think she is.

Eger. I know you do not; and I am sure you never will advise the match.

Sid. I never did—I never will.

Eger. You make me happy—which I assure you I never could be, with your judgment against me in this point.

Sid. But pray, Charles, suppose I had been so indiscreet as to have agreed to marry you to Constantia, would she have consented, think you?

Eger. That I cannot say positively; but I suppose so.

Sid. Did you never speak to her then upon that subject?

Eger. In general terms only: never directly requested her consent in form. But I will this very moment—for I have no asylum from my father's arbitrary design, but by Constantia's arms. Pray do not stir from hence. I will return instantly. I know she will submit to your advice, and I am sure you will persuade her to my wish; as my life, my peace, my earthly happiness, depend on my Constantia. [*Exit.*]

Sid. Poor Charles! he little dreams that I love Constantia too; but to what degree I knew not myself, till he importuned me to join their hands—Yes, I love, but must not be a rival; for he is as dear to me as fraternal fondness—My benefactor, my friend!

Enter BETTY, running up to him.

Bet. I beg your worship's pardon for my

intrusion; I hope I do not disturb your reverence.

Sid. Not in the least, Mrs. Betty

Bet. I humbly beg pardon, Sir;—but I—I wanted to break my mind to your honour about a—a—scruple—that—that lies upon my conscience—and indeed I should not have presumed to trouble you—but that I know you are my young master's friend, and my old master's friend, and my lady's friend, and indeed a friend to the whole family—for to give you your due, Sir, you are as good a preacher as ever went into a pulpit.

Sid. Ha! ha! ha! do you think so, Mrs. Betty?

Bet. Ay, in troth do I—and as good a gentleman too as ever came into a family, and one that never gives a servant a hard word; nor that does any one an ill turn—neither behind one's back, nor before one's face.

Sid. Ha! ha! ha! Why you are a mighty well-spoken woman, Mrs. Betty; and I am mightily beholden to you for your good character of me.

Bet. Indeed, Sir, it is no more than you deserve, and what all the servants say of you.

Sid. I am much obliged to them, Mrs. Betty. But pray what are your commands with me?

Bet. Why, I will tell your reverence—to be sure I am but a servant, as a body may say; and every tub should stand upon its own bottom—but—

[*She takes hold of him familiarly, looking first about very cautiously, and speaks in a low familiar tone of great secrecy.*]

My young master is now in the china-room;—in close conference with Miss Constantia. I know what they are about—but that is no business of mine—and therefore I made bold to listen a little, because you know, Sir, one would be sure—before one took away any body's reputation.

Sid. Very true, Mrs. Betty—very true, indeed.

Bet. Oh! heavens forbid that I should take away any young woman's good name, unless I had a reason for it—but, Sir—if I am in this place alive—as I listened with my ear close to the door, I heard my young master ask Miss Constantia the plain marriage question—Upon which I started—I trembled—nay, my very conscience stirred within me so—that I could not help peeping through the keyhole.

Sid. Ha! ha! ha! and so your conscience made you peep through the keyhole, Mrs. Betty!

Bet. It did indeed, your reverence. And there I saw my young master upon his knees—Lord bless us! kissing her hand, as if he would eat it! and protesting and assuring her he knew that your worship would consent to the match. And then the tears ran down her cheeks as fast—

Sid. Ay!

Bet. They did indeed, Sir;—I would not tell your reverence a lie for the world.

Sid. I believe it, Mrs. Betty. And what did Constantia say to all this?

Bet. Oh! oh! she is sly enough—She looks as if butter would not melt in her mouth—but all is not gold that glitters—smooth water, you know, runs deepest. I am sorry, very sorry indeed—my young master makes himself such a fool—but—um!—ha!—take my word for it, he is not the man—for though she looks as modest as a maid at a christening—yet—a—when sweet-hearts meet—in the dusk of the evening—and stay

together a whole hour—in the dark grove—and and—aha! embrace—and kiss—and—weep at parting—why then—then you know—ah! it is easy to guess all the rest.

Sid. Why; did Constantia meet any body in this manner?

Bet. Oh! heavens! I beg your worship will not misapprehend me! for I assure you, I do not believe they did any harm—that is, not in the grove—at least, not when I was there—and she may be honestly married, for aught I know—She may be very honest, for aught I know—heaven forbid I should say any harm of her—I only say—that they did meet in the dark walk—and perhaps nine months hence—ay, remember, Sir—I said that—a—certain person in this family—nine months hence—may ask me to stand godmother—only remember—for I think I know what's what—when I see it, as well as another.

Sid. No doubt you do, Mrs. Betty.

Bet. I do indeed, Sir; and so your servant, Sir; [*Going, returns.*] but I hope your worship will not mention my name in this business;—or that you had any item from me about it.

Sid. I shall not, Mrs. Betty.

Bet. For indeed, Sir, I am no busy body, nor do I love fending or proving—and I assure you, Sir, I hate all titling and tattling—and gossiping, and backbiting—and taking away a person's character.

Sid. I observe you do, Mrs. Betty.

Bet. I do, indeed, Sir;—I am the furthest from it of any person in the world

Sid. I dare say you are.

Bet. I am, indeed, Sir; and so, Sir, your humble servant.

Sid. Your servant, Mrs. Betty.

Bet. So! I see he believes every word I say; that's charming—I will do her business for her, I am resolved. [*Aside: exit.*]

Sid. What can this ridiculous creature mean—by her dark walk?—I see envy is as malignant in a paltry waiting wench, as in the vainest, or the most ambitious lady of the court. It is always an infallible mark of the basest nature; and merit, in the lowest as in the highest station, must feel the shafts of envy's constant agents—falsehood and slander.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir, Mr. Egerton and Miss Constantia desire to speak with you in the china-room.

Sid. Very well, Sam. [*Exit SAM.*] I will not see them—what's to be done?—inform his father of his intended marriage!—no;—that must not be—for the overbearing temper and ambitious policy of Sir Pertinax would exceed all bounds of moderation. But this young man must not marry Constantia—I know it will offend him—no matter. It is our duty to offend, when the offence saves the man we love from a precipitate action.—Yes, I must discharge the duty of my function and a friend, though I am sure to lose the man whom I intend to serve. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter EGERTON and CONSTANTIA.

Con. Mr. Sidney is not here, Sir.

Eger. I assure you I left him here, and I begged that he would stay till I returned.

Con. His prudence, you see, Sir, has made him retire; therefore we had better defer the subject till he is present—In the meantime, Sir, I hope you will permit me to mention an affair that has greatly alarmed and perplexed me. I suppose you guess what it is?

Eger. I do not, upon my word!

Con. That's a little strange—You know, Sir, that you and Mr. Sidney did me the honour of breakfasting with me this morning in my little study.

Eger. We had that happiness, Madam.

Con. Just after you left me, upon my opening my book of accounts, which lay in the drawer of the reading desk, to my great surprise—I there found this case of jewels, containing a most elegant pair of ear-rings, a necklace of great value, and two bank-bills, in this pocket-book; the mystery of which, Sir, I presume you can explain.

Eger. I can.

Con. They were of your conveying, then?

Eger. They were, Madam.

Con. I assure you, they startled and alarmed me.

Eger. I hope it was a kind alarm, such as blushing virtue feels, when with her hand she gives her heart—and last consent.

Con. It was not, indeed, Sir.

Eger. Do not say so, Constantia—come, be kind at once; my peace and worldly bliss depend upon this moment.

Con. What would you have me do?

Eger. What love and virtue dictate.

Con. Oh! Sir—experience but too severely proves that such unequal matches as ours never produced aught but contempt and anger in parents, censure from the world—and a long train of sorrow and repentance in the wretched parties, which is but too often entailed upon their hapless issue.

Eger. But that, Constantia, cannot be our condition; for my fortune is independent and ample, equal to luxury and splendid folly; I have the right to choose the partner of my heart.

Con. But I have not, Sir—I am a dependent on my lady—a poor, forsaken, helpless orphan. Your benevolent mother found me, took me to her bosom, and there supplied my parental loss with every tender care, indulgent dalliance, and with all the sweet persuasion that maternal fondness, religious precept, polished manners, and hourly example, could administer. She fostered me; [*Weeps*]; and shall I now turn viper, and with black ingratitude sting the tender heart that thus has cherished me? Shall I seduce her house's heir, and kill her peace? No—though I loved to the mad extreme of female fondness; though every worldly bliss that woman's vanity or man's ambition could desire, followed the indulgence of my love, and all the contempt and misery of this life the denial of that indulgence, I would discharge my duty to my benefactress, my earthly guardian, my more than parent.

Eger. My dear Constantia! Your prudence, your gratitude, and the cruel virtue of your self-denial, do but increase my love, my admiration, and my misery.

Con. Sir, I must beg you will give me leave to return these bills and jewels.

Eger. Pray do not mention them; sure my kindness and esteem may be indulged so far, without suspicion and reproach—I beg you will accept of them; nay, I insist—

Con. I have done, Sir,—my station here is to obey—I know they are gifts of a virtuous mind, and mine shall convert them to the tenderest and most grateful use.

Eger. Hark! I hear a carriage—it is my father; dear girl, compose yourself—I will consult Sidney and my lady: by their judgment we will be directed;—will that satisfy you?

Con. I can have no will but my lady's; with your leave, I will retire—I would not see her in this confusion.

Eger. Dear girl, adieu! [*Exit* CONSTANTIA.]

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir Pertinax and my lady are come, Sir; and my lady desires to speak with you in her own room—Oh! she is here, Sir. [*Exit* SAM.]

Enter LADY MACSYCOPHANT.

Lady M. Dear child I am glad to see you: why did you not come to town yesterday, to attend the levee—your father is incensed to the uttermost at your not being there.

Eger. Madam, it is with extreme regret I tell you, that I can no longer be a slave to his temper, his politics, and his scheme of marrying me to this woman. Therefore you had better consent at once to my going out of the kingdom, and to my taking Constantia with me; for, without her, I never can be happy.

Lady M. As you regard my peace, or your own character, I beg you will not be guilty of so rash a step—you promised me, you would never marry her without my consent. I will open it to your father: pray, dear Charles, be ruled—let me prevail.

Eger. Madam, I cannot marry this lady.

Lady M. Well, well; but do not determine. First patiently hear what your father and Lord Lumbercourt have to propose, and let them try to manage this business for you with your father—pray do, Charles.

Eger. Madam, I submit.

Lady M. And while he is in this ill humour, I beg you will not oppose him, let him say what he will; when his passion is a little cool, I will try to bring him to reason—but pray do not thwart him.

Sir P. [*Without.*] Haud your gab, ye scoundrel, and do as you are bid. Zounds! ye are so full of your gab. Take the chesnut gelding, return to town, and inquire what is become of my lord.

Lady M. Oh! here he comes, I'll get out of the way. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. [*Without.*] Here you, Tomlins.

Tom. [*Without.*] Sir.

Sir P. [*Without.*] Where is my son Egerton?

Tom. [*Without.*] In the library, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. [*Without.*] Vary weel, the instant the lawyers come, let me ken it.

Enter SIR PERTINAX.

Sir P. Vary weel—Vary weel—ah, ye are a fine fellow—what have ye to say for yourself—are not ye a fine spark? are ye not a fine spark, I say?—ah! you're a—so you would not come up till the levee?

Eger. Sir, I beg your pardon—but—I—I—I was not very well;—besides—I did not think that—that my presence there was necessary.

Sir P. Sir, it was necessary—I tauld ye it was necessary—and, Sir—I must now tell ye,

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that the whole tenor of your conduct is most offensive.

Eger. I am sorry you think so, Sir. I am sure I do not intend to offend you.

Sir P. [*In anger.*] I care not what ye intend—Sir, I tell ye, ye do offend—What is the meaning of this conduct?—neglect the levee!—Sdeath! Sir, your—what is your reason, I say, for thus neglecting the levee, and disobeying my commands?

Eger. Sir, I own—I am not used to levees;—nor do I know how to dispose of myself—nor what to say or do, in such a situation.

Sir P. Zounds, Sir! do you not see what others do? gentle and simple; temporal and spiritual; lords, members, judges, generals, and bishops? aw crowding, bustling, pushing foremost intill the middle of the circle, and there waiting, watching, and striving to catch a luock or a smile fra the great mon; which they meet with an amicable risibility of aspect—a modest cadence of body—and a conciliating co-operation of the whole mon;—which expresses an officious promptitude for his service, and indicates—that they luock upon themselves as the suppliant appendages of his power, and the enlisted Swiss of his poletical fortune—this, Sir, is what ye ought to do—and this, Sir, is what I never once omitted for these five-and-thirty years—let wha would be meenister.

Eger. [*Aside.*] Contemptible!

Sir P. What is it that ye mutter, Sir?

Eger. Only a slight reflection, Sir; and not relative to you.

Sir P. Sir, your absenting yoursal fra the levee at this juncture is suspicious—it is luocked upon as a kind of disaffection; and aw your countrymen are highly offended with yeer conduct: for, Sir, they do not luock upon ye as a friend or a weel wisher either to Scotland or Scotsmen.

Eger. Then, Sir, they wrong me, I assure you; but pray, Sir, in what particular can I be charged either with coldness or offence to my country?

Sir P. Why, Sir, ever since your mother's uncle, Sir Stanley Egerton, left ye this three thousand pounds a year; and that ye have, in compliance with his will, taken up the name of Egerton, they think ye are grown proud—that ye have estranged yoursal fra the Macsycophants—have associated with yeer mother's family—with the opposition—and with those, again I must tell you, wha do not wish weel till Scotland—besides, Sir, in a conversation the other day, after dinner, at yeer cousin Campbell Mackenzies, before a whole table full of yeer ain relations, did ye not publicly wish—a total extinguishment of aw party, and of aw national distinctions whatever, relative to the three kingdoms. And, ye blockhead—was that a prudent wish—before sae many of yeer own countrymen, and be damned to ye! Or, was it a filial language to hold before me?

Eger. Sir, with your pardon—I cannot think it unfilial, or imprudent; I own I do wish—most ardently wish, for a total extinction of all parties—particularly that of English, Irish, and Scotch, might never more be brought into contest, or competition; unless, like loving brothers, in generous emulation for one common cause.

Sir P. How, Sir; do ye persist?—what, would ye banish aw party—and aw distinction betwaxt English, Irish, and your ain countrymen?

Eger. I would, Sir.

Sir P. Then damme, Sir—ye are nae true Scot. Ay, Sir, ye may luock as angry as ye wull; but again I say—ye are nae true Scot.

Eger. Your pardon, Sir, I think he is the true Scot, and the true citizen, who wishes equal justice to the merit and demerit of every subject of Great Britain.—Amongst whom, Sir, I know but of two distinctions.

Sir P. Weel, Sir, and what are those? what are those? [*Impatience.*]

Eger. The knave and—the honest man.

Sir P. Pshaw! redecculous!

Eger. And he who makes any other—let him be of the north or of the south, of the east or of the west, in place or out of place—is an enemy to the whole, and to the virtues of humanity.

Sir P. Ay, Sir! this is your brother's impudent doctrine—for the which I have banished him for ever fra my presence, my heart, and my fortune—Sir, I will have nae son of mine, because truly he has been educate in the English university, presume to speak against his native land—or against my principles. Sir, Scotsmen—Scotsmen, Sir—wherever they meet throughout the globe—should unite and stick together, as it were, in a poleetical phalanx. However—nae mair of that now, I will talk at large till ye about that business anon; in the meantime, Sir, notwithstanding your contempt of my advice, and your disobedience till my commands, I woul convince ye of my paternal attention till your welfare, by my management with this voluptuary—this Lord Lumbercourt, whose daughter ye are to marry:—ye ken, Sir, that the fellow has been my patron above these five-and-thirty years.

Eger. True, Sir.

Sir P. Vary weel—and now, Sir, you see by his prodigality he is become my dependant; and accordingly I have made my bargain with him—the deel a bawbee he has in the world but what comes through these clutches; for his whole estate, which has three impleecit boroughs upon it—mark—is now in my custody at nurse; the which estate, on my paying off his debts, and allowing him a life-rent of seven thousand per annum, is to be made over till me for my life; and at my death is to descend till ye and your issue—the peerage of Lumbercourt, you ken, will follow of course—so, Sir, you see there are three impleecit boroughs, the whole patrimony of Lumbercourt, and a peerage, at one slap—why it is a stroke—a hit—a hit—a capital hit, mon. Zounds! Sir, a man may live a century, and not make sic another hit again!

Eger. It is a very advantageous bargain, no doubt, Sir; but what will my lord's family say to it?

Sir P. Why, mon, he cares not if his family were aw at the deel, so his luxury be but gratified—only let him have his race-horse, till feed his vanity; his polite blacklegs, to advise him in his matches on the turf, cards, and tennis; his haridan, till drink drams wi' him, scrat his face, and burn his periwig, when she is in her maudlin hysterics—the fellow has aw that he wants, and aw that he wishes, in this world—

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Lady Rodolpha is come, Sir.

Sir P. And my lord?

Tom. No, Sir, he is about a mile behind, the servant says.

Sir P. Let me know the instant he arrives.

Tom. I shall, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Step ye oot, Charles, and receive Lady Rodolpha. And I desire, Sir, ye woul treat her with ass much respect and gallantry ass possible—for my lord has hinted that ye have been very remiss ass a lover. Adzooks, Charles! ye should admeenister a whole torrent o' flattery till her; for a woman ne'er thinks a man loves her, till he has made an idiot of her understanding by flattery; flattery is the prime bliss o' the sex, the nectar and ambrosia o' their charms; and ye can ne'er gi'e them o'er muckle of it: sae, there's a guid lad, gang and mind yeer flattery. [*Exit EGERTON.*]

Hah! I must keep a tight hand upon this fallow, I see. I'm frightened oot o' my wits lest his mother's family should seduce him to their party, which would ruin my whole scheme, and break my heart. A fine time o' day indeed for a block-head to turn patriot—when the character is exploded, marked, proscribed; why, the common people, the very vulgar, have found out the jest, and laugh at a patriot now-a-days, just as they do at a conjurer, a magician, or any other impostor in society.

Enter TOMLINS and LORD LUMBERCOURT.

Tom. Lord Lumbercourt. [*Exit.*]

Lord L. Sir Pertinax, I kiss your hand.

Sir P. Your lordship's most devoted—I rejoice to see you.

Lord L. You stole a march upon me this morning!—gave me the slip, Mac; though I never wanted your assistance more in my life. I thought you would have called upon me.

Sir P. My dear lord, I beg ten millions of pardons, for leaving town before you—but ye ken that your lordship at dinner yesterday settled that we should meet this morning at the levee?

Lord L. That I acknowledge, Mac—I did promise to be there, I own—but—

Sir P. You did, indeed—and accordingly I was at the levee; and waited there till every mortal was gone, and seeing you did na come, I concluded that your lordship was gone before.

Lord L. To confess the truth, my dear Mac, that old sinner, Lord Freakish, General Jolly, Sir Anthony Soaker, and two or three more of that set, laid hold of me last night at the opera; and, as the General says,—I believe, by the intelligence of my head this morning—ha! ha! ha! we drank deep ere we departed—ha! ha! ha! and—

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha! nay, if you were with that party, my lord, I don't wonder at not seeing your lordship at the levee!

Lord L. The truth is, Sir Pertinax, my fellow let me sleep too long for the levee. But I wish I had seen you before you left town—I wanted you dreadfully.

Sir P. I am heartily sorry that I was not in the way; but on what account, my lord, did you want me?

Lord L. Ha! ha! ha! a cursed awkward affair—and—ha! ha! yet I cannot help laughing at it neither; though it vexed me confoundedly.

Sir P. Vexed you, my lord—I wish I had been wi' ye then; but for heaven's sake, my lord, what was it that could possibly vex your lordship?

Lord L. Why, that impudent, teasing, dunning rascal, Mahogany, my upholsterer—vou know the fellow?

Sir P. Perfectly, my lord.

Lord L. The impudent scoundrel has sued me up to some infernal kind of a—something or other, in the law, which I think they call an execution!

Sir P. The rascal!

Lord L. Upon which, Sir, the fellow—ha! ha! ha! I cannot help laughing at it—by way of asking pardon, ha! ha! ha! had the modesty to wait on me two or three days ago—to inform my honour, ha! ha! as he was pleased to dignify me—that the execution was now ready to be put in force against my honour, ha! ha! ha!—but that, out of respect to my honour, as he had taken a great deal of my honour's money, he would not suffer his lawyer to serve it—till he had first informed my honour—because he was not willing to affront my honour! ha! ha! ha!—a son of a whore!

Sir P. I never heard of so impudent a dog.

Lord L. Now, my dear Mac! ha! ha! as the scoundrel's apology was so very satisfactory, and his information so very agreeable to my honour—I told him, that in honour I could not do less than to order his honour to be paid immediately.

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha!—vary weel—ye were as complainant ass the scoundrel till the full, I think, my lord.

Lord L. Ha! ha! ha! to the full; but you shall hear—you shall hear, Mac—so, Sir, with great composure, seeing a smart oaken cudgel, that stood very handily in a corner of my dressing-room—I ordered two of my fellows to hold the rascal, and another to take the cudgel, and return the scoundrel's civility with a good drubbing, as long as the stick lasted!

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha! admirable! as gude a stroke of humour as ever I heard of—and did they drub him soundly, my lord?

Lord L. Oh! most liberally, ha! ha! ha! most liberally; and there I thought the affair would have rested, till I should think proper to pay the scoundrel—but this morning, Sir, just as I was stepping into my chaise—my servants all about me—a fellow, called a tip-staff, stepped up, and begged the favour of my footman, who thrashed the upholsterer, and the two that held him, to go along with him upon a little business to my lord chief justice.

Sir P. The devil!

Lord L. And at the same instant I, in my turn, was accosted by two other very civil scoundrels, who, with a most insolent politeness, begged my pardon, and informed me, that I must not go into my own chaise!

Sir P. How, my lord! not intill your ain carriage!

Lord L. No, Sir—for that they, by order of the sheriff, must seize it, at the suit of a gentleman—one Mr. Mahogany, an upholsterer.

Sir P. An impudent villain!

Lord L. It is all true, I assure you; so you see, my dear Mac, what a damned country this is to live in, where noblemen are obliged to pay their debts, just like merchants, cobblers, peasants, or mechanics.—Is not that a scandal, dear Mac, to a nation.

Sir P. My lord, it is not only a scandal, but a national grievance.

Lord L. Sir, there is not another nation in the world that has such a grievance to complain of. But what concerns me most, I am afraid, my dear

Mac, that the villain will send down to Newmarket, and seize my string of horses.

Sir P. Your string of horses! We must prevent that, at all events:—that would be such a disgrace, I will despatch an express to town directly, to put a stop till the scoundrel's proceedings.

Lord L. Pr'ythee do, my dear Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Oh! it shall be done, my lord.

Lord L. Thou art an honest fellow, Sir Pertinax, upon honour.

Sir P. Oh, my lord: 'tis my duty to oblige your lordship to the very utmost stretch of my abeility.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Colonel Toper presents his compliments to you, Sir, and having no family down with him in the country—he and captain Hardbottle, if not inconvenient, will do themselves the honour of taking a family dinner with you.

Sir P. They are two of our militia officers: does your lordship know them?

Lord L. By sight only.

Sir P. I am afraid, my lord, they will interrupt our business.

Lord L. Ha! ha! not at all—not at all—ha! ha! ha! I should like to be acquainted with Toper, they say he is a fine jolly fellow!

Sir P. Oh! very jolly, and very clever. He and the captain, my lord, are reckoned two of the hardest drinkers in the country.

Lord L. Ha! ha! ha! so I have heard—let us have them by all means, Mac; they will enliven the scene—how far are they from you!

Sir P. Just across the meadows—not half a mile, my lord—a step—a step.

Lord L. Oh, let us have the jolly dogs, by all means!

Sir P. My compliments, I shall be proud of their company. [*Exit TOMLINS.*] Gif ye please, my lord, we wull gang and chat a bit wi' the women. I have not seen lady Rodolpha since she returned frae the Bath; I long to have a little news from her about the company there.

Lord L. Oh! she'll give you an account of them, I'll warrant you. [*A very loud laugh without.*] Here the hairbrin comes! it must be her by her noise.

Lady R. [*Without.*] Allons! gude folks—follow me—*sans ceremonie!*

Enter LADY RODOLPHA, LADY MACSYCOPHANT, EGERTON, and SIDNEY.

Lady R. [*Running up to Sir PERTINAX.*] Sir Pertinax,—your most devoted—most obsequious, and most obedient vassal. [*Courtesies very low.*]

Sir P. Lady Rodolpha—down till the ground my congratulations, duty, and affection, sincerely attend your ladyship. [*Bowing ridiculously low.*]

Lady R. Oh! Sir Pertinax—your humeility is most sublimely complaisant—at present unanswerable—but, Sir, I shall intensely study to return it [*Courtesies very low.*] fafty fold.

Sir P. Weel, Madam, ha! you luock gaily weel—and how—how is your ladyship after your jaunt till the Bath?

Lady R. Never better, Sir Pertinax—as well as youth, health, riotous spirits, and a careless, happy heart can make me.

Sir P. I am mighty glad till hear it, my lady.

Lord L. Ay, ay,—Rodolpha is always in spirits; Sir Pertinax, *Vive la bagatelle*, is the philosophy of our family, ha!—Rodolpha,—ha!

Lady R. Traith is it, my lord: and upon honour, I am determined it never shall be changed by my consent—weel I vow—ha! ha! ha! ha! *Vive la bagatelle* would be a most brilliant motto for the chariot of a belle of fashion—what say ye till my fancy, Lady Macsycophant?

Lady M. It would have novelty at least to recommend it, Madam.

Lady R. Which of aw charms is the most delightful that can accompany wit, taste, love, or friendship—for novelty, I take to be the true *je ne sçai quoi* of all wordly bliss. Cousin Egerton, should not you like to have a wife with *Vive la bagatelle* upon her wedding chariot?

Eger. Oh! certainly, Madam.

Lady R. Yes—I think it would be quite out of the common, and singularly ailegant.

Eger. Indisputably, Madam—for, as a motto is a word to the wise, or rather a broad hint to the whole world, of a person's taste and principles, *Vive la bagatelle* would be most expressive, at first sight, of your ladyship's characteristic!

Lady R. Oh, Maister Egerton! you touch my very heart wi' your approbation—ha! ha! ha! that is the very spirit of my intention, the instant I commence bride. Well, I am immensely proud that my fancy has the approbation of so sound an understanding—so sublime a genius—and so polished, nay, so exquisite a taste, as that of the accomplished Mr. Egerton.

Sir P. But, Lady Rodolpha, I wish, till ask your ladyship some questions about the company at Bath; they say ye had aw the world there.

Lady R. O, yes!—there was a vary great mob indeed; but vary little company: aw canaille—except our ain party; the place was quite crowded wi' your little purseprood mechanics—an odd kind of queer luocking animals, that ha'e started intill fortunes fra lottery tickets, rich prizes at sea, gambling in Change Alley, and sic like caprices of fortune, and awaw they aw croud till the Bath, to larn genteelity, and the names, titles, intrigues, and bon mots of us people of fashion—ha! ha! ha!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Lord L. Ha! ha! ha! I know them—I know the things you mean, my dear, extremely well. I have observed them a thousand times; and wondered where the devil they all came from! ha! ha! ha!

Lady M. Pray, Lady Rodolpha, what were your diversions at Bath?

Lady R. Gude faith, my lady, the company were my diversion—and better nae human follies ever afforded—ha! ha! ha! sic an a maxture—and sic oddits, ha! ha! ha! a perfect gallimowfry! ha! ha! ha! Lady Kunigunda Mackenzie and I used to gang about till every part of this human chaos, ha! ha! on purpose till reconnoitre the monsters, and pick up their frivolities, ha! ha! ha! ha!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha! why, that must have been a high entertainment till your ladyship!

Lady R. Superlative, and inexhaustible, Sir Pertinax: ha! ha! ha! Madam, we had in yane group a peer and a sharper—a duchess and a pin-maker's wife—a boarding-school miss and her grandmother—a fat parson, a lean general, and a yellow admiral—ha! ha! all speaking together, and bawling, and fretting, and fuming, and wrangling, and retorting in fierce contention, as if the fame, and the fortune, of aw the parties, were till be the issue of the conflict.

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, Madam, what was the object of their furious contantion?

Lady R. Oh! a vary important one, I assure you, Sir Pertinax; of no less consequence, Madam, than how an odd trick at whist was lost, or might have been saved!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Lady R. In another party, Sir Pertinax, we had what was called the cabinet council; which was composed of a duke and a haberdasher—a red hot patriot and a sneering courtier—a discarded statesman and his scribbling chaplain—wi' a busy bawling, muckle-headed, prerogative lawyer—All of whom were every minute ready to gang together by the lugs, aboot the in and the oot meenistry: ha! ha! ha!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha! weel, that was a droll, motley cabinet, I vow. Vary whimsical, upon honour; but they are all great politeecians at Bath, and settle a meenistry there with ass much ease ass they do a tune for a country dance!

Lady R. Then, Sir Pertinax, in a retired part of the room—snug—in a by-corner—in close conference, we had a Jew and a beeshop.

Sir P. A Jew and a beeshop! ha! ha! a devilish gude connexion that; and pray, my lady, what were they aboot?

Lady R. Why, Sir, the beeshop was striving to convert the Jew; while the Jew, by intervals, was sliely picking up intelligence fra the beeshop, aboot the change in the meenistry, in hopes of making a stroke in the stocks.

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha! admirable, admirable, I honour the smouse—hah!—it was deevilish clever of him, my lord, deevilish clever, the Jew distilling the beeshop's brains.

Lord L. Yes, yes, the fellow kept a sharp look out; I think it was a fair trial of skill on both sides, Mr. Egerton.

Eger. True, my lord; but the Jew seems to have been in the fairer way to succeed.

Lord L. Oh! all to nothing, Sir: ha! ha! ha! Well, child, I like your Jew and your bishop much—it is monstrous clever, let us have the rest of the history, pray, my dear.

Lady R. Gude traith, my lord, the sum total is, that there we aw danced, and wrangled, and flattered, and slandered, and gambled, and cheated, and mingled, and jumbled—

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Lord L. Well, you are a droll girl, Rodolpha, and upon honour, ha! ha! ha!—you have given us as whimsical a sketch as ever was hit off. What say you, Mr. Sidney?

Sid. Upon my word, my lord, the lady has made me see the whole assembly at Bath, in glaring, pleasing, distinct colours!

Lady R. O, dear Maister Sidney, your approbation makes me as vain as a reigning toast at her looking-glass.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Colonel Toper and Captain Hardbottle are come, Sir.

Sir P. O, vary weel! dinner immediately.

Tom. It is ready, Sir. [*Exit TOMLINS.*]

Sir P. My lord, we attend your lordship.

Lord L. Lady Mac, your ladyship's hand, if you please. [*He leads her out.*]

Sir P. Lady Rodolpha, here is an Arcadian swain, that has a hand at your ladyship's devotion!

Lady R. And I, *Sir Pertinax*, ha'e yane at his — [*Gives her hand to EGERTON.*] there, *Sir*,—as to hearts—ye ken, cousin, they are nae brought into the account o' human dealings now-a-days.

Eger. Oh! Madam, they are mere temporary baubles, especially in courtship; and no more to be depended upon than the weather—or a lottery ticket.

Lady R. Ha! ha! ha! twa axcellent seemilies, I vow, *Mr. Egerton*, axcellent!—for they illustrate the vagaries and inconstancy of my dissipated heart, ass exactly—ass if ye had meant till describe it. [*EGERTON leads her out.*]

Sir P. Ha! ha! what a vast fund of speerits and good humour she has, *Maister Sidney*.

Sid. A great fund, indeed, *Sir Pertinax*.

Sir P. Hah! by this time to-morrow, *Maister Sidney*, I hope we shall ha'e every thing ready for ye to put the last helping hand till the earthly happiness o' your friend and pupil; and then, *Sir*, my cares wull be over for this life; for as till my other son I expect nae gude o' him; nor should I grieve were I to see him in his coffin. But this match—Oh! it wull make me the happiest of aw human beings. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter SIR PERTINAX and EGERTON.

Sir P. *Sir*, I wull not hear a word aboot it;—I insist upon it ye are wrong—ye should ha'e paid your court till my lord, and not ha'e scrupled swallowing a bumper or twa—or twanty till oblige him!

Eger. *Sir*, I did drink his toast in a bumper.

Sir P. Yas, ye did; but how?—how?—just ass a cross-brain takes pheesic, wi' wry mouths, and sour faces, whach my lord observed; then, to mend the matter, the moment that he and the colonel got intill a drunken dispute aboot reelegion, ye silyly slunged awa'.

Eger. I thought, *Sir*, it was time to go, when my lord insisted upon half-pint bumpers.

Sir P. *Sir*, that was not levelled at you—but at the colonel, the captain, and the commissioner, in order till try their bottoms; but they aw agreed that ye and I should drink oot o' smaw glasses.

Eger. But, *Sir*, I beg pardon—I did not choose to drink any more.

Sir P. But, *Sir*, I tell you there was necessity for your drinking more at this particular juncture.

Eger. A necessity! in what respect, *Sir*?

Sir P. Why, *Sir*, I have a certain point to carry, independent of the lawyers, with my lord, in this agreement of your marriage, aboot whach, I am afraid we shall ha'e a warm crooked squabble—and therefore I wanted your assistance in it.

Eger. But how, *Sir*, could my drinking contribute to assist you in your squabble?

Sir P. Yas, *Sir*, it woud ha'e contributed—it might have prevented the squabble.

Eger. How so, *Sir*?

Sir P. Why, *Sir*, my lord is proud of ye for a son-in-law, and of your little French songs—your stories, and your bon mots, when ye are in the humour—and gin ye had but staid, and been a leetle jolly, and drank half a score bumpers wi' him, till he got a little tipsy, I am sure when we

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had him i' that tipsy mood—we might ha'e settled the point amongst ourselves, before the lawyers came—but noow, *Sir*, I dinna ken what will be the consequence.

Eger. But when a man is intoxicated, woud that have been a seasonable time to settle business, *Sir*?

Sir P. The most seasonable, *Sir*, the most seasonable; for, *Sir*, when my lord is in his cups, his suspection and his judgment are baith asleep, and his heart is aw jollity, fun, and gude fellowship—you may then mould his consent to any thing; and can there be a happier moment than that for a bargain, or to settle a dispute wi' a friend? What is it you shrug your shoulders at, *Sir*?

Eger. At my own ignorance, *Sir*: for I understand neither the philosophy nor the morality of your doctrine.

Sir P. I ken ye do not, *Sir*:—and what is warse, ye never wull understand it, ass ye proceed. In yane word, *Charles*—I ha'e often tauld ye, and noow again I tell ye yance for aw, that every man should be a man o' the world, and should understand the doctrine of pleabeelity; for, *Sir*, the manœuvres of pleabeelity are ass necessary to rise in the world, ass wrangling and logical subtlety are to rise at the bar. Why ye see, *Sir*, I ha'e acquired a noble fortune, a princely fortune, and hoow do ye think I ha'e raised it?

Eger. Doubtless, *Sir*, by your abilities.

Sir P. Dootless, *Sir*, ye are a blockhead—nae, *Sir*, I'll tell ye hoow I raised it, *Sir*; I raised it by boowing; by boowing, *Sir*; I naver in my life could stond straight i' th' presence of a great mon; but always boowed, and boowed, and boowed, as it were by instinct.

Eger. How do you mean, by instinct, *Sir*?

Sir P. Hoow do I mean, by instinct—why, *Sir*, I mean by—by—by instinct of interest, *Sir*, whach is the universal instinct of mankind, *Sir*: it is wonderful to think, what a cordial, what an amicable, nay, what an infallible influence, boowing has upon the pride and vanity of human nature; *Charles*, answer me sincerely, ha'e ye a mind till be convinced of the force of my doctrine, by example and demonstration?

Eger. Certainly, *Sir*.

Sir P. Then, *Sir*, as the greatest favour I can confer upon ye, I wull give ye a short sketch of the stages of my boowing; ass an excitement and a landmark for ye till boow by, and as an infallible nostrum for a mon o' the world till thrive i' the world.

Eger. *Sir*, I shall be proud to profit by your experience.

Sir P. Vary weel. [*They both sit down.*]

And noow, *Sir*, ye must recall till your thoughts, that your grandfather was a mon, whose penurious income of half-pay was the sum total of his fortune; and, *Sir*, aw my proveession fra him was a modicum of Latin, an expartness of areethmetic, and a short system of worldly counsel; the chief ingredients of which were, a persevering industry, a reegid economy, a smooth tongue, a pliabeelity of temper, and a constant attention till make every mon weel pleased wi' himself.

Eger. Very prudent advice, *Sir*.

Sir P. Therefore, *Sir*, I lay it before ye—now, *Sir*, wi' these materials, I set oot, a rough raw-boned stripling, fra the north, till try my fortune wi' them here i' the south; and my first step

intill the world was a beggarly clerkship in Sawney Gordon's counting-house, here i' the city of London, whach, you'll say, afforded but a barren sort of a prospect.

Eger. It was not a very fertile one, indeed, Sir.

Sir P. The reverse, the reverse. Well, Sir, seeing mysel in this unprofitable situation, I reflected deeply, I cast about my thoughts, and concluded that a matrimonial adventure, prudently conducted, would be the readiest gait I could gang for the bettering of my condection, and accordingly set about it—noow, Sir, in this pursuit—beauty—beauty, ah! beauty often struck mine eyne, and played about my heart, and fluttered, and beet, and knocked, and knocked, but the deel an entrance I ever let it get—for I observed that beauty is generally a prood, vain, saucy, expensive sort of a commodity.

Eger. Very justly observed, Sir.

Sir P. And therefore, Sir, I left it to prodigals and coxcombs, that could afford till pay for it, and in its stead, Sir,—mark—I lucked oot for an ancient, weel-jointured, superannuated dowager:—a consumptive, toothless, phthisicky, wealthy widow—or a shreeveled, cadaverous, neglected piece of deformity, i' th' shape of an eazar, or an empersi-and—or in short, any thing, any thing, that had the siller, the siller; for that was the north star of my affection—do ye take me, Sir? Was nae that right?

Eger. O doubtless, doubtless, Sir.

Sir P. Noow, Sir, where do ye think I gaed to luck for this woman wi' th' siller—nae till court—nae till play-houses, or assemblies—ha, Sir, I gaed till the kirk, till the Anabaptists, Independent, Bradleonian, Muggleonian meetings; till the morning and evening service of churches and chapels of ease; and till the midnight, melting, conceeliating love-feasts of the Methodists—and there at last, Sir, I fell upon an old, rich, sour, slighted, antiquated, musty maiden; that lucked—ha! ha! she lucked just like a skeleton in a surgeon's glass-case—noow, Sir, this meeserable object was relegiously angry wi' hersel, and aw the world; had nae comfort but in a supernatural, relegious, enthusiastic deleerium; ha! ha! ha! Sir, she was mad—mad ass a bedlamite.

Eger. Not improbable, Sir; there are numbers of poor creatures in the same enthusiastic condition.

Sir P. Oh! numbers, numbers; now, Sir, this poor, cracked, crazy creature, used to sing, and sigh, and groan, and weep, and wail, and gnash her teeth constantly, morning and evening, at the tabernacle. And ass soon ass I found she had the siller, aha! gude traith, I plumped me doon upo' my knees close by her, cheek-by-jole, and sung, and sighed, and groaned as vehemently ass she could do for the life of her; ay, and turned up the whites of my eyne, till the strings almost cracked again. I watched her attentively; handed her till her chair; waited on her hame; got most relegiously intimate wi' her in a week; married her in a fortnight; buried her in a month; touched the siller; and wi' a deep suit of mourning, a sorrowful veeage, and a joyful heart, I began the world again: and this, Sir, was the first effectual boow I ever made till the vanity of human nature: noow, Sir, do ye understand this doctrine?

Eger. Perfectly well Sir.

Sir P. My next boow, Sir, was till your ain mother, whom I ran away wi' fra the boarding-school, by the interest of whose family I got a gude smart place i' th' treasury; and, Sir, my vary next step was intill parliament, the whach I entered wi' ass ardent and ass determined an ambection, ass ever ageated the heart o' Cæsar himsel. Sir, I boowed, and watched, and attended, and dangled upo' the then great mon, till I got intill the vary bowels of his confidence—hah! got my snack of the clothing, the foraging, the contracts, the lottery tickets, and aw the poleetical bonuses; till at length, Sir, I became a much wealthier mon than one half of the golden calves I had been so long a boowing to. [*He rises, EGERTON rises too.*] And was nae that boowing to some purpose, Sir, ha?

Eger. It was, indeed, Sir.

Sir P. But are ye convinced of the gude effects, and of the uteelity of boowing?

Eger. Thoroughly, Sir, thoroughly.

Sir P. Sir, it is infallible—but, Charles, ah! while I was thus boowing and raising this princely fortune, ah! I met many heart sores, and disappointments, fra the want of leterature, ailouquence, and other popular abeelities; Sir, gin I could but ha'e spoken i' th' house, I should ha'e done the deed in half the time; but the instant I opened my mouth there, they aw fell a laughing at me: aw which defeeciencies, Sir, I determined at any expense till have supplied by the polished education of a son, who I hoped would yane day raise the house of Macyscopant till the highest pinnacle of ministeerial ambection; this, Sir, is my plan; I ha'e done my part of it: Nature has done her's: ye are alioquant, ye are popular; aw parties like ye; and noow, Sir, it only remains for ye to be directed—completion follows.

Eger. Your liberality, Sir, in my education, and the judicious choice you made of the worthy gentleman, to whose virtues and abilities you entrusted me, are obligations I ever shall remember with the deepest filial gratitude.

Sir P. Vary weel, Sir—vary weel; but, Charles, ha'e ye had any conversation yet wi' Lady Rodolpha, about the day of yeer marriage, yeer leeveries, yeer equipage, or yeer establishment?

Eger. Not yet, Sir.

Sir P. Pah! why there again now, there again ye are wrong; vary wrong.

Eger. Sir, we have not had an opportunity.

Sir P. Why, Charles, ye are vary tardy in this business.

Lord L. [*Singing without.*]

What have we with day to do? &c.

Sir P. Oh! here comes my lord!

Lord L. [*Singing without.*]

Sons of care, 'twas made for you.

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT, *drinking a dish of coffee*; TOMLINS *waiting, with a salver in his hand.*

Sons of care, 'twas made for you.

Very good coffee indeed, Mr. Tomlins.

Sons of care, 'twas made for you.

Here, Mr. Tomlins. [*Gives him the cup.*]

Tom. Will your lordship please to have another dish?

Lord L. No more, Mr. Tomlins. [*Exit* TOM.

LINS.] Well, my host of the Scotch pints! we have had warm work.

Sir P. Yes, you pushed the bottle aboot, my lord, wi' the joy and veegour of a bacchanal.

Lord L. That I did, my dear Mac—no loss of time with me—I have but three motions, old boy, charge!—toast!—fire!—and off we go—ha! ha! ha! that's my exercise.

Sir P. And fine warm exercise it is, my lord, especially with the half-pint glass.

Lord L. It does execution point blank—ay, ay, none of your pimping acorn glasses for me, but your manly, old English, half-pint bumpers, my dear.—Zounds, Sir, they try a fellow's stamina at once. But where's Egerton?

Sir P. Just at hand, my lord; there he stonds, loocking at your lordship's picture.

Lord L. My dear Egerton.

Eger. Your lordship's most obedient.

Lord L. I beg your pardon, I did not see you—I am sorry you left us so soon after dinner; had you staid, you would have been highly entertained; I have made such examples of the commissioner the captain, and the colonel.

Eger. So I understand, my lord.

Lord L. But, Egerton, I have slipped from the company, for a few moments, on purpose to have a little chat with you. Rodolpha tells me, she fancies there is a kind of a demur on your side, about your marriage with her.

Sir P. A demur, hoow so, my lord?

Lord L. Why, as I was drinking my coffee with the women, just now, I desired they would fix the wedding night, and the etiquette of the ceremony; upon which the girl burst into a loud laugh, telling me she supposed I was joking, for that Mr. Egerton had never yet given her a single glance, or hint upon the subject.

Sir P. My lord, I have been just this vary instant talking to him aboot his shyness to the lady.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Counsellor Plausible is come, Sir, and Sergeant Eitherside.

Sir P. Why, then, we can settle this business this vary evening, my lord.

Lord L. As well as in seven years—and to make the way as short as possible, pray, Mr. Tomlins, present your master's compliments and mine to lady Rodolpha, and let her ladyship know we wish to speak to her directly. [Exit TOMLINS.] He shall attack her this instant, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha! ay! that's excellent, this is doing business effectually, my lord.

Lord L. Oh! I will pit them in a moment, Sir Pertinax—that will bring them into the heat of the action at once; and save a deal of awkwardness on both sides—Oh, here your Dulcinea comes, Sir!

Enter LADY RODOLPHA.

Lady R. Weel, Sir Pertinax, I attend your commands, and yours, my paternal lord.

[She courtesies.]

Lord L. Why then, my filial lady, we are to inform you, that the commission for your ladyship, and this enamoured cavalier, commanding you jointly and inseparably to serve your country, in the honourable and forlorn hope of matrimony, is to be signed this very evening.

Lady R. This evening, my lord!

Lord L. This evening, my lady: come, Sir Pertinax, let us leave them to settle their liveries, wedding suits, carriages, and all their amorous equipage for the nuptial camp.

Sir P. Ha! ha! ha! excellent! weel, I voow, my lord, ye are a great officer: this is as gude a manœuvre to bring on a rapid engagement, as the ablest general of them aw could ha'e started.

Lord L. Ay, ay; leave them together, they'll soon come to a right understanding, I warrant you, or the needle and the loadstone have lost their sympathy.

[Exeunt LORD LUMBERCOURT and SIR PERTINAX.]

Eger. What a dilemma am I in! [Aside.]

Lady R. Why, this is downright tyranny—it has quite damped my spirits, and my betrothed, yonder, seems planet-struck too, I think.

Eger. A whimsical situation mine! [Aside.]

Lady R. Ha! ha! ha! methinks we luock like a couple of cawtious geneerals, that are obliged till take the field, but neither of us seems willing till come to action. [Aside.]

Eger. I protest, I know not how to address her. [Aside.]

Lady R. He wull nae advance, I see—what am I to do i' this affair? gude traith, I wull even do as I suppose many brave heroes ha'e done before me; clap a gude face upo' the matter, and so conceal an aching heart under a swaggering countenance. [Aside.] Sir, Sir, ass we ha'e, by the commands of our gude fathers—a business of some little consequence till transact, I hope ye wull excuse my taking the leeberty of recommending a chair till ye. [Courtesies very low.]

Eger. [Greatly embarrassed.] Madam, I beg your pardon.

[Hands her a chair, then one for himself.]

Lady R. Aha! he's resolved not to come too near till me, I think. [Aside.]

Eger. A pleasant interview—hem! hem!

[Aside.]

Lady R. Hem! hem! [Mimics him.] He wull not open the congress, I see; then I wull. [Aside.] Come, Sir, whan wull ye begin?

[Very loud.]

Eger. [Starts.] Begin! what, Madam.

Lady R. To make love till me.

Eger. Love, Madam?

Lady R. Ay, love, Sir? why, you ha'e never said a word till me yet upo' the subject: nor cast a single glance on me, nor brought forth one tender sigh, nor even vance secretly squeezed my loof. Now, Sir, thoff oor fathers are so tyrannical ass to dispose of us merely for their ain interests, without a single thought of oor hearts or affections; yet, Sir, I hope ye ha'e mair humanity than to think of wedding me, without first admeenistering some of the preleeminaries usual on those occasions.

Eger. Madam, I own your reproach is just; I shall therefore no longer disguise my sentiments, but fairly let you know my heart—

Lady R. Ah! ye are right, ye are right, cousin. Honourably and affectionately right—noow that is what I like of aw things in my swain—ay, ay, cousin, open your heart frankly till me, ass a true lover should; but sit ye down, sit ye down again, I shall return your frankness, and your passion cousin, wi' a melting tenderness, equal to the amorous enthusiasm of an ancient heroine.

Eger. Madam, if you will hear me—

Lady R. But remember ye must begin yee!

address wi' fervency, and a most rapturous vehemence; for ye are to conseeder, cousin, that our match is nae till arise fra the union of hearts, and a long decorum of ceremonious courtship, but is instantly till start at yance out of necessity or mere accident, ha! ha! ha! just like a match in an ancient romance, where ye ken, cousin, the knight and the damsel are mutually smitten, and dying for each other at first sight; or by an amorous sympathy, before they exchange a single glance.

Eger. Dear Madam, you entirely mistake.

Lady R. So noow, cousin, wi' the true romantic enthusiasm, ye are till suppose me the lady o' the enchanted castle, and ye—ha! ha! ha! ye are to be the knight o' the sorrowful countenance—ha! ha! ha! and, upon honour, ye luock the character admirably, ha! ha!

Eger. Trifling creature!

Lady R. Nay, nay, nay, cousin, gin ye do na begin at yance, the lady o' the enchanted castle will vanish in a twinkling.

Eger. [*Rises.*] Lady Rodolpha, I know your talent for railery well; but at present, in my case, there is a kind of cruelty in it.

Lady R. Railery! upon my honour, cousin, ye mistake me quite and clean. I am serious; vary serious; and I have cause till be serious: ay, and vary sad intill the bargain; [*Rises.*] nay, I will submit my case even till yourself—can only poor lassie be in a mair lamentable condection [*Whining.*] than to be sent four hundred miles, by the commands of a positive grandmother, till marry a man who I find has nae mair affection for me than if I had been his wife these seven years.

Eger. Madam, I am extremely sorry.

Lady R. But it is vary weel, cousin—vary weel—I see your aversion plain enough—and, Sir, I must tell ye fairly, ye are the ainly mon that ever slighted my person, or that drew tears fra these eyne; but 'tis vary weel. [*Cries.*] I will return till Scotland to-morrow morning, and let my grandmother know how I have been affronted by your slights, your contempts, and your aversions.

Eger. If you are serious, Madam, your distress gives me a deep concern: but affection is not in our power; and when you know that my heart is irrecoverably given to another woman, I think your understanding and good nature will not only pardon my past coldness and neglect of you, but forgive me when I tell you, I never can have that honour which is intended me, by a connexion with your ladyship.

Lady R. [*Starting up.*] How, Sir! are ye serious?

Eger. Madam, I am too deeply interested, both as a man of honour and a lover, to act otherwise with you on so tender a subject.

Lady R. And so, ye persast in slighting me.

Eger. I beg your pardon, but I must be explicit—and at once declare, that I never can give my hand where I cannot give my heart.

Lady R. Why, then, Sir, I must tell you, that your declaration is sic an affront ass nae woman o' speerit ought to bear, and here I make a solemn vow never till pardon it—but on yane condection.

Eger. If that condition be in my power, Madam—

Lady R. Sir, it is i' your poower.

Eger. Then, Madam, you may command me.

Lady R. Why, then, Sir, the condection is this; ye must here gi'e me your honour, that nae importunity, command, or menace, o' your father—in fine, that nae consideration whatever shall induce you to take me, Rodolpha Lumbercourt, till be your wedded wife.

Eger. Madam! I most solemnly promise, I never will.

Lady R. And I, Sir, in my turn, most solemnly and sincerely thank ye for your resolution, [*Courtesies.*] and your agreeable aversion, ha! ha! ha! for ye ha'e made me as happy as a poor wretch reprieved in the vary instant of intended execution.

Eger. Pray, Madam, how am I to understand all this?

Lady R. Sir, your frankness and sincerity demand the same behaviour on my side. Therefore, without further disguise or ambiguity, know, Sir, that I myself am ass deeply smitten wi' a certain swain, ass I understand ye are wi' yeer Constantia.

Eger. Indeed, Madam!

Lady R. Oh, Sir, aw my extravagance, levity, and redeculous behaviour in your presence, noow, and ever since your father prevailed on mine to consent till this match, has been a premeditated scheme, to provoke your gravity and gude sense intill a cordial disgust, and a positive refusal.

Eger. Madam, you have contrived and executed your scheme most happily; but, with your leave, Madam, if I may presume so far—pray who is your lover?

Lady R. In that too I shall surprise you, Sir—he is [*Courtesies.*] your ain brither. So ye see, cousin Charles, thoff I could nae mingle affections wi' ye, I ha'e nae gaed oot o' the family.

Eger. Madam, give me leave to congratulate myself upon your affection—you couldn't have placed it on a worthier object; and whatever is to be our chance in this lottery of our parents, be assured that my fortune shall be devoted to your happiness and his.

Lady R. Generous indeed, cousin, but not a whit nobler, I assure you, than your brother Sandy believes of you; and pray, credit me, Sir, that we shall both remember it, while the heart feels, or memory retains a sense of gratitude: but now, Sir, let me ask one question—pray, how is your mother affected in this business?

Eger. She knows of my passion, and will, I am sure, be a friend to the common cause.

Lady R. Ah! that is lucky, vary lucky—our first step must be to take her advice upon our conduct, so as till keep our fathers in the dark, till we can hit off some measure that wull wind them about till our ain purpose, and till the common interest of our ain passions.

Eger. You are very right, Madam, for should my father suspect my brother's affection for your ladyship, or mine for Constantia, there is no guessing what would be the consequence; his whole happiness depends upon his bargain with my lord: for it gives him the possession of three boroughs, and those, Madam, are much dearer to him than the happiness of his children: I am sorry to say it, but to gratify his political rage, he would sacrifice every social tie that is dear to friend or family.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter SIR PERTINAX and COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE.

Sir P. No, no; come away, Counsellor Plausible—come away, I say; let them chew upon it—let them chew upon it.—Why, Counsellor, did ye ever hear so impertinent, so meddling, and so obstinate a blockhead, ass that Sergeant Eitherside? confound the fallow, he has put me oot of aw temper!

Plau. He is very positive, indeed, Sir Pertinax, and no doubt was intemperate and rude; but, Sir Pertinax, I would not break up the match notwithstanding: for, certainly, even without the boroughs, it is an advantageous bargain, both to you and your son.

Sir P. But, Plausible, do you think I will give up the nomination till three boroughs? why, I would rather give him twanty, nay, tharty thousand pounds in any other part o' th' bargain—especially at this juncture, when votes are likely to become so valuable—why, mon, if a certain affair comes on, they'll rise above five hundred per cent.

Plau. No doubt they will, Sir Pertinax—but what shall we do in this case? for Mr. Sergeant insists that you positively agreed to my lord's having the nomination to the three boroughs during his own life.

Sir P. Why, yes, in the first sketch of the agreement I believe I did consent; but at that time, mon, my lord's affairs did not appear to be half so desperate ass I noow find they turn oot. Sir, he must acquiesce in whatever I demand, for I ha'e gotten him intill sic an hobble, that he canna exist without me.

Plau. No doubt, Sir Pertinax, you have him absolutely in your power.

Sir P. Vary weel; and ought not a mon till make his vantage of it?

Plau. No doubt you ought, no manner of doubt; but, Sir Pertinax, there is a secret spring in this business that you do not seem to perceive, and which I am afraid governs the whole matter respecting these boroughs.

Sir P. What spring do ye mean, Counsellor?

Plau. Why this: I have some reason to think that my lord is tied down, by some means or other, to bring Sergeant Eitherside in, the very first vacancy, for one of those boroughs—now that, I believe, is the sole motive why the sergeant is so very strenuous that my lord should keep the boroughs in his own power, fearing that you might reject him for some man of your own.

Sir P. Oh! my dear Plausible, ye are clever—yes, vary clever—ye ha'e hit upo' the vary string that has made aw this discord—O! I see it—I see it noow; but haud, haud—bide a wee bit—a wee bit, mon—I ha'e a thought come intill my head—yes—I think noow, Plausible, wi' a little twist in oor negotiation, that the vary string, properly tuned, may be still made to produce the vary harmony we wish for—ya—yas, I ha'e it—this sergeant I see understands business, and if I am not mistaken knows hoow till take a hint.

Plau. Oh! nobody better, Sir Pertinax. nobody better.

Sir P. Why then, Plausible, the short road is

always the best wi' sic a man; ye must even come up till his mark at yance, and let him know fra me, that I will secure him a seat for yane of those vary boroughs.

Plau. Oh! that will do, Sir Pertinax; that will do, I'll answer for it.

Sir P. And further, I beg ye wull let him know, that I think myself obliged till conseeder him in this affair ass acting for me ass weel ass for my lord, ass a common friend till baith, and for the service he has already done us, mak' my special compliments till him; and pray let this soft, sterling, bit of paper be my faithful advocate till convince him what my gratitude further intends for his great [*Gives him a bank-bill.*] equity, in adjusting this agreement betwixt my lord's family and mine.

Plau. Ha! ha! ha! Sir Pertinax, upon my word this is noble—ay, ay! this is an eloquent bit of paper, indeed.

Sir P. Maister Plausible, in aw human dealings the most affectual method is that of ganging at yance till the vary bottom of a mon's heart—for, if we expect that men should serve us, we must first win their affections by serving them—Oh! here they baith come!

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT and SERGEANT EITHERSIDE.

Lord L. My dear Sir Pertinax, what could provoke you to break off this business so abruptly?—You are really wrong in the point; and if you will give yourself time to recollect, you will find that my having the nomination to the boroughs for my life, was a preliminary article—and I appeal to Mr. Sergeant Eitherside here, whether I did not always understand it so.

Serg. E. I assure you, Sir Pertinax, that in all his lordship's conversation with me upon this business, and in his positive instructions too, we always understood the nomination to be in my lord, *durante vita, durante vita*—clearly, clearly, beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Sir P. Why then, my lord, till shorten the dispute, aw I can say, in answer till your lordship, is, that there has been a total mistake betwixt us in that point—and therefore the treaty must end here—I give it up—I wash my hands of it for ever—for ever.

Plau. Well but, gentlemen, a little patience, pray. Sure this mistake, some how or other, may be rectified—Mr. Sergeant, pray let you and I step into the next room by ourselves, and reconsider the clause relative to the boroughs, and try if we cannot hit upon some medium that will be agreeable to both parties.

Serg. E. Mr. Plausible, I have already considered the clause fully, am entirely master of the question, and my lord cannot give up the point; it is unkind, unreasonable, to expect it, and I shall never, never—on no account whatsoever shall I ever advise him to give it up.

Plau. Nay, Mr. Sergeant, I beg you will not misapprehend me—do not think I want his lordship to give up any point without an equivalent. Sir Pertinax, will you permit Mr. Sergeant and me to retire for a few moments, to reconsider this point about the three boroughs?

Sir P. Wi' aw my heart and saul, Maister Plausible, ainy thing till accommodate his lordship—ainy thing—ainy thing.

Plau. What say you, my lord?

Lord L. Nay, I submit it entirely to you and Mr. Sergeant.

Plau. Come, Mr. Sergeant, let us retire.

Lord L. Ay, ay, go, Mr. Sergeant, and hear what Mr. Plausible has to say, however.

Serg. E. Nay, I will wait on Mr. Plausible, my lord, with all my heart; but I am sure I cannot suggest the shadow of a reason for altering my present opinion:—impossible, impossible, he cannot give them up; it is an opinion from which I never can depart.

Plau. Well, well, do not be positive, Mr. Sergeant; do not be positive. I am sure, reason, and your client's convenience, will always make you alter your opinion.

Serg. E. Ay, ay, reason, and my client's convenience, Mr. Plausible, will always control my opinion, depend upon it. Ay, ay! there you are right; Sir, I attend you. *[Exeunt Lawyers.]*

Sir P. I am sorry, my lord, extremely sorry, indeed, that this mistake has happened.

Lord L. Upon honour, and so am I, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. But come noow, after aw, your lordship must allow ye ha'e been i' the wrong. Come, my dear lord, ye must allow that noow.

Lord L. How so, my dear Sir Pertinax?

Sir P. Not about the boroughs, my lord, for those I do not mind of a bawbee—but about yeer distrust of my friendship. Why, do ye think noow, I appeal till your ain breast, my lord; do ye think, I say, that I should ever ha'e refused or slighted your lordship's nomination till these boroughs?

Lord L. Why really I don't think you would, Sir Pertinax; but one must be directed by one's lawyer, you know.

Sir P. Ha! my lord, lawyers are a dangerous species of animals till ha'e any dependence upon—they are always starting punctilios and deeficulties among friends. Why, my dear lord, it is their interest that aw mankind should be at variance; for disagreement is the vary manure wi' which they enrich and fatten the land of leetigation; and as they find that that constantly produces the best crop, depend upon it they will always be sure till lay it on ass thick ass they can.

Lord L. Come, come, my dear Sir Pertinax, you must not be angry with the sergeant for his insisting so warmly on this point—for those boroughs, you know, are my sheet anchor.

Sir P. I know it, my lord; and as an instance of my promptness to study, and my acquiescence till your lordship's inclination, ass I see that this Sergeant Eitherside wishes ye weel, and ye him, I think noow he would be as gude a mon to be returned for yane of those boroughs as could be pitched upon, and ass such I humbly recommend him to your lordship's consideration.

Lord L. Why, my dear Sir Pertinax, to tell you the truth, I have already promised him; he must be in for one of them; and that is one reason why I insisted so strenuously—he must be in.

Sir P. And why not?—why not? is nae yeer word a fiat? and wull it nae be always so till me? are ye nait my friend, my patron? and are ye nait by this match of our children to be united intill yane interest.

Lord L. So I understand it, I own, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. My lord, it canna be otherwise—then for heaven's sake, ass your lordship and I ha'e

but yane interest for the future, let us ha'e nae mair words aboot these paltry boroughs, but conclude the agreement at yance—just as it stands—otherwise there must be new writings drawn, new consultations of lawyers; new objections and delays will arise, creditors will be impatient and impertinent—so that we shall nae finish the Lord knows when.

Lord L. You are right, you are right; say no more, Mac, say no more—split the lawyers—you judge the point better than all Westminster-hall could—it shall stand as it is—yes, it shall be settled your own way, for your interest and mine are the same, I see plainly. Oh! here the lawyers come—so gentlemen—well, what have ye done—how are your opinions now?

Enter COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE and SERGEANT EITHERSIDE.

Serg. E. My lord, Mr. Plausible has convinced me—fully convinced me, that the boroughs should be given up to Sir Pertinax.

Plau. Yes, my lord, I have convinced him—I have laid such arguments before Mr. Sergeant, as were irresistible.

Serg. E. He has, indeed, my lord; for when I come to consider the long friendship that has subsisted between your lordship and Sir Pertinax; the great and mutual advantages that must attend this alliance; the various foreclosings, seizing, distracting, and in short every shape of ruin that the law can assume; all which must be put in force, should this agreement go off; and as Sir Pertinax gives his honour, that your lordship's nomination shall be sacredly observed, why, upon a nearer review of the whole affair, I am convinced that it will be the wiser measure to conclude the agreement just as it is drawn—just as it is drawn, my lord: it cannot be more to your advantage.

Lord L. I am very glad you think so, Mr. Sergeant, because that is my opinion too—so, my dear Eitherside, do you and Plausible despatch the business now as soon as possible.

Serg. E. My lord, every thing will be ready for signing in less than an hour—come, Mr. Plausible, let us go and fill up the blanks, and put the last hand to the writings, on our part.

Plau. I attend you, Mr. Sergeant.

[Exeunt Lawyers.]

Lord L. And while the lawyers are preparing the writings, Sir Pertinax, I will go and saunter with the women.

Sir P. Do, do, my lord, and I wull come to you presently.

Lord L. Very well, my dear Mac, I shall expect you. *[Exit singing.]*

Sir P. So! a leetle flattery, mixed wi' the finesse of a guiled promise on yane side, and a quantum sufficit of the aurum palpabile on the other, have at last made me the happiest father in Great Britain, and feel nothing but dignity and elevation. Haud! haud! bide a wee! bide a wee! I ha'e yane leetle mair in this affair till adjust, and then, Sir Pertinax, ye may dictate till fortune herself, and send her till govern feuls; while ye show, and convince the world that wise men always govern her. Wha's there?

Enter SAM.

Tell my son Egerton I would speak wi' him. Now I ha'e settled the grand point *[Exit. SAM.]*

wi' my lord, this I think is the proper juncture till feel the political pulse of my spark, and yance for aw till set it to the exact measure that I would ha'e it constantly beat.

Enter EGERTON.

Come hither, Charles.

Eger. Your pleasure, Sir?

Sir P. About two hours since I told you, Charles, that I received this letter express, complaining of your brother's acteevity at an election i' the north, against a particular friend of mine; which has given great offence; and, Sir, ye are mentioned in the letter, ass weel ass he. To be plain, I must roundly tell ye, that on this interview depends my happiness, ass a mon and a faither, and my affection till ye, Sir, ass a son, for the remainder of your days.

Eger. I hope, Sir, I shall never do any thing either to forfeit your affection, or disturb your happiness.

Sir P. I hope so too; but to the point—the fact is this. There has been a motion made this vary day, to bring on the grand affair, which is settled for Friday se'nnight: noow, Sir, ass ye are popular, ha'e talents, and are weel heard, it is expected, and I insist upon it, that ye endeavour till atone for yeer misconduct, by preparing and taking a lairge share in that question, and supporting it wi' aw your poower.

Eger. But, Sir, I hope you will not so exert your influence, as to insist upon my supporting a measure by an obvious prostituted sophistry, in direct opposition to my character and my conscience.

Sir P. Conscience! did ye ever hear ainy man talk of conscience in poeetical maiters? conscience, quotha!—I ha'e been in parliament these three-and-thirty years, and never heard the term made use of before—Sir, it is an unparliamentary word, and ye will be laughed at for it.

Eger. Then, Sir, I must frankly tell you, that you work against my nature—you would connect me with men I despise, and press me into measures I abhor. For know, Sir, that the malignant ferment, which the venal ambition of the times provokes in the heads and hearts of other men—I detest.

Sir P. What are ye aboot, Sir; with your malignant, yeer venal ambection, and your romantic nonsense? Sir, every mon should be ambectionous till serve his country—and every mon should be rewarded for it. And pray, Sir, would not ye wish till serve yeer country? answer me that, I say, would not ye wish till serve your country?

Eger. Only show me how I can serve my country, and my life is her's.—Were I qualified to lead her armies, to steer her fleets, and deal her honest vengeance on her insulting foes; or could my eloquence pull down a state leviathan, mighty by the plunder of his country, black with the treasons of her disgrace, and send his infamy down to free posterity, as a monumental terror to corrupt ambition, I would be foremost in such service, and act it with the unremitting ardour of a Roman spirit.

Sir P. Why, ye are mad, Sir; stark, staring, raving mad; certainly the fellow has been bitten by some mad whig or other! ye are vary young—vary young, indeed, in these matters; but experience wull convince ye, Sir, that every mon in

public business has twa consciences; mind, Sir, twa consciences; a reelegious and a poeetical conscience—you see a maichant, or a shopkeeper, that kens the science of the world, always luocks upon an oath in a custom-house, or behind a counter, only as an oath in business—a thing of course—a mere thing o' course, that has naething till do wi' reelegion; and just so it is at an election, exactly the same—for instance, noow, I am a candidate—pray observe—I gang till a periwig-maker, a hatter, or a hosier, and I give ten, twanty, or tharty guineas, for a periwig, a hat, or a pair of hose, and so on through a majority o' voters; vary weel, what is the consequence? why, this commercial intercourse, ye see, begets a friendship betwixt us, and in a day or twa, these men gang and give me their suffrages. Weel, what is the inference, pray, Sir? can ye, or ainy lawyer, divine, or casuist, caw this a bribe? nae, Sir, in fair poeetical reasoning, it is ainy generosity on the yane side, and gratitude on the ither—so, Sir, let me ha'e na mair of yeer reelegious or philosophical refinements; but prepare—attend—and speak till the question, or ye are nae son o' mine—Sir, I insist upon it.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir, my lord says the writings are now ready, and his lordship and the lawyers are waiting for you and Mr. Egerton.

Sir P. Vary weel; we'll attend his lordship. [*Exit SAM.*] Come, Sir, let us gang down and despatch the business.

[*Going, is stopped by EGERTON.*]

Eger. Sir, with your permission, I beg you will first hear me a word or two upon this subject.

Sir P. Weel, Sir; what would ye say?

Eger. I have often resolved to let you know [*Bows very low.*] my aversion to this match.

Sir P. Hoow, Sir?

Eger. But my respect and fear of disoblighing you, hitherto kept me silent.

Sir P. Your aversion! hoow dare ye use sic language till me? your aversion! luock you, Sir, I shall cut the matter vary short—Conseede,—my fortune is nae inheritance; aw my ain aquisition; I can make ducks and drakes of it; so do not provoke me, but sign the articles directly.

Eger. I beg your pardon, Sir; but I must be free on this occasion, and tell you at once, that I can no longer dissemble the honest passion that fills my heart for another woman.

Sir P. Hoow! another woman! ah, ye villain, how dare ye love another woman without my parmission—but what other woman? wha is she? speak, Sir, speak.

Eger. Constantia.

[*Bowing very low.*]

Sir P. Constantia! Oh, ye profligate! what, a creature taken in for charity?

Eger. Her poverty is not her crime, Sir, but her misfortune; and virtue, though covered with a village garb, is virtue still; therefore, Sir—

Sir P. Haud yeer jabbering, ye villain! haud yeer jabbering! none of yeer romance, or refinement, till me. I ha'e but yane question till ask ye, but yane question, and then I ha'e done wi' ye for ever—for ever—therefore think before ye answer; wull ye marry the lady, or wull ye break my heart?

Eger. Sir, my presence shall not offend you any longer: but when reason and reflection take

their turn, I am sure you will not be pleased with yourself for this unpaternal passion. [*Going.*]

Sir P. Tarry, I command you—and I command ye likewise not to stir till ye ha'e given me yane answer—a defeenitive answer—wull ye marry the lady, or wull ye not?

Eger. Since you command me, Sir, know then, that I cannot—will not marry her. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Oh! the villain has shot me through the head; he has cut my vitals! I shall run distracted—there never was sic a bargain ass I ha'e made wi' this feulish lord—possession of his whole estate, wi' three boroughs upon it; sax members! why, what an acquisition, what consequence! what dignity, what weight till the house of Mac-sycophant—O! domn the fellow—three boroughs, only for sending doon six broomsticks—Oh! miserable; ever since this fallow came intill the world have I been secretly preparing him for the seat of ministerial dignity, and sure never, never were times so favourable—every thing conspires; for aw the auld poleetical posthorses are broken-winded, and foundered, and canna get on; and ass till the rising generation, the vanity of surpassing yane another in what they feulishly caw taste and ailegance, binds them hond and foot in the chains of luxury; which wull always set them up till the best bidder; so that if they can but get wherewithal till supply their dissipation, a meenister may convert the poleetical morals of aw sic voluptuaries intill a vote that would sell the nation till Prester John, and their boasted leeberties till the great Mogul. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter Sir PERTINAX and BETTY.

Sir P. Come this way, Betty, come this way; ye are a gude girl, and I'll reward you for this discovery. Oh! the villain! offer her marriage!

Bet. It is true, indeed; I would not tell your honour a lie for the world; but in troth it lay upon my conscience, and I thought it my duty to tell your worship.

Sir P. Ye are right, ye are right; it was yeer duty to tell me, and I'll reward you for it; ye say Maister Sidney is in love wi' her too—pray, how came you by that intelligence?

Bet. Oh! Sir, I know when folks are in love, let them strive to hide it as much as they will; I know it by Mr. Sidney's eyes, when I see him stealing a sly side-look at her; by his trembling, his breathing short, his sighing when they are reading together—besides, Sir, he made love verses upon her, in praise of her virtue, and her playing upon the music; ay! and I suspect another thing, Sir; she has a sweetheart, if not a husband, not far from hence.

Sir P. Wha! Constantia?

Bet. Ay, Constantia, Sir—Lord, I can know the whole affair, Sir, only for sending over to Hadley, to farmer Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir P. Then send this instant, and get me a particular account of it.

Bet. That I will, this minute, Sir.

Sir P. In the meantime keep a strict watch upon Constantia—and be sure ye bring me word of whatever new matter ye can pick up aboot her, my son, or this Hadley husband or sweetheart.

Bet. Never fear, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Wha's there?

Enter TOMLINS.

Where is Maister Sidney?

Tom. In the drawing-room, Sir.

Sir P. Tell him I would speak wi' him. [*Exit TOMLINS.*] Why suppose this Sidney noow should be privy till his friend Charles' love for Constantia—what then, gude traith, it is natural till think that his ain love wull demand the preference—ay, and obtain it too—yas! yas! self! is an ailoquent advocate on these occasions—for only make it a mon's interest till be a rascal, and I think ye may safely depend upon his integrity in serving himself.

Enter SIDNEY.

Sid. Sir Pertinax, your servant. Mr. Tomlins told me you desired to speak with me.

Sir P. Yes, I wanted till speak wi' ye upon a very singular business.—Maister Sidney, give me yeer hond, gin it did na luock like flattery (which I detest,) I would tell ye, Maister Sidney, that ye are an honour till your cloth, yeer country, and till human nature.

Sid. Sir, you are very obliging.

Sir P. Sit ye doon here, Maister Sidney—sit ye doon here by me—my friend. [*They sit.*] I am under the greatest obligations till ye, for the care ye ha'e taken of Charles—the principles, releigious, moral, and poleetical, that ye ha'e infused intill him, demand the warmest return of gratitude, baith fra him and fra me.

Sid. Your approbation, Sir, next to that of my own conscience, is the best test of my endeavours, and the highest applause they can receive.

Sir P. Sir, ye deserve it, richly deserve it; and noow, Sir, the same care that ye ha'e had of Charles, the same my wife has taken of her favourite, and sure never were accomplishments, knowledge, or principles, social and releigious, impressed intill a better nature than Constantia's.

Sid. In truth, Sir, I think so too.

Sir P. She is, besides, a gentlewoman, and of ass gude a family as any in this county.

Sid. So I understand, Sir.

Sir P. Sir, her faither had a vast estate; the which he dissipated, and melted in feastings, and friendships, and charities, hospitalities, and sic kind of nonsense—but to the business.—Maister Sidney, I love ye—yas, I love you, and ha'e been luocking oot, and contriving hoow till settle ye in the world: Sir, I want till see ye comfortably and honourably fixed at the heed of a respectable family, and gin ye were my ain son, a thoosand times, I could na mak' a mair valuable present till ye for that purpose, ass a partner for life, than this same Constantia, wi' sic a fortune doon wi' her ass ye yoursel shall deem to be competent: ay, and an assurantee of every canonical contingency in my poower till confer or promote.

Sid. Sir, your offer is noble and friendly; but though the highest station would derive lustre from Constantia's charms and worth; yet, wer she more amiable than love could paint her in the lover's fancy, and wealthy beyond the thirst of the miser's appetite, I could not—would not wed her. [*Rises.*]

Sir P. Not wed her! odzwins, mon! ye surprise me! why so? what hinders? [*Rises.*]

Sid. I beg you will not ask a reason for my

refusal; but, briefly and finally, it cannot be, nor is it a subject I can longer converse upon.

Sir P. Weel Sir, I ha'e done, I ha'e done—sit doon, mon—sit doon again—sit ye doon. [*They sit.*] I shall mention it no more—not but I must confess honestly till ye, friend Sidney, that the match, had ye approved of my proposal, besides profitin' you, would ha'e been of singular service till me likewise; hoowever, ye may still sarve me ass effectually ass if ye had married her.

Sid. Then, Sir, I am sure I will most heartily. *Sir P.* I believe it, I believe it, friend Sidney, and I thank ye. I ha'e nae friend till depend upon but yersel—my heart is almost broke—I canna help these tears; and to tell ye the fact at yance, your friend Charles is struck wi' a most dangerous malady, a kind of insanity—in short, this Constantia, I am afraid, has cast an evil eye upon him—do ye understand me?

Sid. Not very well, Sir.

Sir P. Why, he is grievously smitten wi' the love of her, and I am afraid will never be cured without a leetle of your assistance.

Sid. Of my assistance! pray, Sir, in what manner?

Sir P. In what manner! Lord, Maister Sidney, how can ye be so dull? Now then, my very gude friend, gin ye would take an opportunity to speak a gude word for him till the wench, and contrive to bring them together once, why, in a few days after, he would nae care a pinch o' snuff for her. [*SIDNEY starts up.*] What is the matter wi' ye, mon—what the deevil gars ye start and luock so astonished?

Sid. Sir, you amaze me! In what part of my mind, or conduct, have you found that baseness, which entitles you to treat me with this indignity?

Sir P. Indignity—what indignity do ye mean, Sir? Is asking ye till serve a friend wi' a wench an indignity? Sir, am not I your patron and benefactor, ha'?

Sid. You are, Sir, and I feel your bounty at my heart—but the virtuous gratitude, that sowed the deep sense of it there, does not inform me, that in return, the tutor's sacred function, or the social virtue of the man, must be debased into the pupil's pander, or the patron's prostitute.

Sir P. Hoow! what, Sir, do ye dispute? are ye na my dependant—ha! and do ye hesitate aboot an ordinary civeelity, which is practised every day by men and women of the first fashion? Sir, let me tell ye, however nice ye may be, there is nae a dependant aboot the coort that would nae jump at sic an oppertunity till oblige his patron.

Sid. Indeed, Sir, I believe the doctrine of pimping for patrons may be learned in every party school: for where faction and public venality are taught as measures necessary to the prosperity of the Briton and the patriot—there every vice is to be expected.

Sir P. Oho! oho! very weel, fine insinuations! I ken what ye glance at—yas, ye intend this satire as a slander upon meenisters—ay! ay! fine seduction against government.—Oh! ye villain—ye—ye sirrah—ye are a black sheep, and I'll mark ye, and represent ye: I'll draw your picture—ah! ah! I am glad ye show yersel—yas, yas—ye ha'e taken off the mask at last: ye ha'e been in my service for many years, ye hypocrite! ye impostor—but I never knew your principles before.

Sid. Sir, you never affronted them before; if you had, you should have known them sooner.

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Sir P. I ha'e done wi' ye—I ha'e done wi' ye. Ay, ay, noow I can account for my son's conduct; his avarition till courts, till meenisters, levees, public business, and his disobedience till my commands—a perfeedious fellow—ye're a Judas! ye ha'e ruined the morals of my son, ye villain, but I ha'e done wi' ye; however, this I wull prophesy at oor pairting, for your comfort, that gin ye air so vary squeamish in obliging your patron, ye'll never rise in the church.

Sid. Though my conduct, Sir, should not make me rise in her power, I am sure it will in her favour—in the favour of my own conscience too, and in the esteem of all worthy men; and that, Sir, is a power and dignity beyond what patrons of any denomination can confer. [*Erit.*]

Sir P. What a reegorous, saucy, stiff-necked fallow it is!—I see my folly noow; I am undone by my ain policy! this Sidney was the last man that should ha'e been about my son. The fallow, indeed, hath given him principles that might ha'e done vary weel among the ancient Romans, but are domned unfit for the modern Britons—weel! gin I had a thoosand sons, I never would suffer yane of yeer English univarsity bred fellows, till be aboot a son of mine again; for they ha'e sic an pride of leeterature and character, and sic saucy English notions of leeberty, contenually fermenting in their thoughts, that a man is never sure of one of them; but what am I to do? Zoons, he must nae marry this beggar—I canna sit doon tamely under that—stay, haud a wee; by the blood, I have it—yas! I ha'e hit upon 't.

Enter BETTY.

Bet. Oh! Sir, I have got the whole secret out.

Sir P. About what?

Bet. About Miss Constantia; I have just had all the particulars from farmer Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir P. Weel, weel, but what is the story? quick, quick, what is it?

Bet. Why, Sir, it is certain that Mrs. Constantia has a sweetheart, or a husband, a sort of a gentleman, or a gentleman's gentleman, they don't know which, that lodges at Gaffer Hodges'; for Sukey says she saw them together last night in the dark walk, and Mrs. Constantia was all in tears.

Sir P. Ah! I am afraid this is too gude news till be true.

Bet. Oh! Sir, it is certainly true; besides, Sir, she has just writ a letter to the gallant; and I have sent John Gardener to her, who is to carry it to him to Hadley; now, Sir, if your worship would seize the letter. See, see, Sir, here John comes, with the letter in his hand!

Sir P. Go, go; step ye out, Betty, and leave the fallow till me.

Bet. I will, Sir.

[*Erit.*]

Enter JOHN, with a packet and a letter.

John. There, go you into my pocket. [*Puts up the packet.*] There's nobody in the library—so I'll e'en go through the short way; let me see what is the name—Mel—Meltill—Oh! no! Melville, at Gaffer Hodges'.

Sir P. What letter is that, Sir?

John. Letter, Sir!

Sir P. Give it me, Sir.

John. An't please your honour, Sir—it it is not mine.

Sir P. Deliver it this instant, Sirrah; or I'll break yer head.

John. There, there, your honour.

[*Gives the letter to SIR PERTINAX.*]

Sir P. Be gone, rascal—this I suppose wull let us intill the whole business.

John. You have got the letter, old surly, but the packet is safe in my pocket. I'll go and deliver that, however; for I wull be true to poor Mrs. Constantia, in spite of you. [*Aside: exit.*]

Sir P. [*Reading the letter.*] Um!—Um!—Um! And bless my eyes with the sight of you. Um! um! Throw myself into your dear arms. Zoouns, this letter is invaluable!

Enter BETTY.

Oh! Betty, ye are an excellent wench, this letter is worth a million.

Bet. Is it as I suspected, Sir, to her sweet-heart?

Sir P. It is—it is! bid Constantia pack oot of the house this instant; and let them get the chaise ready to carry her wherever she pleases but first send my wife and son hither.

Bet. I shall, Sir.

Sir P. Do so, be gone. [*Exit BETTY.*] Aha! Maister Charles, I believe I shall cure your passion for a virtuous beggar noow; I think he canna be so infatuated as to be a dupe till a strumpet—let me see—hoow am I till act noow?—why, like a true poleetician, I must pretend most sincerely, where I intend most deceit.

Enter LADY MACSYCOPHANT and EGERTON.

Weel, Charles, notwithstanding the meesery ye ha'e brought upon me, I ha'e sent for ye and yeer mother, in order till convince ye baith of my affection, and my readiness till forgive; nay, and even till indulge your parvarse passion; for since I find this Constantia has got hold of your heart, and that your mother and ye think that ye can never be happy withoot her, why I'll nae longer oppose your inclinations.

Eger. Dear Sir, you snatch me from the sharpest misery. On my knees, let my heart thank you for this goodness.

Lady M. Let me express my thanks too, and my joy; for had you not consented to his marrying her, we all should have been miserable.

Sir P. Weel, I am glad I ha'e found a way till please ye baith at last—but noow, my dear Charles, suppose noow, that this spotless vestal, this wonder of vartue, this idol of your heart, should be a concealed wanton after aw!

Eger. A wanton, Sir! [*Eagerly.*]

Sir P. Or suppose that she should have an engagement of marriage, or an intrigue wi' another mon, and is only making a dupe of ye aw this time; I say, only suppose it, my dear, dear Charles; what would ye think of her?

Eger. I should think her the most deceitful, and the most subtle of her sex, and if possible would never think of her again.

Sir P. Wull ye give me yeer honour of that?

Eger. Most solemnly, Sir.

Sir P. Enough—I am satisfied. [*Cries with joy.*] You make me young again; I was afraid ye were fascinated wi' the charms of a crack. Do ye ken this hond?

Eger. Mighty well, Sir.

Sir P. And ye, Madam?

Lady M. As well as I do my own, Sir; it is Constantia's.

Sir P. It is so; and a better evidence it is, than any that can be given by the human tongue; here is a warm, rapturous, lascivious letter, under the hypocritical siren's ain hond; her ain hond, Sir, her ain hond. But judge yourselves—read it.

Eger. [*Reads.*] *I have only time to tell you, that the family came down sooner than I expected, and that I cannot bless my eyes with the sight of you till the evening. The notes and jewels, which the bearer will deliver to you, were presented to me, since I saw you, by the son of my benefactor—*

Sir P. Now, mark.

Eger. [*Reads.*] *All which I beg you will convert to your own immediate use, for my heart has no room for any wish, or fortune, but what contributes to your relief and happiness.—*

Sir P. Oh, Charles, Charles? do ye see, Sir, what a dupe she makes of you? But mark what follows; mark, Charles, mark.

Eger. [*Reads.*] *Oh, how I long—*

Sir P. Mark.

Eger. [*Reads.*] *To throw myself into your dear, dear arms—*

Sir P. Mark, mark.

Eger. [*Reads.*] *To soothe your fears, your apprehensions, and your sorrows. I have something to tell you of the utmost moment, but will reserve it till we meet this evening in the dark walk—*

In the dark walk!

Sir P. In the dark walk—ah! an evil-eyed curse upon her! yas, yas, she has been often in the dark walk, I believe—but read, read!

Eger. [*Reads.*] *In the meantime, banish all fears, and hope the best, from fortune, and your ever dutiful and ever affectionate*

Constantia Harrington.

Sir P. There, there's a warm epistle for you! in short, the fact is—the hussy, ye must know, is married till the fallow.

Eger. Not unlikely, Sir.

Lady M. Indeed, by her letter, I believe she is.

Sir P. Noow, Madam, what amends can ye make me for countenancing your son's passion for sic an a reptile? and ye, Sir, what ha'e you till say for your disobedience and your frenzy? Oh! Charles! Charles, you'll shorten my days!

[*Sits down.*]

Eger. Pray, Sir, be patient—compose yourself a moment; I will make you any compensation in my power.

Sir P. Then instantly sign the articles of marriage.

Eger. The lady, Sir, has never yet been consulted, and I have some reason to believe that her heart is engaged to another man.

Sir P. Sir, that is nae business of yours—I know she wull consent; and that's aw we are till consider. Oh! here comes my lord!

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT.

Lord L. Sir Pertinax, every thing is ready, and the lawyers wait for us.

Sir P. We attend your lordship; where is Lady Rodolpha?

Lord L. Giving some female consolation to poor Constantia. Why, my lady! ha! ha! ha! I hear your vestal, Constantia, has been flirting!

Sir P. Yas, yas, my lord, she is in very gude order for ainy mon that wants a wife, and an heir till his estate, intill the bargain.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Sir, there's a man below, that wants to speak to your honour upon particular business.

Sir P. Sir, I canna speak till any body noow—he must come another time; haud—stay, what, is he a gentleman?

Tom. He looks something like one, Sir; a sort of a gentleman; but he seems to be in a kind of a passion; for when I asked his name, he answered hastily, 'tis no matter, friend, go tell your master there is a gentleman here, that must speak to him directly.

Sir P. Must! ha! very peremptory indeed! prythee let's see this angry sort of a gentleman for curiosity's sake. *[Exit TOMLINS.]*

Enter LADY RODOLPHA.

Lady R. Oh! my Lady Macsycophant, I am come an humble advocate for a weeping piece of female frailty; who begs she may be permitted to speak till your ladyship, before you finally reprobate her.

Sir P. I beg your pardon, Lady Rodolpha, but it must not be; see her, she shall not.

Lady M. Nay, there can be no harm, my dear in hearing what she has to say for herself.

Sir P. I tell you, it shall not be.

Lady M. Well, well, my dear, I have done, I have done.

Enter TOMLINS and MELVILLE.

Tom. Sir, that is my master.

Sir P. Weel, Sir, pray what is your urgent business wi' me, Sir?

Mel. To shun disgrace and punish baseness.

Sir P. Punish baseness? what does the fallow mean? wha are ye, Sir?

Mel. A man, Sir.

Sir P. A mon, Sir!

Mel. And one whose spirit and fortune once bore as proud a sway as any within this country's limits.

Lord L. You seem to be a soldier, Sir!

Mel. I was, Sir, and have the soldier's certificate, to prove my service—rags and scars: for ten long years, in India's parching clime, I bore my country's cause, and in noblest dangers sustained it with my sword—at length ungrateful peace has laid me down, where welcome war first took me up—in poverty—and the dread of cruel creditors. Paternal affection brought me to my native land, in quest of an only child. I found her, as I thought, amiable as paternal fondness could desire; but foul seduction has snatched her from me; and hither am I come, fraught with a father's anger, and a soldier's honour, to seek the seducer, and glut revenge.

Lady M. Pray, Sir, who is your daughter?

Mel. I blush to own her—but—Constantia.

Omnes. How!

Lady M. Constantia!

Eger. Is Constantia your daughter, Sir?

Mel. She is, and was the only comfort that nature, fortune, or my own extravagance, had left me.

Sir P. Gude traith, then I fancy ye wull find but vary little comfort fra her; for she is nae

better than she should be—she has had nae damage in this mansion; but ye may gang till Hadley, till yane farmer Hodges, and there ye may learn the whole story, fra a cheel they caw Melville.

Mel. Melville!

Sir P. Yas, Sir; Melville.

Mel. O! would to heaven she had no crime to answer but her commerce with Melville—no, Sir, he is not the man; it is your son, your Egerton, that has seduced her! and here, Sir, are the evidences of his seduction.

Eger. Of my seduction, Sir?

Mel. Of yours, Sir, if your name be Egerton.

Eger. I am that man, Sir; but pray what is your evidence?

Mel. These bills, and these gorgeous jewels—not to be had in her menial state, but at the price of chastity; not an hour since she sent them, impudently sent them, by a servant of this house; contagious infamy started from their touch.

Eger. Sir, perhaps you may be mistaken concerning the terms on which she received them; do you but clear her conduct with respect to Melville, and I will instantly satisfy your fears concerning the jewels and her virtue.

Mel. Sir, you give me new life; you are my better angel—I believe in your words, your looks—know then—I am that Melville.

Sir P. Hoow, Sir! ye that Melville, that was at farmer Hodges'?

Mel. The same, Sir; it was he brought my Constantia to my arms; lodged and secreted me—once my lowly tenant, now my only friend; the fear of inexorable creditors made me change my name from Harrington to Melville, till I could see and consult some who once called themselves my friends.

Eger. Sir, suspend your fears and anger but for a few minutes—I will keep my word with you religiously; and bring your Constantia to your arms, as virtuous and as happy as you could wish her.

[Exeunt LADY MACSYCOPHANT and EGERTON.]

Sir P. The clearing up of this wench's virtue is domned unlucky! I'm afraid it wull ruin aw oor affairs again—hoowever, I ha'e yane stroke still in my heed, that wull secure the bargain wi' my lord, let matters gang as they wull. *[Aside.]* But I wonder, Maister Melville, that ye did nae pick up some leetle matter of silver in the Indies—Ah! there ha'e been bonny fortunes snapped up there of late years by some of the meelitary blades.

Mel. Very true, Sir; but it is an observation among soldiers, that there are some men who never meet with any thing in the service but blows and ill fortune—I was one of those, even to a proverb.

Sir P. Ah! 'tis pity, Sir; a great pity, noow, that ye did nae get a mogul, or some sic an animal, intill your clutches—Ah! I should like till ha'e the strangling of a nabob—the rummaging of his gold dust, his jewel closet, and aw his magazines of bars and ingots; ha! ha! ha! gude traith, noow, sic an a fellow would be a bonny cheel to bring over till this toown, and till exhibit him riding on an elephant; upon honour, a mon might raise a poll tax by him that would gang near till pay the debts of the nation!

Enter EGERTON, CONSTANTIA, LADY MACSYCOPHANT, and SIDNEY.

Eger. Sir, I promised to satisfy your fears concerning your daughter's virtue; and my best proof to you and all the world, that I think her not only chaste, but the most deserving of her sex, is, that I have made her the partner of my heart, and the tender guardian of my earthly happiness for life!

Sir P. Hoow married!

Eger. I know, Sir, at present we shall meet your anger—but time, reflection, and our dutiful conduct, we hope, will reconcile you to our happiness.

Sir P. Naver, naver; and could I make ye, her, and aw your issue, beggars—I would move hell, heaven, and earth till effect it.

Lord L. Why, Sir Pertinax, this is a total revolution, and will entirely ruin my affairs.

Sir P. My lord, wi' the consent of your lordship and Lady Rodolpha, I ha'e an expedient till offer, that will not ainly punish that rebellious villain, but answer every end that your lordship and Lady Rodolpha proposed by the intended match wi' him.

Lord L. I doubt it much, Sir Pertinax: I doubt it much: but what is it, Sir? what is your expedient?

Sir P. My lord, I ha'e another son, my son Sandy, he is a gude lad; and provided the leady and your lordship ha'e nae objection till him, every article of that rebel's intended marriage shall be amply fulfilled, upon Lady Rodolpha's union with my younger son, Sandy.

Lord L. Why, that is an expedient, indeed, Sir Pertinax; but what say you, Rodolpha?

Lady R. Nay, nay, my lord, ass I had nae reason till ha'e the least affection till my cousin Egerton, and ass my intended marriage wi' him was entirely an act of obedience till my grandmother, provided my cousin Sandy will be as agreeable till her ladyship, ass my cousin Charles here would ha'e been—I have nae the least objection till the change; ay, ay, upon honour yane brother is ass gude till Rodolpha ass another.

Sir P. I'll answer, Madam, for your grandmother; noow, my lord, what say you?

Lord L. Nay, Sir Pertinax, so the agreement stands, all is right again; come, child, let us be gone. Look ye, Sir Pertinax, let me have no more perplexity or trouble about writings, lawyers,

duns, debts, or daughter; only let me be at my ease, and rat me if I care one pinch of snuff if her ladyship concorporates with the cham of Tartary.

[*Exit* LORD LUMBERCOURT.]

Sir P. Ass to ye, my Lady Macsycophant, I suppose ye concluded, before ye gave your consent till this match, that there would be an end of every thing betwixt ye and me; ye shall ha'e a jointure, but not a hawbee besides, living or dead, shall ye, or any of your issue, ever see of mine; so, Madam, live wi' yeer Constantia, wi' yeer son, and wi' that—that damned black sheep there.

[*Exit* SIR PERTINAX.]

Lady R. Weel, cousin Egerton, in spite o' the ambeetious frenzy o' your father, and the thoughtless deesipation o' mine, don Cupid has at last carried his point in favour o' his devotees; but I mun noow take my leave with the fag-end of an auld north country wish, brought fra the hospitable land of fair Strathbogie; may mutual love and gude humour ever be the guest of your hearts, the theme of your tongues, and the blighsome phantom of aw your tricky dreams through the rugged road of this crooked, deceitful world; and may our fathers be an example to oorsels, that will remind us to treat oor bairns, should heaven croon our endeavours, wi' more lebeerality and affection, than that with which oor fathers have treated us!

[*Exit* LADY RODOLPHA.]

Eger. You seem melancholy, Sir.

Mel. These precarious turns of fortune, Sir, will press upon the heart: for notwithstanding my Constantia's happiness, and mine in hers, I own I cannot help feeling some regret, that my misfortunes should be cause of any disagreement between a father and the man to whom I am under the most endearing obligations.

Eger. You, Sir, have no share in his disagreement; for had not you been born, from my father's nature, some other cause of his resentment must have happened; and angry vicissitudes have taken their leave of us all: if affluence can procure content and ease, they are within our reach. My fortune is ample, and shall be dedicated to the happiness of this domestic circle.

My scheme, though mock'd by knave, coquette, and fool,

To thinking minds must prove this golden rule:
In all pursuits—but chiefly in a wife,
Not wealth, but morals, make the happy life.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE APPRENTICE:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY.

REMARKS.

THIS is an ingenious satire on a pernicious folly prevalent among many young people, who, without the requisite talent, lose their time and reputation in attempts on the works of authors, who would be unable, in such hands, to recognise their own offspring. It was first performed in 1756, at Drury Lane, and has induced a great reform; though many stage-struck heroes still "leave their calling for this idle trade." The performance of Dick, by Mr. John Bannister, and his admirable recitation of the prologue, were fortunate instances of that gentleman's comic versatility.

The marginal references to the numerous quotations, in the character of Dick, from other dramatic writers, interfere so unpleasantly with the text, that they are omitted in the modern editions; they, however, considerably heighten the effect of the piece, and are easily traced by readers at all conversant with the drama.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at DRURY LANE, 1756.

DRURY LANE, 1815.

WINGATE,.....	<i>Mr. Yates.</i>	<i>Mr. Gattie.</i>
DICK,.....	<i>Mr. Woodward.</i>	<i>Mr. Bannister.</i>
GARGLE,.....	<i>Mr. Burton.</i>	<i>Mr. Penson.</i>
SIMON,.....	<i>Mr. H. Vaughan.</i>	<i>Mr. Oxberry.</i>
SCOTSMAN,.....	<i>Mr. Blakes.</i>	<i>Mr. Carr.</i>
IRISHMAN,.....	<i>Mr. Jefferson.</i>	<i>Mr. Fisher.</i>
CATCHPOLE,.....	<i>Mr. Vaughan.</i>	<i>Mr. Maddocks.</i>
CHARLOTTE,.....	<i>Miss Minors.</i>	<i>Mrs. Orge</i>

Spouting Club, Watchmen, &c.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

Spoken by MR. BANNISTER.

PROLOGUES precede the piece—in mournful verse;
As undertakers walk before a hearse;
Whose doleful march may strike the harden'd
mind,
And wake its feelings—for the dead—behind.
To-night, no smuggled scenes from France we
show,
'Tis English—English, Sirs!—from top to toe.
Though coarse the colours and the hand un-
skill'd,

From real life our little cloth is fit'd.
The hero is a youth,—by Fate design'd
For culling simples,—but whose stage-struck mind
Nor Fate could rule, nor his indentures bind.
A place there is where such young Quixotes
meet;
'Tis call'd the SPOUTING CLUB,—a glorious
treat,
Where 'prentic'd kings—alarm the gaping street:
There Brutus starts and stares by midnight taper,
Who, all the day, enacts—a woollen-drapeer.
There Hamlet's ghost stalks forth with doubled
fist,
Cries out with hollow voice,—“List, list, O list!”

And tightens Denmark's prince, a young tobacco-
conist.

The spirit, too, cleared from his deadly white,
Rise,——a haberdasher to the sight!
Not young attornies—have this rage withstood,
But change their pens for truncheons, ink for
blood,
And (strange reverse!) die for their country's
good.

To check these heroes, and their laurels crop,
To bring 'em back to reason—and their shop,
Our author wrote;—O you, Tom, Jack, Dick,
Will!

Who hold the balance, or who gild the pill!
Who wield the yard, and simpering pay your
court,

And, at each flourish, snip an inch too short!
Quit not your shops; there thrift and profit call,
Whilst here, young gentlemen are apt to fall!

[*Bell rings.*
But soft!—the prompter calls!—brief let me be—
Here groans you'll hear, and flying apples see,
Be damn'd peacaps; farewell!—remember me!

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter WINGATE and SIMON.

Win. Nay, nay, but I tell you I am convinced
—I know it is so; and so, friend, don't you think
to trifle with me; I know you're in the plot, you
scoundrel; and if you don't discover all, I'll—

Sim. Dear heart, Sir, you won't give a body
time.

Win. Zookers! a whole month missing, and no
account of him far or near!—Sirrah, I say he
could not be 'prentice to your master so long, and
you live so long in one house, with him, without
knowing his haunts and all his ways—and then,
varlet, what brings you here to my house so often?

Sim. My master Gargle and I, Sir, are so un-
easy about un, that I have been running all over
the town since morning to inquire for un; and so
in my way I thought I might as well call here.

Win. A villain, to give his father all this
trouble. And so you have not heard any thing
of him, friend?

Sim. Not a word, Sir, as I hope for mercy,
though, as sure as you are there, I believe I can
guess what's come on un. As sure as any thing,
master, the gipsies have gotten hold on un; and
we shall have un come home as thin as a rake,
like the young girl in the city, with living upon
nothing but crusts and water for six-and-twenty
days.

Win. The gipsies have got hold of him, ye
blockhead! Get out of the room—Here you,
Simon!

Sim. Sir.

Win. Where are you going in such a hurry?
Let me see; what must be done? A ridiculous
numskull, with his damned Cassanders and Clop-
patras, and trumpery; with his romances, and his
Odyssey Popes, and a parcel of rascals not worth
a groat! Zookers! I'll not put myself in a pas-
sion. Simon, do you step back to your master,
my friend Gargle, and tell him I want to speak
with him—though I don't know what I should

send for him for—a sly, slow, hesitating block-
head! he'll only plague me with his physical cant
and his nonsense. Why don't you go, you booby,
when I bid you?

Sim. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit*

Win. This fellow will be the death of me a-
last! I have been turmoiling for him all the days
of my life, and now the scoundrel's run away.
Suppose I advertise the dog?—Ay, but if the vil-
lain should deceive me, and happen to be dead,
why then he tricks me out of six shillings—my
money's flung into the fire.—Zookers, I'll not
put myself in a passion; let him follow his nose—
'tis nothing at all to me—what care I?

Re-enter SIMON.

What do you come back for, friend?

Sim. As I was going out, Sir, the post came
to the door, and brought this letter.

Win. Let me see it. The gipsies have got
hold of him, ha, ha! What a pretty fellow
you are! ha, ha!—Why don't you step where I
bid you, Sirrah?

Sim. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit*

Win. Well, well, I'm resolved, and it shall be
so—I'll advertise him to-morrow morning, and
promise, if he comes home, all shall be forgiven,
and when the blockhead comes, I may do as I
please, ha, ha! I may do as I please. Let me
see—he had on—slidikins, what signifies what
he had on? I'll read my letter, and think no
more about him,—Hey! what a plague have
we here? [*Mutters to himself.*] Bristol—a-
what's all this?

[*Reads.*] "*Esteemed friend,—Last was twen-
tieth ultimo, since none of thine, which will occa-
sion brevity. The reason of my writing to thee
at present, is to inform thee that thy son came
to our place with a company of strollers, who
were taken up by the magistrate, and committed
as vagabonds to jail.*"—Zookers! I'm glad of
it—a villain of a fellow! let him lie there.—"*I
am sorry thy lad should follow such profane
courses; but out of the esteem I bear unto thee,
I have taken thy boy out of confinement, and sent
him off for your city in the waggon, which left
this four days ago. He is consigned to thy ad-
dress, being the needful from thy friend and
servant,*

"EBENEZER BROADBRIM."

Wounds! what did he take the fellow out for?
A scoundrel, rascal! turned stage-player!—I'll
never see the villain's face. Who comes there?

Re-enter SIMON.

Sim. I met my master over the way, Sir.
Our cares are over. Here is Mr. Gargle, Sir.

Win. Let him come in—and do you go down
stairs, you blockhead. [*Exit* SIMON.]

Enter GARGLE.

So, friend Gargle, here's a fine piece of work—
Dick's turned vagabond!

Gar. He must be put under a proper regimen
directly, Sir.—He arrived at my house within these
ten minutes, but in such a trim! He's now below
stairs: I judged it proper to leave him there till I
had prepared you for his reception.

Win. Death and fire! what could put it into
the villain's head to turn buffoon?

Gar. Nothing so easily accounted for: why

when he ought to be reading the Dispensatory, there was he constantly reading over plays, and farces, and Shakspeare.

Win. Ay, that damned Shakspeare! I hear the fellow was nothing but a deer-stealer in Warwickshire! I never read Shakspeare. Wounds! I caught the rascal myself reading that nonsensical play of Hamlet, where the prince is keeping company with strollers and vagabonds. A fine example, Mr. Gargle.

Gar. His disorder is of the malignant kind, and my daughter has taken the infection from him. Bless my heart!—she was as innocent as water-gruel, till he spoiled her. I found her the other night in the very fact.

Win. Zookers! you don't say so? caught her in the fact.

Gar. Ay, in the very fact of reading a play-book in bed.

Win. Oh, is that the fact you mean? Is that all? though that's bad enough.

Gar. But I have done for my young madam; I have confined her to her room, and locked up all her books.

Win. Look ye, friend Gargle, I'll never see the villain's face. Let him follow his nose and bite the bridle.

Gar. Sir, I have found out that he went three times a week to a spouting club.

Win. A spouting club, friend Gargle! what's a spouting club?

Gar. A meeting of 'prentices, and clerks, and giddy young men, intoxicated with plays; and so they meet in public houses, to act speeches; there they all neglect business, despise the advice of their friends, and think of nothing but to become actors.

Win. You don't say so? a spouting club! wounds, I believe they are all mad.

Gar. Ay, mad indeed, Sir: madness is occasioned in a very extraordinary manner; the spirits flowing in particular channels—

Win. 'Sdeath, you are as mad yourself as any of them.

Gar. And continuing to run in the same ducts—

Win. Ducks! damn your ducks! Who's below there? Tell that fellow to come up.

Gar. Dear Sir, be a little cool—inflammatories may be dangerous.—Do pray, Sir, moderate your passions.

Win. Pr'ythee be quiet, man; I'll try what I can do. Here he comes.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Now my good father, what's the matter?

Win. So, friend, you have been upon your travels, have you? you have had your frolic? Look ye, young man, I'll not put myself in a passion. But, death and fire, you scoundrel, what right have you to plague me in this manner? do you think I must fall in love with your face, because I am your father?

Dick. A little more than kin, and less than kind.

Win. Ha, ha! what a pretty figure you cut now! Ha, ha! why don't you speak, you block-head? have you nothing to say for yourself?

Dick. Nothing to say for yourself. What an old prig it is.

Win. Mind me, friend, I have found you out; I see you'll never come to good. Turn stage-

player! wounds! you'll not have an eye in your head in a month; ha, ha! you'll have 'em knocked out of the sockets with withered apples—remember, I tell you so.

Dick. A critic too! [*Whistles.*] Well done old Squaretoes.

Win. Look ye, young man, take notice of what I say: I made my own fortune, and I could do the same again. Wounds! if I were placed at the bottom of Chancery-lane, with a brush and black-ball, I'd make my own fortune again. You read Shakspeare! get Cocker's Arithmetic; you may buy it for a shilling on any stall—best book that ever was wrote.

Dick. Pretty well, that; ingenious, faith! 'Egad, the old fellow has a pretty notion of letters.

Win. Can you tell how much is five-eighths of three-sixteenths of a pound? Five-eighths of three-sixteenths of a pound. Ay, ay, I see you're a blockhead. Look ye, young man, if you have a mind to thrive in this world, study figures, and make yourself useful—make yourself useful.

Dick. How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world!

Win. Mind the scoundrel now.

Gar. Do, Mr. Wingate, let me speak to him—softly, softly—I'll touch him gently.—Come, come, young man, lay aside this sulky humour, and speak as becomes a son.

Dick. O, Jephtha, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Win. What does the fellow say?

Gar. He relents, Sir. Come, come, young man, he'll forgive.

Dick. They fool me to the top of my bent. 'Gad, I'll hum 'em, to get rid of 'em—a truant disposition, good my lord. No, no, stay, that's not right—I have a better speech. [*Aside.*] It is as you say—when we are sober, and reflect but ever so little on our follies, we are ashamed and sorry: and yet, the very next minute, we rush again into the very same absurdities.

Win. Well said, lad, well said—Mind me, friend; commanding our own passions, and artfully taking advantage of other people's, is the sure road to wealth. Death and fire!—but I won't put myself in a passion. 'Tis my regard for you makes me speak; and if I tell you you're a scoundrel, 'tis for your good.

Dick. Without doubt, Sir. [*Shifting a laugh.*]

Win. If you want any thing, you shall be provided. Have you any money in your pocket? Ha! ha! what a ridiculous numskull you are now! ha! ha! Come, here's some money for you. [*Pulls out his money and looks at it.*] I'll give it to you another time; and so you'll mind what I say to you, and make yourself useful for the future.

Dick. Else, wherefore breathe I in a Christian land?

Win. Zookers! you blockhead, you'd better stick to your business, than turn buffoon, and get truncheons broke upon your arm, and be tumbling upon carpets.

Dick. I shall in all my best obey you, daddy.

Win. Very well, friend—very well said—you may do very well if you please; and so I'll say no more to you, but make yourself useful; and so now go and clean yourself, and make ready to go home to your business—and mind me, young man, let me see no more play-books, and let me never find that you wear a laced waistcoat—you scoun-

drel, what right have you to wear a laced waistcoat?—I never wore a laced waistcoat!—never wore one till I was forty.—But I'll not put myself in a passion—go and change your dress, friend.

Dick. I shall, Sir—

I must be cruel, only to be kind;

Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind.
Cocker's Arithmetic, Sir?

Win. Ay, Cocker's Arithmetic—study figures, and they'll carry you through the world.

Dick. Yes, Sir. [*Stifling a laugh.*] *Cocker's Arithmetic!* [*Exit.*]

Win. Let him mind me, friend Gargle, and I'll make a man of him.

Gar. Ay, Sir, you know the world.—The young man will do very well—I wish he were out of his time; he shall then have my daughter.

Win. Yes, but I'll touch the cash—he shan't finger it during my life.—I must keep a tight hand over him—[*Goes to the door.*]—Do ye hear, friend?—Mind what I say, and go home to your business immediately.—Friend Gargle, I'll make a man of him.

Re-enter DICK.

Dick. Who called on Achmet! Did not Barbarossa require me here?

Win. What's the matter now?—Barossa!—Wounds!—What's the Barossa?—Does the fellow call me names?—What makes the blockhead stand in such confusion?

Dick. That Barbarossa should suspect my truth!

Win. The fellow's stark, staring mad—get out of the room, you villain, get out of the room.

[*Dick stands in a sullen mood.*]

Gar. Come, come, young man, every thing is easy; don't spoil all again—go and change your dress, and come home to your business. Nay, nay, be ruled by me. [*Thrusts him off.*]

Win. I'm very peremptory, friend Gargle; if he vexes me once more, I'll have nothing to say to him. Well, but now I think of it, I have Cocker's Arithmetic below stairs in the counting-house—I'll step and get it for him, and so he shall take it home with him. Friend Gargle, your servant.

Gar. Mr. Wingate, a good evening to you. You'll send him home to his business?

Win. He shall follow you home directly. Five-eighths of three-sixteenths of a pound!—multiply the numerator by the denominator! five times sixteen is ten times eight, ten times eight is eighty, and—a—a—carry one. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter DICK and SIMON.

Sim. Lord love ye, master—I'm so glad you're come back—come, we had as good e'en gang home to my master Gargle's.

Dick. No, no, Simon, stay a moment—this is but a scurvy coat I have on, and I know my father has always some jemmy thing locked up in his closet—I know his ways—he takes 'em in pawn; for he'll never part with a shilling without security.

Sim. Hush! he'll hear us—stay, I believe he's coming up stairs.

Dick. [*Goes to the door, and listens.*] No, no, no, he's going down, growling and grumbling—ay, say ye so?—'Scoundrel, rascal let him bite the bridle.—Six times twelve is seventy two.—All's safe, man; never fear him. Do you stand here—I shall despatch this business in a crack.

Sim. Blessings on him! what is he about now? Why, the door is locked, master.

Dick. Ay, but I can easily force the lock—you shall see me do it as well as any Sir John Brute of 'em all—this right leg—

Sim. Lord love you, master, that's not your right leg.

Dick. Pho! you fool, don't you know I'm drunk? this right leg here is the best lock-smith in England; so, so. [*Forces the door, and goes in.*]

Sim. He's at his plays again; odds my heart, he's a rare hand, he'll go through with it I'll warrant him. Old Coderger must not smoke that I have any concern—I must be main cautious. Lord bless his heart, he's to teach me to act Scrub. He begun with me long ago, and I got as far as the Jesuit before a went out of town:—Scrub—coming, Sir—Lord, ma'am, I've a whole packet full of news; some say one thing, and some say another; but, for my part ma'am, I believe he's a Jesuit—that's main pleasant—I believe he's a Jesuit.

Re-enter DICK.

Dick. I have done the deed;—didst thou not hear a noise?

Sim. No, master; we're all snug.

Dick. This coat will do charmingly; I have bilked the old fellow nicely. In a dark corner of his cabinet, I found this paper; what it is the light will show.—[*Reads.*] 'I promise to pay;—Ha!—'I promise to pay to Mr. Moneytrap, or order, on demand'—'Tis his hand—a note of his—yet more—'the sum of seven pounds, fourteen shillings, and seven pence, value received by me—London, this 15th June, 1775.'—'Tis wanting what should follow; his name shall follow, but 'tis torn off, because the note is paid.

Sim. O, lud! dear Sir, you'll spoil all. I wish we were well out of the house. Our best way, master, is to make off directly.

Dick. I will, I will; but first help me on with this coat.—Simon, you shall be my dresser; you'll be fine and happy behind the scenes.

Sim. O, lud! it will be main pleasant; I have been behind the screens in the country.

Dick. Have you, where?

Sim. Why, when I lived with the man that showed wild beastices.

Dick. Hark ye, Simon, when I am playing some deep tragedy, and cleave the general ear with horrid speech, you must take out your white pocket handkerchief and cry bitterly.

[*Teaches him.*]

Sim. But I haven't got a white pocket handkerchief.

Dick. Then I'll lend you mine.

[*Pulls out a ragged one.*]

Sim. Thank ye, Sir.

Dick. And when I am playing comedy, you must be ready to laugh your guts out, [*Teaches him.*] for I shall be very pleasant—Toll-de-roll.

[*Dances.*]

Sim. Never doubt me, Sir.

Dick. Very well; now run down and open the street door; I'll follow you in a crack.

Sim. I'm gone to serve you, master.

Dick. To serve thyself—for, look ye, Simon, when I am manager, claim thou of me the care of the wardrobe, with all those moveables, whereof the property-man now stands possessed.

Sim. O, lud! this is charming—hush! I am gone. [*Going.*]

Dick. Well, but hark ye, Simon, come hither—what money have you about you, Master Matthew?

Sim. But a tester, Sir.

Dick. A tester! that's something of the least, Master Matthew, let's see it.

Sim. You have had fifteen sixpences now.

Dick. Never mind that—I'll pay you all at my benefit.

Sim. I don't doubt that, master—but mum.

[*Exit.*]

Dick. Thus far we run before the wind.—An apothecary!—make an apothecary of me!—what, cramp my genius over a pestle and mortar, or mew me up in a shop, with an alligator stuffed, and a beggarly account of empty boxes!—to be culling simples, and constantly adding to the bills of mortality!—No, no! it will be much better to be pasted up in capitals—*The part of Romeo by a young gentleman who never appeared on any stage before!*—My ambition fires at the thought.—But hold, mayn't I run some chance of failing in my attempt;—hissed, pelted, laughed at, not admitted into the Green-room.—That will never do.—Down, busy devil, down, down.—Try it again. Loved by the women, envied by the men, applauded by the pit, clapped by the gallery, admired by the boxes.—“Dear colonel, is not he a charming creature?”—“My lord, don't you like him of all things?”—“Makes love like an angel!”—“What an eye he has!”—“Fine legs!”—“I'll certainly go to his benefit.”—Celestial sounds!—And then I'll get in with all the painters, and have myself put up in every print-shop—in the character of Macbeth! “This is a sorry sight.” [*Stands in an attitude.*] In the character of Richard—“Give me another horse; bind up my wounds.”—This will do rarely.—And then I have a chance of getting well married—O, glorious thought!—By heaven I will enjoy it, though but in fancy.—But what's o'clock?—it must be almost nine. I'll away at once: this is club-night.—Egad, I'll go to them for awhile.—The spouters are all met—little they think I'm in town—they'll be surprised to see me.—Off! go, and then for my assignation with my Master Gargle's daughter—poor Charlotte!—she's locked up, but I shall find means to settle matters for her escape; she's a pretty theatrical genius.—If she flies to my arms like a hawk to its perch it will be so rare an adventure, and so dramatic an incident.—

Limbs! do your office, and support me well; Bear me bit to her, then fail me if you can.

[*Exit.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—Discovers the Spouting Club.

The PRESIDENT and MEMBERS seated.

Pres. Come, we'll fill a measure the table round. Now good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both. Come give us a speech.

Scots. Come now, I'll gi'e you a touch of Moebeeth.

1 *Mem.* That will be rare. Come, let's have it.

Scots. What dost lier at, mon? I have had muckle applause at Edinburgh, when I enacted in the Reegiecede; and now I intend to do Moebeeth

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—I seed the degger yesterneet, and I thought I should ha'e killed every one that came in my way.

Irish. Stand out of the way, lads, and see me give a touch of Othollo, my dear. [*Takes the cork, burns it, and blacks his face.*] The devil burn the cork, it would not do it fast enough.

1 *Mem.* Here, here, I'll lend you a helping hand.

[*Blacks him; knocking at the door.*]

Pres. Open locks, whoever knocks.

Enter DICK.

Dick. How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags? What is't ye do? How fare the honest partners of my heart? What bloody scene has Roscius now to act? Arrah, my dear cousin Mackshane, won't you put a remembrance on me?

Irish. Ow! but is it mocking you are? Look ye, my dear, if you'd be taking me off—don't you call it taking off?—by my shoul, I'd be making you take yourself off. What, if you're for being obstroporous, I would not matter you three skips of a flea.

Dick. Nay, pr'ythee, no offence, I hope we shall be brother players.

Irish. Ow! then we'd be very good friends; for you know two of a trade can never agree, my dear.

Dick. What do you intend to appear in?

Irish. Othollo, my dear; let me alone; you'll see how I'll bodder 'em; though by my shoul, myself does not know but I'll be frightened when every thing is in a hub-bub, and nothing to be heard, but “Throw him over.” “Over with him.” “Off, off, off the stage.” “Music.” Ow! but may be the dear craturers in the boxes will be lucking at my legs, ow! to be sure, the devil burn the luck they'll give 'em.

Dick. I shall certainly laugh in the fellow's face. [*Aside.*]

Scots. Stay till you hear me gi'e a specimen of elocution.

Dick. What, with that impediment, Sir?

Scots. Impediment! what impediment? I do not leesp, do I? I do not squeent; I am well leemed, am I not?

Irish. By my shoul, if you go to that, I am as well timbered myself as any of them, and shall make a figure in genteel and top comedy.

Scots. I'll give you a specimen of Moebeeth.

Irish. Make haste then, and I'll begin Othollo.

Scots. Is this a dagger that I see before me, &c.

Irish. [*Collaring him.*] William, be sure you prove my love a whore, &c.

[*Another MEMBER comes forward, with his face powdered, and a pipe in his hand.*]

Mem. I am thy father's spirit, Hamlet—

Irish. You are my father's spirit? My mother was a better man than ever you was.

Dick. Phoe! pr'ythee! you are not fat enough for a ghost.

Mem. I intend to make my first appearance in it for all that; only I'm puzzled about one thing, I want to know, when I come on first, whether I should make a bow to the audience?

Watch. [*Behind the scenes.*] Past five o'clock, cloudy morning.

Dick. Hey! past five o'clock; 'sdeath, I snail miss my appointment with Charlotte; I have staid too long, and shall lose my proselyte. Come, let us adjourn. We'll scower the watch; confu

sion to morality; I wish the constable were married.—Huzza! huzza!

All. Huzza, Huzza! [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Street.

Enter DICK, with a lantern and ladder.

Dick. All's quiet here; the coast's clear—now for my adventure with Charlotte; this ladder will do rarely for the business, though it would be better if it were a ladder of ropes—but hold; have I not seen something like this on the stage? yes I have, in some of the entertainments. Ay, I remember an apothecary, and here about he dwells—this is my Master Gargle's; being dark, the beggar's shop is shut; what, ho! apothecary! but soft, what light breaks through yonder window? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun; arise, fair sun, &c.

CHARLOTTE appears at a window.

Char. Who's there; my Romeo?

Dick. The same, my love, if it not thee displease.

Char. Hush! not so loud; you'll waken my father.

Dick. Alas! there is more peril in thine eye—

Char. Nay, but prythee now: I tell you, you'll spoil all. What made you stay so long?

Dick. Chide not, my fair; but let the god of love laugh in thy eyes, and revel in thy heart.

Char. As I am a living soul, you'll ruin every thing; be but quiet, and I'll come down to you.

[Going.]
Dick. No, no, not so fast; Charlotte, let us act the garden scene first—

Char. A fiddlestick for the garden scene.

Dick. Nay, then, I'll act Ranger; up I go, neck or nothing.

Char. Dear heart, you're enough to frighten a body out of one's wits. Don't come up; I tell you there's no occasion for the ladder. I have settled every thing with Simon, and he's to let me through the shop, when he opens it.

Dick. Well, but I tell you I would not give a farthing for it without the ladder, and so up I go; if it was as high as the garret, up I go.

Enter SIMON, at the door.

Sim. Sir, Sir; Madam, Madam—

Dick. Prythee be quiet, Simon, I am ascending the high top-gallant of my joy.

Sim. An't please you, master, my young mistress may come through the shop; I am going to sweep it out, and she may escape that way fast enow.

Char. 'That will do purely; and so do you stay where you are, and prepare to receive me.

[Exit from above.]

Sim. Master, leave that there, to save me from being respected.

Dick. With all my heart, Simon.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. O, lud! I'm frightened out of my wits; feel with what a pit-a-pat action my heart beats.

Dick. 'Tis an alarm to love; quick, let me snatch thee to thy Romeo's arms, &c.

Watch. [Behind the scenes.] Past six o'clock, and a cloudy morning.

Dick. Is that the raven's voice I hear?

Sim. No, master, it's the watchman's.

Char. Dear heart, don't let us stand fooling here, as I live and breathe we shall both be taken; do, for heaven's sake, let us make our escape.

Dick. Yes, my dear Charlotte, we will go together;

Together to the theatre we'll go,
There to their ravish'd eyes our skill we'll show.
And point new beauties—to the pit below.

[Exit with CHARLOTTE.]

Sim. And I to sweep my master's shop will go.

[Exit into the house, and shuts the door.]

Enter a WATCHMAN.

Watch. Past six o'clock, and a cloudy morning—Hey-day! what's here? A ladder at Master Gargle's window! I must alarm the family—Ho! Master Gargle! [Knocks at the door.]

Gar. [Above.] What's the matter? How comes this window to be open? Ha! a ladder! Who's below there?

Watch. I hope you an't robbed, Master Gargle? As I was going my rounds, I found your window open.

Gar. I fear, that is some of that young dog's tricks. Take away the ladder; I must inquire into all this. [Exit.]

Re-enter SIMON like Scrub.

Sim. Thieves! murder! thieves! popery!—

Watch. What's the matter with the fellow?

Sim. Spare all I have, and take my life!

Watch. Any mischief in the house?

Sim. They broke in with fire and sword; they'll be here this minute.

Watch. What, are there thieves in the house?

Sim. With sword and pistol, Sir.

Watch. How many are there of them?

Sim. Five-and-forty.

Watch. Nay, then 'tis time for me to go.

[Exit.]

Enter GARGLE.

Gar. Dear heart! dear heart! she's gone, she's gone!—my daughter, my daughter!—What's the fellow in such a fright for?

Sim. Down on your knees, down on your marrow-bones, down on your marrow-bones.

Gar. Get up, you fool, get up. Dear heart, I'm all in a fermentation.

Enter WINGATE.

Win. So, friend Gargle,—you're up early, I see—nothing like rising early—nothing to be got by lying in bed, like a lubberly fellow—what's the matter with you? ha! ha! you look like a—ha! ha!—

Gar. Oh—no wonder—my daughter, my daughter!

Win. Your daughter! what signifies a foolish girl?

Gar. Oh dear heart! dear heart!—out of the window.

Win. Fallen out of the window!—well, she was a woman, and 'tis no matter—if she's dead, she's provided for.—Here, I found the book—could not meet with it last night.—Here, friend Gargle, take the book, and give it that scoundrel of a fellow.

Gar. Lord, Sir, he's returned to his tricks.

Win. Returned to his tricks!—what,—broke loose again?

Gar. Ay, and carried off my daughter with him.

Win. Carried off your daughter—how did the rascal contrive that?

Gar. Oh, dear Sir,—the watch alarmed us awhile ago, and I found a ladder at the window—so I suppose my young Madam made her escape that way.

Win. I'll never see the fellow's face.

Sim. Secrets! secrets!

Win. What, are you in the secret friend?

Sim. To be sure, there be secrets in all families—but, for my part, I'll not speak a word pro or con, till there's a peace.

Win. You won't speak, Sirrah!—I'll make you speak—do you know nothing of this, numscull?

Sim. Who I, Sir?—he came home last night from your house, and went out again directly.

Win. You saw him then—

Sim. Yes, Sir,—saw him to be sure, Sir—he made me open the shop-door for him—he stopped on the threshold, and pointed at one of the clouds, and asked me if it was not like an ouzel?

Win. Like an ouzel!—wounds! what's an ouzel?

Gar. And the young dog came back in the dead of night, to steal away my daughter.

Enter a PORTER.

Win. Who are you, pray?—what do you want?

Por. Is one Mr. Gargle here?

Gar. Yes—who wants him?

Por. Here's a letter for you.

Gar. Let me see it. Oh, dear heart!—[Reads.] “To Mr. Gargle, at the Pestle and Mortar”—slidkins, this is a letter from that unfortunate young fellow.

Win. Let me see it, Gargle.

[Reads.]

“To Mr. Gargle, &c.

“Most potent, grave, and reverend doctor, my very noble and approved good master, that I have to'en away your daughter it is most true, true I will marry her—'tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true.”—What in the name of common sense is all this? “I have done your shop some service, and you know it; no more of that—yet I could wish, that at this time I had not been this thing,”—what can the fellow mean?—“for time may have yet one fated hour to come, which, winged with liberty, may overtake occasion past.”—Overtake occasion past!—no, no, time and tide wait for no man—“I expect redress from thy noble sorrows—thine and my poor country's ever,

“R. WINGATE.”

Mad as a March hare! I have done with him—let him stay till the shoe pinches, a crack-brained numscull.

Por. An't please ye, Sir, I fancies the gentleman is a little beside himself—he took hold un me here by the collar, and called me villain, and bid me prove his wife a whore—Lord help him, I never see'd the gentleman's spouse in my born days before.

Gar. Is she with him now?

Por. I believe so—there is a likely young woman with him, all in tears.

Gar. My daughter, to be sure.

Por. I fancy, master, the gentleman's under troubles—I brought it from a spunging-house.

Win. From a spunging-house!

Por. Yes, Sir, in Gray's Inn-lane.

Win. Let him lie there, let him lie there—I am glad of it—

Gar. Do, my dear Sir, let us step to him.

Win. No, not I, let him stay there—this it is to have a genius—ha! ha!—a genius! ha! ha!—a genius is a fine thing indeed!—ha! ha!

[Exit,

Gar. Poor man! he has certainly a fever on his spirits—do you step in with me, honest man, till I slip on my coat, and then I'll go after this unfortunate boy.

Por. Yes, Sir,—'tis in Gray's Inn-lane.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.—Spunging House.

DICK and BAILIFF at a table, and CHARLOTTE sitting in a disconsolate manner by him.

Bail. Here's my service to you, young gentleman—don't be uneasy—the debt is not much—why do you look so sad?

Dick. Because captivity has robbed me of a just and dear diversion.

Bail. Never look sulky at me—I never use any body ill—come, it has been many a good man's lot—here's my service to you—but we've no liquor—come, we'll have t'other bowl.

Dick. I've now not fifty ducats in the world—yet still I am in love, and pleased with ruin.

Bail. What do you say?—you've fifty shillings, I hope.

Dick. Now, thank heaven! I'm not worth a groat.

Bail. Then there's no credit here, I can tell you that—you must get bail, or go to Newgate—who do you think is to pay house-rent for you?—Such poverty-struck devils as you shan't stay in my house—you shall go to quod, I can tell you that. [Knocking at the door.] Coming, coming, I am coming—I shall lodge you in Newgate, I promise you, before night,—not worth a groat!—you're a fine fellow to stay in a man's house—you shall go to quod. [Exit.

Dick. Come, clear up, Charlotte, never mind this—come, now—let us act the prison-scene in the Mourning Bride.

Char. How can you think of acting speeches, when we're in such distress?

Dick. Nay, but my dear angel—

Enter WINGATE and GARGLE.

Come, now we'll practise an attitude—how many of 'em have you?

Char. Let me see,—one—two—three—and then in the fourth act, and then—O gemini, I have ten at least.

Dick. That will do swimmingly—I've a round dozen myself—come, now begin—you fancy me dead, and I think the same of you—now mind.

[They stand in attitudes.

Win. Only mind the villain.

Dick. O thou soft fleeting form of Lindamira!

Char. Illusive shade of my beloved lord!

Dick. She 'lives, she speaks, and we shall still be happy!

Win. You lie, you villain, you shan't be happy, [Knocks him down.

Dick. [On the ground.] Perdition catch your arm, the chance is thine.

Gar. So, my young madam—I have found you again.

Dick. Capulet, forbear; Paris, let loose your hold—she is my wife—our hearts are twined together.

Win. Sirrah! villain! I'll break every bone in your body. [*Strikes him.*]

Dick. Parents have flinty hearts, no tears can move 'em: children must be wretched.

Win. Get off the ground, you villain; get off the ground.

Dick. 'Tis a pity there are no scene-drawers to lift me.

Win. 'Tis mighty well, young man—zookers! I made my own fortune; and I'll take a boy out of the Blue-coat Hospital, and give him all I have. Look ye here, friend Gargle.—You know I'm not a hard-hearted man—the scoundrel, you know, nas robbed me; so d'ye see, I won't hang him,—I'll only transport the fellow—and so, Mr. Catchpole, you may take him to Newgate.

Gar. Well, but, dear Sir, you know I always intended to marry my daughter into your family; and if you let the young man be ruined, my money must all go into another channel.

Win. How's that?—into another channel! must not lose the handling o' his money—Why, I told you, friend Gargle, I'm not a hard-hearted man. Ha! ha!—why, if the blockhead would but get as many crabbed physical words from Hippocrites and Allen, as he has from his nonsensical trumpery,—ha! ha!—I don't know, between you and I, but he might pass for a very good physician.

Dick. And must I leave thee, Juliet?

Char. Nay, but, pr'ythee now have done with your speeches—you see we are brought to the last distress, and so you had better make it up.

[*Apart to DICK.*]

Dick. Why, for your sake, my dear, I don't care if I do. [*Apart.*—Sir, you shall find for the future, that we'll both endeavour to give you all the satisfaction in our power.

Win. Very well, that's right.

Dick. And since we don't go on the stage, 'tis some comfort that the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. Some play the upper, some the under, parts, And most assume what's foreign to their hearts; Thus life is but a tragic-comic jest, And all is farce and mummery at best. [*Exeunt.*]

EPILOGUE.

ORIGINALLY SPOKEN BY MRS. CLIVE.

Enters, reading a Play-Bill.

A VERY pretty bill,—as I'm alive!
The part of—Nobody—by Mrs. Clive!

A paltry, scribbling fool—to leave me out—
He'll say, perhaps—he thought I could not spout
Malice and envy to the last degree!
And why?—I wrote a farce as well as he;
And fairly ventur'd it, without the aid
Of prologue dress'd in black, and face in masquerade.

O pit!—have pity—see how I'm dismay'd!
Poor soul!—this canting stuff will never do,
Unless, like Bayes, he brings his hangman too.
But granting that from these same obsequies,
Some pickings to our bard in black arise;
Should your applause to joy convert his fear,
As Pallas turns to feast—Lordella's bier;
Yet 'twould have been a better scheme by half,
T' have thrown his weeds aside, and learn'd with me to laugh.

I could have shown him, had he been inclin'd,
A spouting junco of the female kind.
There dwells a milliner in yonder row,
Well dress'd, full voiced, and nobly built for show,
Who, when in rage, she scolds at Sue and Sarah;
Damn'd, damn'd, dissembler: thinks she's Madam Zara.

She has a daughter too, that deals in lace,
And sings—O ponder well—and Chevy Chase,
And fain would fill the fair Ophelia's place.
And in her cock'd-up hat, and gown of camlet,
Presumes on something—touching the Lord Hamlet.

A cousin too she has, with squinting eyes,
With waddling gait, and voice like London Cries;

Who, for the stage too short by half a story,
Acts Lady Townly—thus—in all her glory.
And while she's traversing the scanty room,
Cries—"Lord, my lord, what can I do at home?"
In short, there's girls enough for all the fellows,
The ranting, whining, starting, and the jealous,
The Hotspurs, Romeos, Hamlets, and Othellos.
Oh! little do those silly people know
What dreadful trials actors undergo.
Myself, who most in harmony delight,
Am scolding here from morning until night.
Then take advice from me, ye giddy things,
Ye royal milliners, ye apron'd kings;
Young men, beware, and shun your slippery ways,

Study arithmetic, and burn your plays.
And you, ye girls, let not our tinsel train
Enchant your eyes, and turn your madd'ning brain;
Be timely wise, for oh! be sure of this,
A shop with virtue is the height of bliss.

JANE SHORE:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY NICHOLAS ROWE.

REMARKS.

It has been observed, that Rowe seldom moves either pity or terror, but often elevates the sentiments; he seldom pierces the breast, but always delights the ear, and often improves the understanding. This excellent tragedy is always acted with great applause, and will, in one instance at least, prove the author's power to excite a powerful effect: consisting chiefly of domestic scenes and private distress, the play before us is an affecting appeal to pity, especially in the parting of Alicia and Hastings, the interview between Jane Shore and Alicia, and in the catastrophe. In the plot, Rowe has nearly followed the history of this misguided and unhappy fair one, and has produced an impressive moral lesson.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted in 1713.

COVENT GARDEN, 1814.

LORD HASTINGS,.....	Mr. Booth.....	Mr. C. Kemble.
DUKE OF GLOSTER,.....	Mr. Cibber.....	Mr. Egerton.
BELMOUR,.....	Mr. Mills.....	Mr. Clarendon.
SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE,.....	Mr. Bowman.....	Mr. Treby.
SIR WILLIAM CATESBY,.....	Mr. Husband.....	Mr. Creswell.
SHORE,.....	Mr. Wilks.....	Mr. Barrymore.
JANE SHORE,.....	Mrs. Oldfield.....	Miss O'Neil.
ALICIA,.....	Mrs. Porter.....	Mrs. Fawcett.

Lords of the Council, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Tower.*

Enter the DUKE OF GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.

Glos. Thus far success attends upon our councils,
And each event has answer'd to my wish;
The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd;
Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers,
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.
The nobles have, with joint concurrence, nam'd me
Protector of the realm: my brother's children,
Young Edward and the little York, are lodg'd
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, Sirs,
Does not this business wear a lucky face?
The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty
Seem hung within my reach.

Sir R. Then take 'em to you,
And wear them long and worthily; you are

The last remaining male of princely York,
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of 'em,)
And therefore on your sovereignty and rule
The commonweal does her dependence make,
And leans upon your highness' able hand.

Cates. And yet to-morrow does the council meet,
To fix a day for Edward's coronation.
Who can expound this riddle?

Glos. That can I.
Those lords are each one my approv'd good friends,
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom;
And, howsoever busy they may seem,
And diligent to bustle in the state,
Their zeal goes on no further than we lead,
And at our bidding stays.

Cates. Yet there is one,
And he amongst the foremost in his power,
Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd.
For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault,
I own I doubt of his inclining much.

Glos. I guess the man at whom your words would point;

Hastings—

Cates. The same.

Glos. He bears me great good will.

Cates. 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protector, And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service; But were he bid to cry, God save king Richard, Then tell me in what terms he would reply. Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found him: I know he bears a most religious reverence To his dead master Edward's royal memory, And whither that may lead him, is most plain. Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is, Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion, They call it honour, honesty, and faith, And sooner part with life than let it go.

Glos. And yet this tough, impracticable heart, Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl; Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures; "A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she, Shall make him amble on a gossip's message, And take the distaff with a hand as patient As e'er did Hercules.

Sir R. The fair Alicia, Of noble birth and exquisite of feature, Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.

Cates. I fear, he fails in his allegiance there; Or my intelligence is false, or else The dame has been too lavish of her feast, And fed him till he loathes.

Glos. No more, he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Lord H. Health, and the happiness of many days,

Attend upon your grace.

Glos. My good lord chamberlain, We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

Lord H. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

Glos. In right good time. Speak out your pleasure freely.

Lord H. I am to move your highness in behalf Of Shore's unhappy wife.

Glos. Say you, of Shore?

Lord H. Once a bright star, that held her place on high:

The first and fairest of our English dames, While royal Edward held the sov'reign rule. Now, sunk in grief and pining with despair, Her waning form no longer shall incite Envy in woman, or desire in man.

She never sees the sun, but through her tears, And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

Glos. Marry! the times are badly chang'd with her,

From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity, Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter, Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masking, 'Till life fled from us like an idle dream, A show of mummery without a meaning. My brother, rest and pardon to his soul, Is gone to his account; for this his minion, The revel-rout is done—But you were speaking, Concerning her—I have been told, that you Are frequent in your visitation to her.

Lord H. No further, my good lord, than friendly pity

And tender-hearted charity allow.

Glos. Go to: I did not mean to chide you for it. For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you To cherish the distressed.—On with your tale.

Lord H. Thus it is, gracious Sir, that certain officers,

Using the warrant of your mighty name, With insolence unjust, and lawless power, Have seiz'd upon the lands which late she held By grant, from her great master Edward's bounty

Glos. Somewhat of this, but slightly have I heard;

And though some counsellors of forward zeal, Some of most ceremonious sanctity And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd The hand of justice to fall heavy on her; Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness, And tender memory of Edward's love, I have withheld the merciless stern law From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.

Lord H. Good heaven, who renders mercy back for mercy,

With open-handed bounty shall repay you: This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost, To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion, And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

Glos. Thus far the voice of pity pleaded only: Our further and more full extent of grace Is given to your request. Let her attend, And to ourself deliver up her griefs. She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong At full redress'd. But I have other news, Which much import us both; for still my fortunes Go hand in hand with yours: our common foes, The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry, Have fall'n their haughty crests—that for your privacy. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—An apartment in JANE SHORE'S House.

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.

Bel. How she has liv'd you have heard my tale already;

The rest your own attendance in her family, Where I have found the means this day to place you,

And nearer observation, best will tell you. See with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss, Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady, The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you, And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

Jane S. My gentle neighbour, your good wishes still

Pursue my hapless fortunes! ah, good Belmour! How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out, And court the offices of soft humanity.

Like thee, reserve their raiment for the naked, Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan, Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep. Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine, To speak and bliss thy name. Is this the gentleman, Whose friendly service you commended to me?

Bel. Madam, it is.

Jane S. A venerable aspect! [*Aside.*]

Age sits with decent grace upon his visage, And worthily becomes his silver locks; He wears the marks of many years well spent, Of virtue, truth well tried, and wise experience; A friend like this would suit my sorrows well. Fortune, I fear me, Sir, has meant you ill,

[*To DUMONT.*]
Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance,

Which my poor hand and humble roof can give.
But to supply those golden vantages,
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet
A just regard and value for your worth,
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership
Of all that little good the world allows me.

Dum. You over-rate me much; and all my answer

Must be my future truth; let that speak for me,
And make up my deserving.

Jane S. Are you of England?

Dum. No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my birth;

At Antwerp has my constant biding been,
Where sometimes I have known more plenteous days

Than these which now my failing age affords.

Jane S. Alas! at Antwerp! O, forgive my tears!
[Weeping.

They fall for my offences—and must fall
Long, long, ere they shall wash my stains away.
You knew perhaps—O, grief! O, shame!—my husband.

Dum. I knew him well; but stay this flood of anguish.

The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows:
Three years and more are past, since I was bid,
With many of our common friends, to wait him
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,
Sprinkled his clay-cold corpse with holy drops,
According to our church's rev'rend rite,
And saw him laid, in hallow'd ground, to rest.

Jane S. Oh, that my soul had known no joy but him!

That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms,
And dying slept in innocence beside him!
But now his honest dust abhors the fellowship,
And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. The lady Alicia
Attends your leisure.

Jane S. Say, I wish to see her.

[Exit SERVANT.

Please, gentle Sir, one moment to retire,
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you
Of each unhappy circumstance, in which
Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me.

[Reënt BELMOUR and DUMONT.

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Still, my fair friend, still shall I find you thus?

Still shall these sighs heave after one another,
These trickling drops chase one another still,
As if the posting messengers of grief
Could overtake the hours fled far away,
And make old time come back?

Jane S. No, my Alicia,
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,
There is no hour of all my life o'er-past,
That I could wish should take its turn again.

Alic. And yet some of those days my friend has known,

Some of those years might pass for golden ones,
At least if womankind can judge of happiness.
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,
Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us
Our reasons to rebel, and power to reign;
What could we more than to behold a monarch,
Lovely, renown'd, a conqueror, and young,
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?

Jane S. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,

The goodly pride of all our English youth;
He was the very joy of all that saw him,
Form'd to delight, to love, and to persuade.
But what had I to do with kings and courts?
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;
And that he was the first of all mankind,
The bravest, and most lovely, was my curse.

Alic. Sure something more than fortune join'd your loves:

Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness
And beauty of my friend.

Jane S. Name him no more:

He was the bane and ruin of my peace.
This anguish, and these tears, these are the legacies
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,
Ere yet a few short days pass o'er my head,
Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.

The hand of power has seiz'd almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread.

Alic. Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear
To wound my heart with thy forboding sorrows;
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,
Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mist.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern protector,
And sooth his savage temper with thy beauty;
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting, nature,
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

Jane S. My form, alas! has long forgot to please;
The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd;
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes;
But haggard grief, lean-looking, sallow care,
And pining discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn.
One only shadow of a hope is left me;
The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.

Alic. Does Hastings undertake to plead your cause?

But wherefore should he not? Hastings has eyes:
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty;
But yours shall charm him long.

Jane S. Away, you flatterer!

Nor charge his generous meaning with a weakness
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd.
Too many giddy, foolish, hours are gone,
And in fantastic measures danc'd away:
May the remaining few know only friendship.
So thou, my dearest, truest, best, Alicia,
Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,
A partner there, I will give up mankind,
Forget the transports of increasing passion,
And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

Alic. Live! live and reign for ever in my bosom;
[Embracing.

Safe and unrivall'd there, possess thy own;
And you, the brightest of the stars above,
Ye saints, that once were women here below,
Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
Which here to this my other self I vow
If I not hold her nearer to my soul,

Than every other joy the world can give,
Let poverty, deformity, and shame,
Distraction and despair, seize me on earth,
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship!

Jane S. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true;

Therefore, these jewels, once the lavish bounty
Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee;

[*Giving a Casket.*]

Receive this, all that I can call my own,
And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee:
That, if the state's injustice should oppress me,
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
And shelter from the storm.

Alic. My all is thine;

One common hazard shall attend us both,
And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.
But let thy fearful, doubting, heart be still;
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,
The gentle, deeds of mercy thou hast done,
Shall die forgotten all; the poor, the pris'ner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,
Shall cry to heaven, and pull a blessing on thee.
Even man, the merciless insulter, man,
Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,
Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness
Forget thy failings, and record thy praise.

Jane S. Why should I think that man will do for me,

What yet he never did for wretches like me?
Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd;
Such is the fate unhappy women find,
And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,
Free and unquestion'd through the wilds of love;
While woman,—sense and nature's easy fool,
If poor weak woman swerve from virtue's rule;
If, strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray;
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
And one false step entirely damns her fame;
In vain, with tears the loss she may deplore,
In vain, look back on what she was before;
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in JANE SHORE'S House.

Enter ALICIA, speaking to JANE SHORE as entering.

Alic. No further, gentle friend; good angels guard you,
And spread their gracious wings about your slumbers.

The drowsy night grows on the world, and now
The busy craftsman, and the o'er-labour'd hind
Forget the travail of the day in sleep:
Care only wakes, and moping pensiveness;
With meagre discontented looks they sit,
And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.
Such vigils must I keep, so wakes my soul,
Restless and self-tormented! O, false Hastings!
Thou hast destroyed my peace.

[*Knocking without.*]

What noise is that?

What visitor is this, who, with bold freedom,
Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest,
With such a rude approach?

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. One from the court,
Lord Hastings (as I think) demands my lady.

Alic. Hastings! Be still, my heart, and try to meet him

With his own arts! with falsehood.—But he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS, speaking to a Servant as entering.

Lord H. Dismiss my train, and wait alone without.

Alicia here! Unfortunate encounter!
But be it as it may.

Alic. When humbly, thus,
The great descend to visit the afflicted,
When thus, unmindful of their rest, they come
To sooth the sorrows of the midnight mourner,
Comfort comes with them; like the golden sun,
Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influence.
And cheers the melancholy house of care.

Lord H. 'Tis true, I would not over-rate a courtesy,

Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,
To nip and blast its favour, like a frost;
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd;
The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,
And means to show her grace.

Alic. My friend! my lord.

Lord H. Yes, lady, yours; none has a right more ample

To tax my power than you.

Alic. I want the words

To pay you back a compliment so courtly;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wo' not die your debtor.

Lord H. 'Tis well, Madam:

But I would see your friend.

Alic. Oh, thou false lord!

I would be mistress of my heaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy, dull, indiff'rence;
But 'two' not be; my wrongs will tear their way,
And rush at once upon thee.

Lord H. Are you wise?

Have you the use of reason? Do you wake?

What means this raving, this transporting passion?

Alic. O thou cool traitor! thou insulting tyrant!
Dost thou behold my poor, distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means? Art thou not false?
Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd;
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy,
Given up to be the sport of villain's tongues,
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons?
And all because my soul has doated on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable!

Lord H. Are these the proofs of tenderness and love?

These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,
These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,
Which every other moment, rise to madness?

Alic. What proof, alas! have I not given of love?
What have I not abandon'd to thy arms?
Have I not set at naught my noble birth,
A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,
The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue?

My prodigality has given thee all;
And now, I've nothing left me to bestow,
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

Lord H. Why am I thus pursued from place to place,

Kept in the view, and cross'd at every turn?
In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,
Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert;
Ere I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

Alic. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose;
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,
Your pious, charitable, midnight visits.

Lord H. If you are wise, and prize your peace of mind,

Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy.
Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,
That cursed curiosity, seduce you
To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your quiet; but, once known,
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.
Go to—be yet advis'd.—

Alic. Dost thou in scorn
Preach patience to my rage, and bid me tamely
Sit, like a poor contented idiot, down,
Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me? Ruin seize thee,

And swift perdition overtake thy treachery!
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?
Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy falsehood?
To hide it might have spoke some little tenderness,
And shown thee half unwilling to undo me:
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity;
Thy words, and all thy actions, have confessed it;
Even now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
And insolently own the glorious villany.

Lord H. Well then, I own my heart has broke your chains,

Patient, I bore the painful bondage long,
At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyranny;
The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,
Have driven him forth to seek some safer shelter,
Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

Alic. You triumph!—do! and with gigantic pride

Defy impending vengeance. Heaven shall wink;
No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
Nor send his lightnings forth: no more his justice
Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

Lord H. Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,

Be present to me now, my better angel!
Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,
And, if I have beyond atonement sinn'd,
Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
So I escape the fury of that tongue.

Alic. Thy prayer is heard—I go—but know, proud lord,
Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,
This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,

Howe'er sublime in power and greatness plac'd,
With royal favour guarded round and grac'd;
On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmost height;
Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,
And view thee fallen, and grov'ling at my feet;

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See thy last breath with indignation go,
And tread thee sinking to the shades below.

[Exit.

Lord H. How fierce a fiend is passion! With what wildness,

What tyranny untam'd, it reigns in woman!
Unhappy sex! whose easy yielding temper
Gives way to every appetite alike:
And love in their weak bosoms is a rage
As terrible as hate, and as destructive.
But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims
Strife and her wrangling train; of equal elements,
Without one jarring atom, was she form'd,
And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship
Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late
To greet you with the tidings of success.
The princely Gloster has vouchsaf'd your hearing,
To-morrow he expects you at the court;
There plead your cause, with never-failing beauty,
Speak all your griefs, and find a full redress.

Jane S. Thus humbly let your lowly servant bend;

[Kneeling.

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,
And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

Lord H. Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning much,

Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,
To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

Jane S. 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my speaking:

But, though my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank you;

And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,
My fervent soul shall breathe one prayer for you,
That heaven will pay you back, when most you need,

The grace and goodness you have shown to me.

Lord H. If there be aught of merit in my service,

Impute it there, where most 'tis due, to love;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

Jane S. Alas! my lord—

Lord H. Why bend thy eyes to earth?

Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow?
Why breathes that sigh, my love? And wherefore falls

This trickling shower of tears, to stain thy sweetness?

Jane S. If pity dwells within your noble breast,
(As sure it does,) oh, speak not to me thus.

Lord H. Can I behold thee, and not speak of love?

Even now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses,
Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire;
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,
And bid my tongue be still?

Jane S. Cast round your eyes

Upon the high-born beauties of the court;
Behold, like opening roses, where they bloom,
Sweet to the sense, unsully'd all; and spotless;
There choose some worthy partner of your heart,
To fill your arms and bless your virtuous bed,
Nor turn your eyes this way.

Lord H. What means this peevish, this fantastic change?

Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face,
Thy wonted graces and thy dimpled smiles?
Where hast thou lost thy wit and sportive mirth?
That cheerful heart, which us'd to dance for ever,
And cast a ray of gladness all around thee?

Jane S. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach;
And for those foolish days of wanton pride,
My soul is justly humbled to the dust:
All tongues, like yours, are licens'd to upbraid me,
Still to repeat my guilt, and urge my infamy,
And treat me like that abject thing I have been.

Lord H. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough

To whine and mortify thyself with penance,
The present moment claims more gen'rous use;
Thy beauty, night, and solitude, reproach me,
For having talk'd thus long—come, let me press thee,

[*Laying hold of her.*]
Pant on thy bosom, sink into thy arms,
And lose myself in the luxurious flood.

Jane S. Forbear, my lord!—here let me rather die,
[*Kneeling.*]
And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

Lord H. Away with this perverseness—
'tis too much.

Nay, if you strive—'tis monstrous affectation!

[*Striving.*]
Jane S. Retire! I beg you, leave me—
Lord H. Thus to coy it!—

With one who knows you too.—

Jane S. For mercy's sake—

Lord H. Ungrateful woman! Is it thus you pay
My services?—

Jane S. Abandon me to ruin—
Rather than urge me—

Lord H. This way to your chamber;
[*Pulling her.*]

There if you struggle—

Jane S. Help, O gracious heaven!
Help! Save me! Help! [Exit.]

Enter DUMONT; he interposes.

Dum. My lord! for honour's sake—

Lord H. Hah! What art thou?—Be gone!

Dum. My duty calls me

To my attendance on my mistress here.

Lord H. Avaunt! base groom—
At distance wait, and know thy office better.

Dum. No, my lord—

The common ties of manhood call me now,
And bid me thus stand up in the defence
Of an oppress'd, unhappy, helpless, woman.

Lord H. And dost thou know me, slave?

Dum. Yes, thou proud lord!

I know thee well; know thee with each advantage,
Which wealth, or power, or noble birth, can give thee.

I know thee too for one who stains those honours,
And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.

Lord H. 'Tis wondrous well! I see, my saint-like dame,

You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

Dum. Take back the foul reproach, unmanner'd railer!

Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou should'st find
I have as daring spirits in my blood

As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted;
And though no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,
Yet heaven, that made me honest, made me more

Than ever king did, when he made a lord.

Lord H. Insolent villain! henceforth let this
teach thee, [*Draws and strikes him.*]
The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

Dum. Nay then, my lord, [*Drawing.*] learn
you by this, how well

An arm resolv'd can guard its master's life

[*They fight; DUMONT disarms LORD HASTINGS.*]

Lord H. Confusion! baffled by a base-born hind!

Dum. Now, haughty Sir, where is our difference now?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,

The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue,

(Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you,) Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.

But wear your sword again; and know, a lord,

Oppos'd against a man, is but a man.

Lord H. Curse on my failing hand! your better fortune

Has given you 'vantage o'er me; but perhaps

Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance. [Exit.]

Re-enter JANE SHORE.

Jane S. Alas! what have you done? Know ye the power,

The mightiness, that waits upon this lord?

Dum. Fear not, my worthiest mistress; 'tis a cause

In which heaven's guards shall wait you. O pursue,

Pursue, the sacred counsels of your soul,

Which urge you on to virtue;

Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,

Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with peace.

Jane S. O that my head were laid, my sad eyes clos'd,

And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest!

My painful heart will never cease to beat,

Will never know a moment's peace, till then.

Dum. Would you be happy, leave this fatal place;

Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood;

Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing modesty

Is made the scorner's jest; where hate, deceit,

And deadly ruin, wear the masks of beauty,

And draw deluded fools with shows of pleasure.

Jane S. Where should I fly, thus helpless and forlorn,

Of friends and all the means of life bereft?

Dum. Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes to serve you,

Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,

Far from the court and the tumultuous city.

Within an ancient forest's ample verge,

There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,

Built for convenience and the use of life:

Around it, fallows, meads, and pastures fair,

A little garden, and a limpid brook,

By nature's own contrivance seem'd dispos'd;

No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,

Honest and true, with a well-meaning priest:

No faction, or domestic fury's rage,

Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place,

When the contending nobles shook the land

With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.

Your virtue there may find a safe retreat

From the insulting powers of wicked greatness.

Jane S. Can there be so much happiness in store?

A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.

Haste then, and thither let us take our flight,
Ere the clouds gather, and the wintry sky
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

Dum. Will you then go? You glad my very soul.

Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me;
Plenty and ease, and peace of mind, shall wait you,
And make your latter days of life most happy.
O lady! but I must not, cannot, tell you,
How anxious I have been for all your dangers,
And how my heart rejoices at your safety.
So when the spring renews the flowery field,
And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,
She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,
Where she may trust her little tuneful brood;
Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow;
Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
Sits there, and wanders through the grove no more;
Warbling, she charms it each returning night,
And loves it with a mother's dear delight.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Court.

Enter ALICIA, with a paper.

Alic. This paper to the great protector's hand
With care and secrecy must be convey'd:
His bold ambition now avows its aim,
To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,
And fix it on his own. I know he holds
My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,
And much devoted to the orphan king;
On that I build: this paper meets his doubts,
And marks my hated rival as the cause
Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.
O jealousy! thou bane of pleasing friendship,
How does thy rancour poison all our softness,
And turn our gentle natures into bitterness!
See, where she comes! once my heart's dearest
blessing,
Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beauty,
Loath that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Jane S. O my Alicia!

Alic. What new grief is this?

What unforeseen misfortune has surpris'd thee,
That racks thy tender heart thus?

Jane S. O Dumont!

Alic. Say, what of him?

Jane S. That friendly, honest, man,
Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,
On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,
My surest trust was built, this very morn'
Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,
Forc'd from my house, and borne away to prison.

Alic. To prison, said you? can you guess the cause?

Jane S. Too well, I fear. His bold defence of me
Has drawn the vengeance of Lord Hastings on him.

Alic. Lord Hastings! ha!

Jane S. Some fitter time must tell thee
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
Hang all my poor, my last remaining, hopes.
Within this paper is my suit contain'd;
Here, as the princely Gloster passes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble knees,

And move him for redress.

[*She gives the paper to ALICIA, who opens and seems to read it.*]

Alic. Now for a while,
To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart;
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her
For ever from my perjurd Hastings' eyes:
Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail.

[*Aside: pulling out the other paper.*]

Jane S. But see, the great protector comes this way.

Give me the paper, friend.

Alic. For love and vengeance!

[*Aside: she gives her the other paper.*]

Enter the DUKE OF GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other Attendants.

Jane S. [Kneeling.] O noble Gloster, turn
thy gracious eye,
Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint;
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless, woman,
Entreats a little bread for charity,
To feed her wants, and save her life from perishing.

Glos. Arise, fair dame, and dry your wat'ry eyes.

[*Receiving the paper, and raising her.*]

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart
That could refuse a boon to such a suitress.
You've got a noble friend to be your advocate;
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,
And to his trust most true. This present now
Some matters of the state detain our leisure;
Those once despatch'd, we'll call for you anon,
And give your griefs redress. Go to! be comforted.

Jane S. Good heavens repay your highness for
this pity,
And shower down blessings on your princely head.

Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
And help me to support this feeble frame,
That, nodding, totters with oppressive wo,
And sinks beneath its load.

[*Exeunt JANE S. and ALIC.*]

Glos. Now, by my holiday!
Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude calamity
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions;
The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
And shiver at the shock. What says her paper?

[*Seeming to read.*]

Ha! What is this? Come nearer, Ratcliffe!

Catesby!

Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning.

[*He reads.*]

*Wonder not, princely Gloster, at the notice
This paper brings you from a friend unknown;
Lord Hastings is inclin'd to call you Master,
And kneel to Richard as to England's king;
But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
And draws his service to king Edward's sons:
Drive her away, you break the charm that holds
him,*

And he, and all his powers attend on you.

Sir R. 'Tis wonderful!

Cates. The means by which it came
Yet stranger too!

Glos. You saw it given, but now.

Sir R. She could not know the purport.

Glos. No, 'tis plain—

She knows it not, it levels at her life;

Should she presume to prate of such high matters,
The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.

Cates. What hast soe'er it comes from, be as-
sur'd,

It means your highness well——

Glos. Upon the instant,
Lord Hastings will be here; this morn I mean
To prove him to the quick; then if he flinch,
No more but this—away with him at once,
He must be mine or nothing.—But he comes!
Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.

[*They whisper.*]

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Lord H. This foolish woman hangs about my
heart,
Lingers and wanders in my fancy still;
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,
And worn to urge desire—I must possess her.
The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,
Ere this is humbled, and repents his daring.
Perhaps, even she may profit by th' example,
And teach her beauty not to scorn my power.

Glos. This do, and wait me ere the council sits.
[*Exit RATCLIFFE AND CATESBY.*]
My lord, you're well encounter'd; here has been
A fair petitioner this morning with us;
Believe me, she has won me much to pity her:
Alas! her gentle nature was not made
To buffet with adversity. I told her
How worthily her cause you had befriended;
How much for your good sake we meant to do,
That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

Lord H. Your highness binds me ever to your
service.

Glos. You know your friendship is most po-
tent with us,
And shares our power. But of this enough,
For we have other matters for your ear.
The state is out of tune: distracting fears,
And jealous doubts, jar in our public councils.
Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,
Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,
With open scorn of government; hence credit,
And public trust 'twixt man and man are broke.
The golden streams of commerce are withheld,
Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,
Who therefore curse the great, and threat rebellion.

Lord H. The resty knaves are over-run with
ease,

As plenty ever is the nurse of faction;
If, in good days, like these, the headstrong herd
Grow madly wanton and repine, it is
Because the reins of power are held too slack,
And reverend authority of late
Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.

Glos. Beshrew my heart! but you have well
divin'd

The source of these disorders. Who can wonder
If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,
When the crown sits upon a baby brow?
Plainly to speak, hence comes the gen'ral cry,
And sum of all complaint: 'twill ne'er be well
With England (thus they talk) while children
govern.

Lord H. 'Tis true, the king is young: but what
of that?

We feel no want of Edward's riper years,
While Gloster's valour and most princely wisdom
So well support our infant sov'reign's place,
His youth's support, and guardian to his throne.

Glos. The council (much I'm bound to thank
'em for't)

Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand,
Barren of power, and subject to control;
Scorn'd by my foes, and useless to my friends.
Oh, worthy lord! were mine the rule indeed,
I think I should not suffer rank offence
At large to lord it in the commonweal;
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

Lord H. Of this I am to learn; as not supposing
A doubt like this——

Glos. Ay, marry, but there is——
And that of much concern. Have you not heard
How, on a late occasion, Doctor Shaw
Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness
Of Edward's issue? By right grave authority
Of learning and religion, plainly proving,
A bastard scion never should be grafted
Upon a royal stock; from thence at full
Discoursing on my brother's former contract
To lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that same buxom widow,
The queen he left behind him——

Lord H. Ill befall
Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples!
By heaven, 'tis done in perfect spite of peace.
Did not the king,
Our royal master, Edward, in concurrence
With his estates assembled, well determine
What course the sov'reign rule should take hence-
forward?

When shall the deadly hate of faction cease,
When shall our long-divided land have rest,
If every peevish, moody, malecontent,
Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,
Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brains
Each day with some fantastic giddy change?

Glos. What if some patriot, for the public good,
Should vary from your scheme, new-mould the
state?

Lord H. Curse on the innovating hand at-
tempts it!

Remember him, the villain, righteous heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance! Blast the traitor
And his pernicious counsels; who, for wealth,
For power, the pride of greatness, or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars!

Glos. You go too far, my lord.

Lord H. Your highness' pardon——
Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth their
battles;

When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,
Our groaning country bled at every vein;
When murders, rapes, and massacres, prevail'd;
When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd;
When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,
And swept away distinction: peasants trod
Upon the necks of nobles: low were laid
The reverend crosier and the holy mitre,
And desolation cover'd all the land?
Who can remember this, and not, like me,
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart,
Whose damn'd ambition would renew those
horrors,

And set once more that scene of blood before us?
Glos. How now! so hot!

Lord H. So brave, and so resolved.
Glos. Is then our friendship of so little moment,
That you could arm your hand against my life?

Lord H. I hope your highness does not think I mean it;

No, heaven forbid that e'er your princely person Should come within the scope of my resentment.

Glos. O noble Hastings! nay, I must embrace you;

By holy Paul, you're a right honest man!

[*Embraces him.*]

The time is full of danger and distrust,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not
Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,
If, when I meant to lodge you next my heart,
I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,
And live your king and country's best support:
For me, I ask no more than honour gives,
To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.

[*Exit.*]

Lord H. I am not read,
Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,
To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.
The duke is surely noble: but he touch'd me
Even on the tend'rest point; the master-string
That makes most harmony or discord to me.

I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd;
Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,
Beyond myself, I prize my native land:
On this foundation would I build my fame,
And emulate the Greek and Roman name;
Think England's peace bought cheaply with my blood,

And die with pleasure for my country's good.

[*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter DUKE OF GLOSTER, RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.

Glos. This was the sum of all; that he would brook

No alteration in the present state.

Marry, at last, the testy gentleman

Was almost mov'd to bid us bold defiance:

But there I dropp'd the argument, and, changing

The first design and purport of my speech,

I prais'd his good affection to young Edward,

And left him to believe my thoughts like his.

Proceed we then in this forementio'd matter,

As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

Sir R. Ill does it thus befall. I could have wish'd

This lord had stood with us.

His name had been of 'vantage to your highness,

And stood our present purpose much in stead.

Glos. This wayward and perverse declining from us,

Has warrant'd at full the friendly notice,

Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,

The puling, whining harlot rules his reason,

And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

Cates. If she have such dominion o'er his heart,

And turn it at her will, you rule her fate;

And should, by inference and apt deduction,

Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,

The very means immediate to her being,

The bounty of your hand? Why does she live,

If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,

To speak, to act, to think, as you command!

Sir R. Let her instruct her tongue to bear your message;

8

Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,

And her deluded eyes to gloat for you;

His ductile reason will be wound about,

Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,

Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

Glos. Your counsel likes me well, it shall be follow'd,

She waits without, attending on her suit.

Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt RATCLIFFE and CATESBY.*]

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,

Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood

To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is!

A moppet made of prettiness and pride;

That oftener does her giddy fancies change,

Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours—

Now, shame upon it! was our reason given

For such a use; to be thus puff'd about?

Sure there is something more than witchcraft in them,

That masters even the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Oh! you are come most fitly. We have ponder'd

On this your grievance: and though some there are,

Nay, and those great ones too, who would enforce

The rigour of our power to afflict you,

And bear a heavy hand; yet fear not you:

We've ta'en you to our favour: our protection

Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

Jane S. The blessings of a heart with anguish broken

And rescu'd from despair, attend your highness.

Alas! my gracious lord, what have I done

To kindle such relentless wrath against me?

Glos. Marry, there are, though I believe them not,

Who say you meddle in affairs of state:

That you presume to prattle like a busy-body,

Give your advice, and teach the lords o' the council

What fits the order of the commonweal.

Jane S. Oh, that the busy world, at least in this,

Would take example from a wretch like me?

None then would waste their hours in foreign

thoughts,

Forget themselves, and what concerns their peace,

To search, with prying eyes, for faults abroad,

If all, like me, consider'd their own hearts,

And wept their sorrows which they found at home.

Glos. Go to; I know your power; and though I trust not

To every breath of fame, I'm not to learn

That Hastings is profess'd your loving vassal.

But fair befall your beauty: use it wisely,

And it may stand your fortunes much in stead,

Give back your forfeit land with large increase,

And place you high in safety and in honour.

Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,

You shall not only bring yourself advantage,

But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you.

Jane S. Oh! where or how—can my unworthy hand

Become an instrument of good to any?

Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly

To yield obedience to your dread command.

Glos. Why, that's well said—Thus then—Observe me well.

The state, for many high and potent reasons,

Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit

For the imperial weight of England's crown—

Jane S. Alas! for pity.

Glos. Therefore have resolv'd
To set aside their unavailing infancy
And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.
This, though of great importance to the public,
Hastings, for very peevishness, and spleen,
Does stubbornly oppose.

Jane S. Does he? Does Hastings?

Glos. Ay, Hastings.

Jane S. Reward him for the noble deed, just
heavens!

For this one action, guard him and distinguish him
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance;
Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame,
Let never-fading honours flourish round him,
And consecrate his name, even to time's end.

Glos. How now!

Jane S. The poor, forsaken, royal little ones!
Shall they be left a prey to savage power?
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
Or cry to heaven for help, and not be heard?
Impossible! O gallant, generous, Hastings,
Go on; pursue, assert, the sacred cause:
Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
And save the friendless infants from oppression.
Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
And warring angels combat on thy side.

Glos. You're passing rich in this same heavenly
speech,

And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me!
My favour is not bought with words like these.
Go to—you'll teach your tongue another tale.

Jane S. No, though the royal Edward has un-
done me,

He was my king, my gracious master, still;
He lov'd me too, though 'twas a guilty flame;
And can I—O my heart abhors the thought!
Stand by, and see his children robb'd of right?

Glos. Dare not, even for thy soul, to thwart me
further!

None of your arts, your feigning, and your foolery;
Your dainty squeamish coying it to me;
Go—to your lord, your paramour, be gone!
Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,
And play your monkey gambols o'er to him.
You know my purpose, look that you pursue it,
And make him yield obedience to my will.
Do it—or wo upon the harlot's head.

Jane S. Oh that my tongue had every grace of
speech,

Great and commanding, as the breath of kings;
That I had art and eloquence divine,
To pay my duty to my master's ashes,
And plead, till death, the cause of injur'd innocence.

Glos. Ha! Dost thou brave me, minion! Dost
thou know

How vile, how very a wretch, my power can make
thee?

That I can place thee in such abject state,
As help shall never find thee; where, repining,
Thou shalt sit down, and gnaw the earth for an-
guish;

Groan to the pitiless winds without return;
Howl, like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,
And curse thy life, in bitterness and misery!

Jane S. Let me be branded for the public scorn,
Turn'd forth and driven to wander like a vaga-
bond,

Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
Upon the barren wild and desolate waste,
Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
Ere I consent to teach my lips injustice,
Or wrong the orphan, who has none to save him

Glos. 'Tis well—we'll try the temper of your
heart.

What, ho! Who waits without?

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, and Attendants.

Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet forth!
Spurn her into the street; there let her perish,
And rot upon a dunghill. Through the city
See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbour;
Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
We seize on, for the profit of the state.
Away! Be gone!

Jane S. Oh, thou most righteous Judge—
Humbly behold, I bow myself to thee,
And own thy justice in this hard decree:
No longer, then, my ripe offences spare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
Yet, since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,
For my past crimes my forfeit life receive;
No pity for my sufferings here I crave,
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

[*Exit JANE SHORE, guarded by CATESBY
and others.*]

Glos. So much for this. Your project's at an end.
[*To SIR RICHARD.*]

This idle toy, this hilding, scorns my power,
And sets us all at nought. See that a guard
Be ready at my call—

Sir R. The council waits
Upon your highness' leisure.

Glos. I'll attend them.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—The Council Chamber.

*The DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, EARL OF DERBY,
BISHOP OF ELY, LORD HASTINGS, and others,
discovered in council. The DUKE OF GLOSTER
enters, and takes his place at the upper end.*

Der. In happy times we are assembled here,
To point the day, and fix the solemn pomp,
For placing England's crown, with all due rites,
Upon our sovereign Edward's youthful brow.

Lord H. Some busy, meddling knaves, 'tis said,
there are,

As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right;
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,
T' appoint the order of the coronation;
So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.

Der. We all attend to know your highness'
pleasure. [*To GLOSTER.*]

Glos. My lords, a set of worthy men you are,
Prudent, and just, and careful for the state;
Therefore, to your most grave determination
I yield myself in all things; and demand
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers,
Who shall, with potions, charms, and witching
drugs,
Practise against our person and our life!

Lord H. So much I hold the king your high-
ness' debtor,
So precious are you to the commonweal,
That I presume, not only for myself,
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

Glos. Then judge yourselves, convince your
eyes of truth;

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry, and wither'd,
 Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd,
 Like some untimely product of the seasons,
 Robb'd of its properties of strength and office.
 This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,
 Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,
 And other like confederate, midnight hags,
 By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
 And conjurations horrible to hear,
 Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
 And set the ministers of hell at work,
 To torture and despoil me of my life.

Lord H. If they have done this deed——

Glos. If they have done it!

Talkest thou to me of ifs, audacious traitor!
 Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
 The patron and plotter of her mischiefs,
 And join'd in this contrivance for my death.
 Nay start not, lords—What, hold a guard there, Sirs!

Enter Guards.

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason.
 Seize him, and bear him instantly away.
 He shall not live an hour. By holy Paul,
 I will not dine before his head be brought me.
 Ratcliffe, stay thou, and see that it be done:
 The rest, that love me, rise and follow me.

[Exit GLOSTER and LORDS.]

LORD HASTINGS, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and
Guards, remain.

Lord H. What! and no more but this—How!
 to the scaffold!

Oh, gentle Ratcliffe! tell me, do I hold thee?
 Or, if I dream, what shall I do to wake,
 To break, to struggle, through this dread confusion?

For surely death itself is not so painful
 As is this sudden horror and surprise.

Sir R. You heard the duke's commands to me
 were absolute.

Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,
 With all good speed you may. Summon your
 courage,

And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

Lord H. Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly
 counsel,

And die as a man should; 'tis somewhat hard,
 To call my scatter'd spirits home at once:
 But since what must be, must be—let necessity
 Supply the place of time and preparation,
 And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die,
 'Tis but to venture on the common hazard,
 Which many a time in battle I have run;
 'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out daylight,
 To view no more the wicked ways of men,
 No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,
 And be a weeping witness of the woes,
 The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
 Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Stand off, and let me pass—I will, I must,
 Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
 And hold him to my heart.—O, Hastings! Hast-
 ings!

Lord H. Alas! why com'st thou at this dread-
 ful moment,

To fill me with new terrors, new distractions;
 To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage,
 And shock the peace of my departing soul?
 Away; I pry thee, leave me!

Alic. Stop a minute——

Till my full griefs find passage. O, the tyrant!
 Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.

Lord H. What means thy frantic grief?

Alic. I cannot speak——

But I have murder'd thee.—Oh, I could tell thee!

Lord H. Speak, and give ease to thy conflict-
 ing passion!

Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense,
 Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
 Break in at once! this way and that they snatch,
 They tear my hurried soul.—All claim attention,
 And yet not one is heard. Oh! speak, and leave
 me,

For I have business would employ an age,
 And but a minute's time to get it done in.

Alic. That, that's my grief—'tis I that urge
 thee on,

Thus hunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,
 And drive thee down this precipice of fate.

Lord H. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy
 weak hand

Bring on this mighty ruin? If it could,
 What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
 So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
 That nothing but my life can make atonement?

Alic. Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the
 heart,

And set my burning bosom all in flames:
 Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
 And writ I know not what—told the protector,
 That Shore's detested wife, by wiles, had won thee
 To plot against his greatness.—He believ'd it,
 (Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel!)
 And, while I meant destruction on her head,
 He has turn'd it all on thine.

Lord H. O, thou inhuman! Turn thy eyes
 away,

And blast me not with their destructive beams:
 Why should I curse thee with my dying breath?
 Be gone! and let me die in peace.

Alic. Canst thou, O cruel Hastings, leave me
 thus?

Hear me, I beg thee—I conjure thee, hear me!
 While, with an agonizing heart, I swear,
 By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,
 The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,
 My hate was on my rival bent alone.
 Oh! had I once divin'd, false as thou art,
 A danger to thy life, I would have died,
 I would have met it for thee.

Lord H. Now mark! and tremble at heaven's
 just award:

While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge
 Pursu'd the innocence which never wrong'd thee,
 Behold, the mischief falls on thee and me:
 Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,
 And everlasting anguish be thy portion.
 For me, the snares of death are wound about me,
 And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
 Oh! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
 Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,
 And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

Alic. Oh! yet, before I go for ever from thee,
 Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me,

[Kneeling]

And, in compassion of my strong affliction,
 Say, is it possible you can forgive
 The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love?
 For, oh! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee
 Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
 This day of horror never would have known us.

Lord H. Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sorrows. [*Raising her.*]
 Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more,
 No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
 I see the hand of heaven is arm'd against me,
 And, in mysterious providence, decrees
 To punish me by thy mistaken hand.
 Most righteous doom! for, oh, while I behold thee,
 Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
 And charge thy ruin on me; thy fair fame,
 Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
 Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd, by me.

Alic. And does thy heart relent for my undoing?
 Oh, that inhuman Gloster could be mov'd,
 But half so easily as I can pardon!

Lord H. Here, then, exchange we mutual forgiveness:

So may the guilt of all my broken vows,
 My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
 As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
 As here I part without one angry thought,
 As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
 Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
 And begging heaven to bless and to support thee.

Sir R. My lord, despatch; the duke has sent to chide me,

For loitering in my duty——

Lord H. I obey.

Alic. Insatiate, savage, monster! Is a moment so tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,
 Thou great Avenger! Give him blood for blood:
 Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings blast him!

That he may know how terrible it is,
 To want that moment he denies thee now.

Lord H. This rage is all in vain, that tears thy bosom:

Retire, I beg thee;
 To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it wounds me;

Thy agonies are added to my own,
 And make the burden more than I can bear.
 Farewell—Good angels visit thy afflictions,
 And bring thee peace and comfort from above.

[*Exit.*]
Alic. Oh! stab me to the heart, some pitying hand,
 Now strike me dead——

Re-enter LORD HASTINGS.

Lord H. One thing I had forgot——
 I charge thee, by our present common miseries;
 By our past loves, if they have yet a name;
 By all the hopes of peace here and hereafter;
 Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue
 The innocence of thy unhappy friend;
 Thou know'st who 'tis I mean; Oh! should'st thou wrong her,
 Just heaven shall double all thy woes upon thee,
 And make 'em know no end—Remember this,
 As the last warning of a dying man.
 Farewell, for ever!

[*The Guards carry HASTINGS off.*]

Alic. For ever! Oh, for ever!
 Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever!
 My rival, too! his last thoughts hung on her,
 And, as he parted left a blessing for her:
 Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever?
 No; since her fatal beauty was the cause
 Of all my sufferings, let her share my pains;
 Let her, like me, of every joy forlorn,
 Devote the hour when such a wretch was born;

Cast every good, and every hope, behind;
 Detest the works of nature, loathe mankind;
 Like me, with cries distracted fill the air,
 Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair,
 And prove the torments of the last despair.

[*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.

Dum. You saw her, then?

Bel. I met her, as returning
 In solemn penance from the public cross.

Before her, certain rascal officers,
 Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
 Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.

Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd,
 Should'ring each other, crowding, for a view,
 Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;
 Some pitying—but those, alas, how few!

The most, such iron hearts we are, and such
 The base barbarity of humankind,

With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,
 Hooting and railing, and with villanous hands
 Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
 To hurl upon her head.

Dum. Inhuman dogs!

How did she bear it?

Bel. With the gentlest patience;
 Submissive, sad, and lowly, was her look;
 A burning taper in her hand she bore,
 And on her shoulders, carelessly confus'd,
 With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung;
 Upon her cheek a faintish blush was spread;
 Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain.
 While, barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,
 Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood;
 Yet, silent still she pass'd, and unrepining:
 Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
 Except when, in some bitter pang of sorrow,
 To heaven, she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise,
 And beg that mercy man denied her here.

Dum. When was this piteous sight?

Bel. These last two days.

You know my care was wholly bent on you,
 To find the happy means of your deliverance,
 Which but for Hastings' death I had not gain'd
 During that time, although I have not seen her,
 Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
 To wait about, and watch a fit convenience
 To give her some relief, but all in vain;
 A churlish guard attends upon her steps,
 Who menace those with death, that bring her comfort,

And drive all succour from her.

Dum. Let 'em threaten;

Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice;
 So heaven befriend my soul, as here I vow

To give her help, and share one fortune with her.
Bel. Mean you to see her thus in your own form?

Dum. I do.

Bel. And have you thought upon the consequence?

Dum. What is there I should fear?

Bel. Have you examin'd
 Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure
 The sev'ral secret springs that move the passions
 Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,
 That wrath and vengeance never may return?

Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep?

Dum. O, thou hast set my busy brain at work,
And now she musters up a train of images,
Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,
And sunk in deep oblivion—Oh, that form!
That angel face on which my dotage hung!
How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul
With very eagerness went forth towards her,
And issu'd at my eyes.—Was there a gem
Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields?
What was there art could make, or wealth could

buy,
Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty?
What could her king do more?—And yet she fled.

Bel. Away with that sad fancy—

Dum. Oh, that day!
The thought of it must live for ever with me.
I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler
Bore her in triumph from my widow'd home!
Within his chariot, by his side, she sat,
And listen'd to his talk with downward looks,
'Till, sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,
Hereyes encounter'd mine—Oh! then, my friend!
Oh! who can paint my grief and her amazement!
As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale;
And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her;
Then, with a shriek heart-wounding, loud she
cried,

While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran
Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung—
Mov'd at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,
With courteous action, woo'd her oft to turn;
Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain;
Even to the last she bent her sight towards me,
And follow'd me—till I had lost myself.

Bel. Alas, for pity! Oh! those speaking tears!
Could they be false? did she not suffer with you?
For, though the king by force possess'd her person,
Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you?
If all her former woes were not enough,
Look on her now; behold her where she wanders,
Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,
With no one hand to help; and tell me then,
If ever misery were known like hers?

Dum. And can she bear it? Can that delicate
frame

Endure the beating of a storm so rude?
Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd
To court her appetite and crown her board,
For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
Can she—

Entreat for bread, and want the needful raiment
To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather?
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her;
I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring
Too rough to breathe upon her; cheerfulness
Danc'd all the day before her, and at night
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow.—
Now, sad and shelterless, perhaps she lies,
Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill
rain

Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.
It is too much.—Hence with her past offences,
They are aton'd at full.—Why stay we then?
Oh! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

Bel. Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
I hear the poor abandon'd creature lingers:
Her guard, though set with strictest watch to keep

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All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

Dum. Here then let us divide; each in his
round

To search her sorrows out; whose hap it is
First to behold her, this way let him lead
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Street.

*Enter JANE SHORE, her hair hanging loose on
her shoulders, and bare-footed.*

Jane S. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, O my
soul!
For are not thy transgressions great and number-
less?

Do they not cover thee like rising floods,
And press thee like a weight of waters down?
Wait then with patience, till the circling hours
Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,
And lay thee down in death.
And hark! methinks the roar, that late pursu'd me,
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind;
And softens into silence. Does revenge
And malice then grow weary, and forsake me?
My guard, too, that observ'd me still so close,
Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
And loiter far behind. Alas! I faint,
My spirits fail at once—this is the door
Of my Alicia—Blessed opportunity!
I'll steal a little succour from her goodness,
Now while no eye observes me.

[*She knocks at the door*]

Enter SERVANT.

Is your lady,
My gentle friend, at home? Oh! bring me to her.

Serv. Hold, mistress, whither would you?

[*Pulling her back.*]

Jane S. Do you not know me?

Serv. I know you well, and know my orders too:

You must not enter here—

Jane S. Tell my Alicia,

'Tis I would see her.

Serv. She is ill at ease,

And will admit no visitor.

Jane S. But tell her

'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,

Wait at the door and beg,—

Serv. 'Tis all in vain,—

Go hence, and howl to those that will regard you

[*Shuts the door, and exit*]

Jane S. It was not always thus; the time has
been,

When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,
To give me entrance here; when this good house
Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me;
When my approaches made a little holiday,
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me:
But now 'tis otherwise; and those who bless'd me
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander,
Stray further on, for I can die even here?

[*She sits down at the door.*]

*Enter ALICIA in disorder, two SERVANTS
following.*

Alic. What wretch art thou, whose misery and
baseness

Hangs on my door; whose hateful whine of wo

Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry?

Jane S. A very beggar, and a wretch, indeed;
One driven by strong calamity to seek
For succours here; one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days,
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,
A draught of water and a little bread.

Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me, for bread;
I know thee not—Go—hunt for it abroad,
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scatter'd it,

Or cast it on the waters—Mark the eagle,
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them—I know thee not.

Jane S. And yet there was a time, when my
Alicia

Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing.
And mourn'd the live-long day she passed without me;

Inclining fondly to me, she has sworn
She lov'd me more than all the world besides.

Alic. Ha! say'st thou? Let me look upon thee well—

'Tis true—I know thee now—A mischief on thee!
Thou art that fatal fair, that cursed she,
That set my brain a madding. Thou hast robb'd me;

Thou hast undone me—Murder! O, my Hastings!

See his pale bloody head shouts glaring by me!
Avaunt; and come not near me—

Jane S. To thy hand
I trusted all; gave my whole store to thee,
Nor do I ask it back; allow me but
The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.

Alic. Nay! tell not me! Where is thy king,
thy Edward,

And all thy cringing train of courtiers,
That bent the knee before thee?

Jane S. Oh! for mercy!

Alic. Mercy! I know it not—for I am miserable.
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells,
This is her house, where the sun never dawns;
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,
Grim spectres weep along the horrid gloom,
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark! something cracks above! it shakes! it totters!

And see the nodding ruin falls to crush me!

'Tis fallen, 'tis here! I felt it on my brain!—

Let her take my counsel:

Why should'st thou be a wretch? Stab, tear thy heart,

And rid thyself of this detested being:

I wo' not linger long behind thee here.

A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me;

And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in blood.

Ha! what art thou? thou horrid headless trunk!

It is my Hastings! see he waits me on!

Away! I go! I fly! I follow thee. [Runs off.]

Jane S. Alas! she raves; her brain, I fear, is turn'd;

In mercy look upon her, gracious heaven,

Nor visit her for any wrong to me.

Sure I am near upon my journey's end;

My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,

And dancing shadows swim before my sight.

I can no more, [Lies down.] receive me, thou cold earth,

Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
And let me rest with thee.

Enter BELMOUR.

Bel. Upon the ground!

Thy miseries can never lay thee lower.

Look up, thou poor afflicted one! thou mourner,
Whom none has comforted! Where are thy friends,

The dear companions of thy joyful days,
Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,
Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,

And bind thee to their bosoms? Thus, with thee,
Thus let us live, and let us die, they said.

Now where are they?

Jane S. Ah, Belmour! where, indeed? They stand aloof,

And view my desolation from afar!

And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.

Alas! there may be danger; get thee gone.

Let me not pull a ruin on thy head.

Leave me to die alone, for I am fallen

Never to rise, and all relief is vain.

Bel. Yet raise thy drooping head; for I am come

To chase away despair. Behold! where yonder
That honest man, that faithful, brave, Dumont,
Is hastening to thy aid—

Jane S. Dumont! Ha! where?

[Raising herself, and looking about.]

Then heaven has heard my prayer; his very name

Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.

Has he then 'scap'd the snare?

Bel. He has; but see—

He comes, unlike to that Dumont you knew,

For now he wears your better angel's form,

And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE.

Jane S. Speak, tell me! Which is he? And oh! what would

This dreadful vision! See it comes upon me—

It is my husband—Ah! [She swoons.]

Shore. She faints! support her!

Bel. Her weakness could not bear the strong surprise.

But see, she stirs! And the returning blood

Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle

Upon her ashy cheek—

Shore. So—gently raise her—

[Raising her up.]

Jane S. Ha! what art thou? Belmour!

Bel. How fare you, lady?

Jane S. My heart is thrill'd with horror—

Bel. Be of courage—

Your husband lives! 'tis he, my worthiest friend—

Jane S. Still art thou there!—Still dost thou hover round me!

Oh, save me, Belmour, from his angry shade!

Bel. 'Tis he himself! he lives! look up—

Jane S. I dare not!

Oh! that my eyes could shut him out for ever—

Shore. Am I so hateful then, so deadly to thee,

To blast thy eyes with horror? Since I'm grown

A burden to the world, myself, and thee,

Would I had ne'er surviv'd to see thee more.

Jane S. Oh! thou most injur'd—dost thou live, indeed?

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head;

Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns;

Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night!
And shield me with thy sable wing for ever.

Shore. Why dost thou turn away?—Why tremble thus?

Why thus indulge thy fears? and, in despair,
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror?
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,
And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.
My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,
To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,
With tender joy, with fond forgiving love.
Let us haste,
Now while occasion seems to smile upon us,
Forsake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

Jane S. What shall I say to you? But I obey—

Shore. Lean on my arm—

Jane S. Alas! I'm wondrous faint:

But that's not strange, I have not eat these three days.

Shore. Oh! merciless!

Jane S. Oh! I am sick at heart!—

Shore. Thou murd'rous sorrow!

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still?

Must she then die? O my poor penitent!

Speak peace to thy sad heart; she hears me not:
Grief masters every sense—

Enter CATESBY, with a guard.

Cates. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the state—

Bel. What means this violence?

[*Guards lay hold on SHORE and BELMOUR.*]

Cates. Have we not found you,
In scorn of the protector's strict command,
Assisting this base woman, and abetting
Her infamy?

Shore. Infamy on thy head!
Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!
I tell thee, knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,
And she that bore thee was an Ethiop to her.

Cates. You'll answer this at full—away with 'em.

Shore. Is charity grown treason to your court?
What honest man would live beneath such rulers?

I am content that we should die together—

Cates. Convey the men to prison; but, for her,
Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

Jane S. I will not part with him—for me!
—for me!

Oh! must he die for me?

[*Following him as he is carried off; she falls.*]

Shore. Inhuman villains!

[*Breaks from the Guards.*]

Stand off! the agonies of death are on her—
She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.

Jane S. Was this blow wanting to complete
my ruin?

Oh! let me go, ye ministers of terror.
He shall offend no more, for I will die,
And yield obedience to your cruel master.
Tarry a little, but a little longer,
And take my last breath with you.

Shore. Oh, my love!

Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,
With such an earnest, such a piteous, look,
As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning
Thou could'st not speak?—

Jane S. Forgive me!—but forgive me!

Shore. Be witness for me, ye celestial hosts,
Such mercy and such pardon as my soul
Accords to thee, and begs of heaven to show thee;
May such befall me at my latest hour,
And make my portion blest or curst for ever.

Jane S. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in
peace—

'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now—

Was there not something I would have bequeath'd
you?

But I have nothing left me to bestow,
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh! mercy, heaven!
[*Dies.*]

Bel. There fled the soul,
And left her load of misery behind.

Shore. Oh, heavy hour!

Fare thee well—

[*Kissing her.*]

Now execute your tyrant's will, and lead me
To bonds or death, 'tis equally indifferent.

Bel. Let those, who view this sad example, know
What fate attends the broken marriage vow;
And teach their children, in succeeding times,
No common vengeance waits upon these crimes,
When such severe repentance could not save
From want, from shame, and an untimely grave.

[*The curtain descends slowly to music*]

WAYS AND MEANS:

A COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS Play is an early production of the most successful dramatic writer of the age who though often attacked by those critical paupers,

Who snatch the poet's wreath with envious claws,
And hiss contempt for merited applause;

has neutralised their venom by the universal sanction of his country, and the superior vigour and brilliancy of his writings.—Under the inspiration of the comic Muse, Mr. Colman has produced a variety of excellent comedies, farces, &c. that will never be excelled in the main requisites of dramatic effect and sterling humour.

The three-act comedy before us is well supported throughout;—the whimsicality of Sir David Dunder, the efforts of the lovers, the curiosity of Peery, the wary cunning of Tiptoe, and the general effect of a clever dispersion of pun and laughable situation, are fair claims to frequent representation.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HAYMARKET.

SIR DAVID DUNDER,.....*Mr. Bannister, jun.*
RANDOM,.....*Mr. Palmer.*
SCRUPLE,.....*Mr. Williamson.*
OLD RANDOM,.....*Mr. Aickin.*
CARNEY,.....*Mr. Barret.*
TIPTOE,.....*Mr. R. Palmer.*
PAUL PEERY,.....*Mr. Usher.*

HAYMARKET.

ROUNDLEE,.....*Mr. Bannister*
QUIRK,.....*Mr. Moss.*
LADY DUNDER,.....*Mrs. Webb.*
HARRIET,.....*Mrs. Kemble.*
KITTY,.....*Mrs. Prideaux.*
MRS. PEERY,.....*Mrs. Love.*

Passengers, French and English Waiter, Bailiff, Servants, &c.

SCENE.—Partly at Dover, and partly at Sir David Dunder's, near Dover.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Anti-Room in an Inn.

PAUL PEERY discovered, in a chair, asleep; bar-bell ringing violently.

Enter MRS. PEERY.

Mrs. P. Why, Paul! why, husband!

Paul P. Eh! What! [*Waking.*]

Mrs. P. For shame! for shame, Mr. Peery! The bar-bell has been ringing this half hour; and here you sleep like the rusty clapper of it; and scarce stir when you are pulled—and when you

are, you only waddle about a little bit, and then stand still till you are pulled again.

Paul P. Pr'ythee, wife, be quiet—You know, I was always famous for giving satisfaction.

Mrs. P. Were you! I wish I could find it out.

Paul P. But what's the matter?

Mrs. P. Packets are the matter—diligences are the matter. Sea and land-cargoes and carriages. Four sea-sick gentlemen, from Calais; and four ladies just stepped out of the mail coach, from Canterbury.—The men, I believe, are making inquiries for the machine to London.

Paul P. Are they? Then show 'em all into

one room. I pity the poor gentlemen.—Nothing is so dreadful as sea sickness—so put 'em all together—and they'll only be sick of one another, you know. *[Bell rings.]*

Enter WAITER.

Wait. Two gentlemen in a post-chaise, with a servant, from London, Sir. *[Exit WAITER.]*

Mrs. P. Run, Mr. Peery!

Paul P. Ay, ay—You take care of the stage-coaches, and let me alone for the post-chaise gentry.—Here, Lewis, John, William! Show a room, here, to the gentlemen, there!

[Exit, bawling.]

Enter WAITER, showing in one FRENCH and three ENGLISH PASSENGERS, from the Packet.

Wait. Walk in, gentlemen.

Mrs. P. Walk in, gentlemen, if you please. Welcome to England! Welcome to Dover, gentlemen!

1 Pass. So—just six o'clock in the morning—becalmed at sea—not a wink all night—the devil take this packet, say I. I'm rumbled, and tumbled, and jumbled—

Mrs. P. I'm extremely sorry for it, Sir!—but—

F. Pass. Now, begar, it do me goot.

Mrs. P. I'm vastly happy to hear it—do you choose any refreshment, Sir?

F. Pass. Vous avez raison—I never vas so refresh in all my life.

Mrs. P. I am very glad, indeed, Sir!

2 Pass. I'm damned sick.

Mrs. P. I'm very sorry, I assure you, Sir!

F. Pass. Ma foi, madame have beaucoup de politesse!

2 Pass. Get me a glass of brandy—ti tol, lol—I feel confounded qualmish, but tol, lol, lol, la—I don't like to own a sea-sickness—and—“Britons ever rule the waves.”

[Singing, and smothering his uneasiness.]

F. Pass. Briton rule de vave! I tink de vave rule you, ma foi, ha, ha!

2 Pass. Right, Mounseer! in the present case, I grant you. Packet sailing—mere plain water agrees best with your folks: but, when there is occasion to mix a little of our British spirit with it, why, it's always too much for a French stomach. Now that's the time when an Englishman never feels qualmish at all.

Enter WAITER, showing in four WOMEN.

Mrs. P. Servant, ladies.

1 Wom. Lard! this mail coach is the worst conveyance in the world. It squeezes four people together, like two double letters.

Mrs. P. Disagreeable to be sure, Ma'am!

1 Man. And that infernal packet!

Mrs. P. Nothing can be half so bad, Sir!

2 Man. But then the cabin—

Mrs. P. Except the cabin, your honour!

2 Wom. And riding backward in a coach—ugh!

Mrs. P. I can't conceive any thing so shocking, Ma'am!

F. Pass. Voila la politesse encore!

Mrs. P. Beg pardon, ladies and gentlemen.—But our house is so full at present, we have but one room to spare; the cloth is laid in it for breakfast, and it will be ready directly—hope you will excuse the—

1 Man. Oh! certainly, hostess; travellers, you know—if you'll give me leave, Ma'am.

1 Wom. Sir, you are very obliging.

[The men hand the women.]

Mrs. P. Here, William, wait on the company.

F. Pass. Ah! c'est drole! pair by pair! two by two!

[Exeunt MEN, handing out the WOMEN.]

Mrs. P. Show 'em into Noah's ark, William, d'ye hear? *[Bell rings.]* Coming! Here, John! Lewis! coming! *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—A Room in the Inn.

Enter PAUL PEERY, showing in RANDOM and SCRUPLE.

Paul P. This way, your honours; this way! one step at the door, if you please.

Rand. Step on, Sir, if you please—pay the post-boy, and send in the servant; *[PEERY going,]* and, harkye, landlord! what's the name of your house?

Paul P. The Ship, your honour. The oldest and best established house in the town, Sir.

Rand. Very well; then give us a better room, and get us some breakfast.

Paul P. It shall be done, Sir. I suppose, gentlemen, you mean to cross to Calais?

Scru. Pshaw!

Paul P. You intend to take water, gentlemen?

Rand. No, Sir, but we intend to take your wine. We may stay here some days, perhaps.

Paul P. Thank your honours! every thing shall be had to your satisfaction; and as far as a cellar and larder can go, I think I—vastly obliged to your honours! Here, Lewis, William, breakfast for two in the Lion, there. *[Exit.]*

Rand. Well said, my thorough, clumsy, talkative innkeeper!—and now, my dear Scruple, after our night's journey, welcome to Dover. Here we are, you see—not with the old, stale intention of taking a voyage to the continent; but a voyage to the island of Love.

Scru. But suppose we should find neither wind nor tide in our favour?

Rand. Why then we shall be love bound here a little, that's all. But, hang it, why anticipate evils? If we are to be unlucky, the less we think of it the better—confound all thinking, say I.

Scru. Confound thinking, Mr. Random! I'm sure it's high time to think—and that very seriously.

Rand. Hey-day! Moralizing! “Confound thinking, Mr. Random!” Yes, Sir, confound thinking:—I'm sure thinking would confound us; and most confoundedly too, Mr. Scruple, at present.

Scru. Yet one can't help having one's doubts.

Rand. Poh! prythee don't doubt at all—doubting is mean and mechanical; and never entered the head or heart of a gentleman. Why, now, if you observe from our own daily experience, the people that doubted most were either our taylors, or tavern-keepers, or shoemakers; or some such pitiful puppies—Zounds, man, don't be faint-hearted now! we shall never win our fair ladies, at this rate—besides, haven't we all the reasonable hopes in the world?

Scru. Why we are sure of *their* good wishes, I believe.

Rand. Certainly—and as to any trifling obstacles, such as father and mother, or so—chance must direct us.

Scru. But may not those trifling obstacles you mention—

Rand. Pshaw! doubting again! why you are more of a Mandarin, on a chimney-piece, than a man—there's no touching you but your head begins shaking. Consider, we attacked 'em at Bath, where they were three weeks ago, on a visit to a female friend, without impertinent relations about 'em to give 'em advice—and made, I think, no inconsiderable progress.

Scru. Granted; but they were then suddenly called home to their father's, the baronet's, near Dover, here; who hinted, in his letter, at no very distant match for both of 'em.

Rand. O never fear, if the girls are averse to it; and they, at our parting, like simple damsels in romance, bewailed their cruel fate, while we, like true knights errant, promised to rescue them from confinement. But you had more opportunities with your flame than I: why did not you marry her at once?

Scru. Because I loved her.

Rand. Well, that's some reason too—you would have made a damned unfashionable figure, I confess.

Scru. You mistake me; I had too much honour to impose on my Harriet's amiable simplicity, and have the utmost detestation for marrying merely to make a fortune. In these interested cases, if we keep up appearances, after marriage, the wife becomes a clog and incumbrance; if we throw off the mask, we are making a worthy woman, perhaps, miserable, who has afforded the only means of making her husband easy.

Rand. Mighty romantic, truly! and charming policy for a fellow without a guinea!

Scru. My policy was chosen from the proverb, Random! I thought honesty the best. I confessed to her my embarrassed circumstances.

Rand. Charming!

Scru. Told her I had nothing to boast of but my family; whom my imprudence had disobliterated.

Rand. Excellent!

Scru. And thus, by candidly acknowledging myself unworthy her affections, I undesignedly, insured them.

Rand. Pugh! this may do well enough for the grave, sentimental, elder sister; but Kitty's the girl for my taste—young, wild, frank, and ready to run into my arms, without the trouble of dying or sighing. Her mind full of fun, her eyes full of fire, her head full of novels, and her heart full of love—ay, and her pocket full of money, my boy!

Scru. Well, we must now find means to introduce ourselves to the family; I dread encountering the old folks too; people in the country, here, are apt to be suspicious; they ask queer questions sometimes.

Rand. Oh! the mere effect of their situation; where they get more health than polish.

Scru. And yet old country families—

Rand. Are like old country bacon—damned fat and very rusty, Scruple. But come, let's to breakfast, and settle our plan over a cup of coffee. But where the devil's our scoundrel? we only hired him overnight, and have scarce set our eyes on him since.

Scru. What, our joint lacquey? that we en-

gaged for the expedition, to avoid inquiries—to wait on us both—dress us both—and fly on both our errands, like a shuttlecock between two battledores?

Rand. Yes, or like another Atlas, with all our world upon his shoulders. Only look at him, Scruple!

Enter TIPTOE, with a small portmanteau.

Tip. Gentlemen, shall I put down the luggage?

Scru. Ay, on this table

Tip. [*Putting it down.*] Whew! It's enough to make a man faint to look at it.

Rand. Why, you scoundrel, it's all you have to bring in; and we have contrived, on purpose to make it easy, to put both our clothes in one portmanteau.

Tip. That's the very reason I complain, Sir, You don't know how fatiguing it is to carry double.

Rand. A shrewd fellow this. He may be of use to us. And now we have to inquire, pray, Sir, what may your name be?

Tip. Tiptoe—Tiptoe, gentlemen, at your service. I have seen better days, no offence to your honours—bonest Tiptoe once stood above the world; but now—all the world stands upon Tiptoe.

Scru. And pray, Sir, what were you, formerly?

Tip. A decent young man, Sir—that could dress wigs, write a running-hand, and preferred a sober, steady family. I shaved my old master, bottled off his wine, copied his papers, and kept the key of his cabinet and cellar; in short, Sir, I was his prime minister.

Scru. How came you to leave him, Sir?

Tip. Ruined by party, Sir;—some of his papers were missing, and as I kept the key—I—

Rand. Began to be suspected—eh! honest Tiptoe?

Tip. Why, I can't tell how it was, Sir; but the cabinet was against me—the whole house opposed me—and poor Tiptoe, like other great men—

Rand. Was turned out, I take it?

Tip. Oh, fie! no, Sir; I resigned. I then fairly advertised my abilities—"wants a place—can turn his hand to every thing!"—you, gentlemen, bid most for me—here I am, and I hope you'll have no cause to complain of my qualifications.

Scru. He'll make no bad ambassador for us, at least, Random, and now to breakfast, and our plan of operations. If they fail—farewell, dear, dear little England! and yet I am wedded to thee—

Rand. Like modern husbands to their wives, Scruple: it's almost impossible to be seen in one another's company any longer.

[*Exeunt RANDOM and SCRUPLE.*]

Tip. Very fine company I seem to have got into—hired in one instant, by two men, I had not heard of three moments; set out on a journey at four in the morning, and it had scarce struck five, when I began to suspect they were all sixes and sevens.

Enter a FRENCH WAITER.

Well, friend!

F. Wait. Serviteur, monsieur.

Tip. Friend! oh Lord! no!—It's the enemy. —French waiters creep into shabby Dover inns, like French footmen into large London families. French footmen! more shame for their employers! who starve their own poor countrymen, to feed a set of skinny scoundrels, whose looks give the lie to their living, and prove their master's head in much nicer order than his heart. What, you come to carry up the portmanteau, I suppose?

F. Wait. Oui, de portmanteau, dat belong to—

Tip. Well, take it [*Puts it on his shoulder.*] and take care of it too, monsieur, d'ye mind; none of your old tricks of running away.

F. Wait. Never you fear; laissez moi faire. "O! de roast oef of Old England."

[*Exit, singing.*]

Tip. There go all the worldly goods of my two poor masters; and here comes our inquisitive puppy of a landlord. Deuce take the fellow! he asked me more questions at the bar of the inn, than if I had been brought to the bar of the Old Bailey.

Enter PEERY.

Paul P. Ah! my honest friend—sweet, honest Mr. Tiptoe, your servant!

Tip. [*Aside.*] How did he pick up my name, now?

Paul P. I hope the two worthy gentlemen, I have shown above stairs, have every thing to their satisfaction? Though I say it, that should not say it, Paul Peery, of the Ship, was ever famous for giving satisfaction. Which of the two do you serve, my friend?

Tip. Umph! serve!—why—a—

Paul P. His honour in gray? or—

Tip. Ay.

Paul P. Or the worthy gentleman in green?

Tip. Yes.

Paul P. Umph! Two sweet gentlemen, indeed; and happy is one of 'em in a servant. You seem to give double the attendance of an ordinary footman.

Tip. Why, though I say it, that shouldn't say it—Tim Tiptoe was ever famous for giving satisfaction. [*Mimicking PEERY.*]

Paul P. A close fellow! Well, I wish 'em success with all my heart, Mr. Tiptoe. You have lived with 'em a long while, I imagine?

Tip. Why, I have lived with 'em long enough, for that matter, Mr. Peery.

Paul P. They are of property, no doubt?

Tip. Of such property, Master Peery—it's impossible to describe it!

Paul P. Indeed! and where may their property lie at this time?

Tip. I believe all their property lies on the sea coast, at this time.

Paul P. Oh, oh! the sea coast! What, in ships, I imagine?

Tip. Yes; it's all in the ship.

Paul P. So, so! merchants! rich rogues, I'll lay my life. [*Aside.*] Ah! warm, warm! Good men, Mr. Tiptoe, trusted by every body, I warrant.

Tip. Trusted for a great while too, I promise you.

Paul P. I hope they find every thing to their liking.—Must be civil here. [*Aside.*] I hope the

room suits their honours? I should be sorry to give any offence. I have given 'em a room I give to the best of company.

Tip. Oh, excellent! make no apologies: your room is as good as your company, Master Peery.

Rand. [*Without.*] Damn your house!—Here! Tiptoe! Tiptoe! you scoundrel!

Tip. Coming directly, Sir.—You are right; you were always famous for giving satisfaction.

Rand. Tiptoe!

Paul P. Hark! is it your master?

Tip. Faith, I do not know. It's either his honour in gray, or the worthy gentleman in green.—Good bye, Master Peery.

Rand. Tiptoe!

Tip. Coming, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Paul P. Why, what the devil can these merchants do at Dover? A bit of a smuggling business, perhaps. They must be rich fellows, by the servant's being so saucy—and, then they call about 'em, and abuse the house so kindly!—Oh! your abusive fellows are the best customers in the world; for none pay so well at an inn as those who are always damning the waiters for ill treatment. [*Bar-bell.*]

Enter WAITER.

Wait. Sir David Dunder, of Dunder Hall, Sir, has had business in the town before breakfast, and stopt in, whilst his horses put to, to go back. [*Exit.*]

Paul P. Odds my life! a rich man, a good natured gentleman, and lives but a mile off: the only great man, I know, whose situation never keeps me at a great distance. An odd fellow, too; and takes more money from my house than a tax gatherer; I can never keep a guest for his cursed kind invitations.—But he pays well while he stays. So, William! wife! hostler! rub down the horses, and show up Sir David Dunder.

[*Exit.*]

PEERY returns, attending SIR DAVID, talking as entering.

Sir D. Pooh, Paul, you're a blockhead—there's two of 'em you tell me?

Paul P. Worth a plum a piece, Sir David.

Sir D. Plums! figs!—How's your wife, Paul, eh?

Paul P. She's pretty—

Sir D. Be quiet—I know she is. And so these two merchants are as rich as—

Paul P. Any thing, your honour.

Sir D. Damned good smile—very new too. Have they taken care of the horses?

Paul P. They're going to—

Sir D. Be quiet—I know it—Merchants! hazard! Vessels are lottery tickets—two blanks to a prize.

Paul P. Right, your honour; and the sea—

Sir D. Is the worst wheel in the world for 'em, Paul; for when once they stick at the bottom, I would not give a farthing for the chance of their coming up. Where do they come from?

Paul P. London—London merchants; and they—

Sir D. I know it, you blockhead—are respected all over the world. London merchants, Paul, are like London porter; a little heavy or so, sometimes; but stout, stiff, heady, old hogsheads, that keep up the vigour of a strong English constitution. Where are they going?

Paul P. I can't tell, Sir David; but if you wish for any intelligence—

Sir D. You can't give it me. Tell 'em I wish to be introduced, d'ye hear? Sir David Dunder, Dunder Hall—you know the form—Bart.; bloody hand, all that—wishes to—Who have we here?

Paul P. The very men, Sir David; coming this way too.

Sir D. Then do you get 'out on't.

Paul P. So! two more guests going by his cursed invitations. *[Aside; exit.]*

Sir D. *[Looking out.]* Gad! they are youngish men for merchants. Well, why the worse? They may be clever fellows, for all that. If so, the younger the better; and a man must be clever indeed, when his enemies can throw nothing but his youth in his teeth.

Enter RANDOM and SCRUPLE.

Rand. Nay, prythee, Scruple, one turn on the quay, and—who is he? Egad, the same queer fellow we observed just now under the window.

Scru. Right, giving orders to his coachman.

Sir D. Gentlemen, your servant.

Both. Sir, your very obedient!

Sir D. My landlord tells me—honest Paul here—You've just left London. Good journey, I hope. Our town of Dover is but an odd, whimsical, sort of a—eh!—and, after the city, you think it a damned dirty, dingy, kind of a—umh?

Scru. Why, Sir, at present, we can't say we are tired of the exchange.

Sir D. The exchange! O, oh! Paul's right—*[Aside.]* I know it.—The *Exchange*, as you say, for people in your situation, is much pleasanter.

Scru. Sir! Our situation!

Sir D. Be quiet; my host has let me into your characters.

Rand. The devil he has! And how should he know any thing of—?

Sir D. Nay, don't be angry; no harm: mere innuendo—didn't tell plump—talked of your dealings.

Scru. Dealings!

Rand. Why, zounds! the scoundrel has not presumed to—

Sir D. Must be rich—damned crusty. *[Aside.]* —You're right, though can't be too cautious. I would not wish to pry. Mean nothing but respect, upon my soul. How many clerks do you keep?

Both. Clerks!

Sir D. Can't do without them, you know. Fine folks though, all you, eh? Props of the public—bulwarks of Britain. Always brought forward as an example to the world. Been in the stocks lately, gentlemen?

Scru. Hell, and the devil!

Sir D. That's right, don't tell. I like you the better. You see what I know of you, and—

Rand. Sir, we suspect what you imagine—and—

Sir D. I know it. You wonder to see me so devilish distant. I live but a mile off—Lady Dunder—a sweet, fine, fat woman—my wife, by the bye—will be happy to entertain gentlemen of—

Rand. How! Lady Dunder your wife?

Scru. Is Lady Dunder your wife, Sir?

[Both in haste.]

Sir D. Hey! my wife! my wife! Why, yes, I think so. She is not yours, is she?

Scru. Oh! you'll pardon us, Sir; only we have heard the name of Sir David Dunder, in this country, before.

Sir D. Like enough; the Dunders are pretty well known, I believe, every where.

Rand. Certainly; indeed, you were the last person in our mouths, Sir David.

Sir D. Pop'd in apropos, eh! Never knew it otherwise. Just like Simon Spungy, our curate; never knocks but at dinner, and always comes in with the cloth. But we are notorious for hospitality to strangers of your stamp; and if you can spare a day or two at Dunder Hall—all in the family way, you know,—Sir David, that's me—Lady and two misses—two fine young women, upon my soul, as any in Kent—tall as hop-poles—will be happy to—eh?

Scru. Sir, you're particularly kind; but—

Rand. We'll attend you with pleasure, Sir David!

Sir D. Will you? that's right. It's close by; quite convenient. And if necessity obliges you to come to the coast here—why, 'tis but a mile.—All in my power. I know your business, and we'll have the horses directly. We shall be at home time enough for a late breakfast. Here—eh! I'll step to coachy myself; but don't, don't abuse honest Paul—meant no harm, upon my soul—mere innuendo—a slight sketch, but no profession specified. Paul is like other inn-keepers, blunders and talks: a damned deal of the bull and mouth about him; but no more meaning than a split crow, or a spread eagle, egad! *[Exit.]*

Rand. Give me your hand, my boy! the day's our own; the luckiest hit in the world!

Scru. Do you think so?

Rand. Think so! Zounds, what's the matter with you? Isn't the very man we have been following, the first man we have met? Hasn't he thrown open his doors to us, when we only hoped to get in at his window? Isn't he our father-in-law that is to be, and hasn't he given us an invitation?

Scru. Granted: and what then?

Rand. What then? Why then, instead of reconnoitring the whole day round his wall, we have nothing to do but to walk in, whisk away with the girls, and be married immediately.

Scru. And is this to be our return, Mr. Random, for Sir David's kindness?

Rand. Why, how can you make a better, than by giving such a strong proof of your attachment to his family?

Scru. For shame, Random! basely endeavour to injure a man, whose hospitality has brought you under his roof! No, no; our reconnoitring plan indeed—weak as you may think it, I should prefer going to his wall, as you say, I assure you.

Rand. Very likely; the weakest always go there. Remember, however, I scorn a mean action, as much as any man; but, if a good marriage is the readiest road to the reconciliation with our friends, who can, if they choose, make us easy—I see no great injury offered to Sir David, nor his family.

Scru. Why, in that case, to be sure—

Rand. Ay, ay, no more of your cases now, good doctor; but follow my prescriptions, I entreat you. Besides, my father is expected from the South of France every day. He may arrive

before we have brought matters to bear; and fathers are apt to spoil sport, you know.

Enter TIPTOE.

Tip. The old gentleman, Sir, with the old coach, is inquiring for you in the court-yard.

Seru. O, Sir David! allons! follow us, Sirrah. We haven't a moment to spare.

Rand. That's right, Scruple! stick close; for he seems so whimsical an old fellow, that he may get into his carriage, drive off, and forget he has ever given us an invitation. Come along, Tiptoe! quick, quick, you scoundrel! [*Exeunt.*]

Tip. Quick! Zounds! I'm almost dead. All night, bumping down to Dover, on a ragged, raw-boned, post-horse, with a brace of pistols at my knees; and as soon as we arrive, clapt up behind a queer, country coach, with a couple of leather straps in my hand, to be rattled back again! Ah, Tiptoe! Tiptoe! You must get into a sober family again, I see. My running-hand will be all I have left for it at last; for I shall be run off my feet, I find, in a fortnight. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Ship at Dover.

Enter ROUNDFFEE and QUIRK.

Round. Why, I told you so all along; but you have no more head than a smooth shilling.

Quirk. No, but I have a mouth, if you would let me open it.

Round. Yes, and then you'd shut it again; just as you do at my dinners; where you have been opening and shutting it, any time these ten years.

Quirk. What! and haven't I deserv'd it? haven't I filled more parchments for you, than stomachs; more skins than bellies; and closed many an account before I could close my orifice; haven't I given you a character in the courts, good humouredly establishing your reputation, before I regarded my own? Haven't I sworn for you, and roundly too, Mr. Roundfee?

Round. Well, well, I always allowed you had a good swallow.

Quirk. Wasn't I, when you were tottering, friend enough to take out a commission of bankruptcy against you? and didn't I kindly make myself a cruel creditor, and insist upon receiving three parts of your effects?

Round. And haven't I always acknowledged my ruin with gratitude?

Quirk. No, nor any thing else. I have dangled after half the heirs in town, without an acknowledgment; making myself the imaginary friend of their imaginary wants, merely to introduce 'em to you, as a man of honour and secrecy.

Round. Ay, if required.

Quirk. Granted; it says so in the advertisement—and did not they come to you, when, if it was not for me, they would have been accommodated at a genteel end of the town? Instead of which, I trudged 'em through the Strand, towards the Bar, all winter long, with their boots and high collars, for fear of sore throats, to chew your tough chops, in the back parlour. Then they'd clap you on the back, call you by your Christian name, tell damned lies, and swear you were an honest fellow, to make you come down with the ready. And who was the disinterested,

moderate man, to settle a proper premium between the parties? Why I, to be sure.

Round. And is there a worse security in the world than your fellows of fashion? Your snug man of business, when he puts his name to a note, is always punctual in his payment; or else we lock him in limbo—safe in the house of bondage. Now, your man of fashion always gets safe in another house; and if he can't duly pay, why he gets duly elected, and I have a false return for my money.

Quirk. That's not the case here, you know.

Round. No, but it's as bad. A pretty wild-goose chase we have had here! Rammed into a post chaise, with more expense than speed; gapping at hops, through a cursed small-beer country, and after two youngsters, who by this time, I take it, have hopped over to Calais. That's another genteel way of chousing an honest creditor. The coast of France is edged with English insolvents. Calais is a King's-bench, and Boulogne little more than a Marshalsea. A parcel of prodigal, webfooted, spendthrifts, come here, and take water like ducks.

Quirk. Yes, but they are lame ducks.

Round. While we, who have hatched 'em like hens, in the shell of their dissipation, stand clucking complaints on the shore, without daring to follow.

Quirk. Come, come, accidents will happen sometimes.

Round. And who brought this accident about, but the dapper Mr. Quirk? with your plaguy politic pate! a thick Simmond's-inn skull, only fit to peep through a pillory. You must be sending me your two, fine, St. James' gentlemen. Dammé, there's more poor rogues, I believe, in that parish than in St. Giles! all in a gang too;—knaves of clubs every one of them—and there my two youngsters coaxed me over with a pretty refreshing story of friends in the country, and rich old fathers with fine crazy constitutions; charming churchyard coughs, and pretty touches of the rheumatism; sweet bile, and delightful bad livers! It put one in fine spirits to hear them talk; and you, you booby, to back it!

Quirk. Why, I had it from the best authority. However, young Random's father is abroad for his health; and every body says in a fine, fair way of dying; and then you'll be in a fair way of recovery. The report is current, my old lad.

Round. Yes, and the son got current cash for it; and now he must go abroad too; with a cursed consumptive pocket, I warrant: and that other oily-tongued fellow, Mr. Scruple.

Quirk. But why call me in question? Could not you see for yourself? Didn't they ask you to dine with 'em; and weren't you foolish enough to drink and grow open-hearted? and then when Random told you he'd take you to Shooter's Hill in his phaeton—

Round. Psha! no such thing.

Quirk. And introduce you to Peggy Pattens, who said you had fine eyes, if you did not squint, and a good walk, if you did not stoop—

Round. Hush!

Quirk. Didn't you chuckle, and whisper he was an honest fellow? and though I kept winking, and pulling your sleeve, did not you take notes which were due the day they set off, and give a draft for the three thousand?

Round. Zounds, it's enough to drive one mad

to think on't! You got the warrant backed by the Sheriff of Canterbury?

Quirk. Yes, by the *Sub*, and all may be repaired at last. We have traced 'em truly to this house, and if the tide hasn't served, we may nab 'em yet. Come along, old Round. We'll pump the waiters, sound our host, and success, no doubt, will crown our inquiries. Come along!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Dunder Hall. A Glass Door in the back scene, with a view into the Gardens.*

SIR DAVID, LADY DUNDER, RANDOM, and SCRUPLE, discovered at the finish of breakfast.

Rand. We are only mortified, Sir David, as we have not had the pleasure of seeing the young ladies, that we are deprived of their company at breakfast.

Sir D. Pshaw! Nonsense! mustn't mind that—'t'other cup—Eh? [*To RANDOM.*] Always the case with my girls—Lump o' sugar?—[*To SCRUPLE.*]

Seru. Not any.

Lady. They are taking their constant morning's round, gentlemen. They always breakfast before the rest of the family; and are generally breathing the air of the shrubbery, while Sir David and I are sipping our tea and chocolate.

Sir D. Be quiet: I know it. Picking posies, gathering daisies and daffy-down-dillies. Pretty pastoral girls, though, I assure you: very like mamma.

Lady. Oh, Sir David.

Sir D. Hush! The very picture of my dear Lady Dunder. Not so plump, perhaps; but all in good time—Bit more muffin?

Seru. The young ladies, Sir David, are happy in their resemblance of so accomplished a mother.

Sir D. Yes; like as three peas. My lady, indeed, has more of the marrow-fat.

[*All rise, as having done breakfast.*]

Lady. Why people do flatter, I confess. None of our neighbours but are pretty partial to the Dunders. Not an assembly round, but my girls are first called out to move in a minuet; and always stand the head couples in a country dance.

Rand. We make no doubt, Madam. The charms which your ladyship's daughters must inherit—

Sir D. Be quiet.—Asked every where, I promise you. Quite the delight of Dover—Acted all the tragedy parts too, at my friend thing-em-bob's. Harriet got great applause, upon my soul: but Kitty was so cursed comical! did Desdemona one night; gets killed, you know, by a bolster.

Seru. An agreeable amusement! Gentlemen's play-houses are much to be wished for.

Sir D. Fine fun, isn't it? We had a touch of dramatics once ourselves, at the hall here—gutta a kitchen, and filled it with fly-flaps—All gentlemen players, you know.

Rand. A kitchen! And how did your players perform?

Sir D. Players! Pokers! Empty as pots; and as flat as the dresser.

Lady. Oh, fie, Sir David! You know, Sir Simon Squab came from London on purpose; and every body said his Romeo was charming.

Sir D. Eh! gad, that's true: forgot Squab. True, deary;—fine,—very fine, indeed, for a gen-

tleman: his figure, to be sure, wasn't so cleverly cut out for the character. A fat fubsy phiz, sunk between a couple of round shoulders, and, damme, he croaked like a toad in a hole. What do you say to a hop in the garden, eh? Look at the lawn?

Rand. Why, at present, Sir David—

Sir D. I know it—Rather not—That's right: no nonsense: I hate excuses. Looks like rain: cursed cloudy; and all that. No ceremony here.

Seru. A little rest after a journey is—

Sir D. Right—By the bye, talking of that, after a journey, I met with Kit—D'ye know Kit Skurry?

Rand. Never heard of him.

Seru. Nor I.

Sir D. An odd, harum-scarum, absent, flighty fish. Old friend of our's; but a damned quiz: got acquainted in the queerest way in the world.

Lady. I've heard Sir David mention—

Sir D. Be quiet. Coming from Paul's one night, where I picked you up in an odd sort of a strange style—

Seru. Why it was rather—

Sir D. Hush! Got into my coach—all alone, dull as hell, dark as the devil: so, to amuse myself, fell fast asleep.

Rand. Entertaining, indeed!

Sir D. Very—I know it. When the carriage came to the hill, rubbed my eyes to wake, out of one corner, and saw Skurry stuck up in the other. I thought coachy had crammed in a corpse.

Rand. It looked rather suspicious.

Sir D. Took him for dead, as I hope to live.

Rand. How did you behave?

Sir D. Sat still: frightened out of my wits, till I got home; and John came out with a candle?

Seru. And how did he explain?

Sir D. Easy enough. Got drunk upon business; going to town; popped into my carriage for the mail-coach, to secure a good place before the rest of the passengers; and as the hostler crossed the yard in the dark, bid him shut the door, and be damned to him. Made us monstrous merry, didn't it, love?

Lady. Extremely.

Sir D. Yes, my lady laughed till she was ready to—Go to the farm, eh? Peep at the pigs?

Lady. Lord, Sir David, how you tease gentlemen to walk, who have scarcely recovered from the rattle of the road: your friends have no relish for pigs now; besides, it's so late, we shall hardly have time to dress for dinner.

Sir D. Eh! gad, that's true. No dinner without dressing.—Wont walk.—Well, do as you like: I leave you here with my dear Lady Dunder. [*To Lady D.*] Talk to 'em, deary, do; give 'em a sketch of the county. Some Dover scandal, and Canterbury tales quite in your way, lovee. She knows all about you.

Seru. Indeed!

Sir D. Yes, I told all, just as I had it from Paul. Make her prattle to you, do you hear? Devilish deal of solid sense about her, I assure you.

Rand. That we are convinced of.

Sir D. I'll just take a turn, and abuse my people; see what's going on within and without—house and garden; farm and fire-side: look at the plate and the pantry: gape at the geese, and the ducks, and the dogs, and the hogs, and the logs. Must go—damned sorry: must mind my little cutter of cabbages; an idle, eating, cheating dog;

and would sooner be damned than dig. He's of no more use in the garden than Adam: for he steals every apple he can find, and wont even take the pains of grafting a gooseberry bush.

[*Exit.*
Scru. I hope we don't detain your ladyship from walking?

Lady. By no means: Sir David's horse-walks have given me a dislike to so fatiguing an exercise. I drive round the grounds in a whiskey, now and then—or a canter on a poney—

Rand. But, while Sir David is at his farm, your ladyship has probably your menagerie to attend. Is your ladyship fond of birds in that style?

Lady. Oh, no, I prefer a little canary in my closet, to all the birds of the air in England.

Scru. No getting rid of her, I see—[*Aside.*] I wonder your ladyship has given up walking too; the air of this garden is delightful.

Rand. Charming! And this lawn before the house here.

[*Walking up to the glass door with SCRUPLE.*

Enter KITTY, running in with a bundle of flowers, HARRIET following.

Kitty. Oh! mamma, mamma! see what a big bundle of flowers I have got.

Lady. Hush, Kitty—Consider!

Kitty. Eh! what, company? O lud! Two Jemmies, I vow. Do, mamma, introduce us.

Lady. For heaven's sake, girl—Gentlemen, give me leave to introduce—

Kitty. La, mamma, you are so round about all ways.—I'll go and give 'em one of my best courtesies.—You'll see now: I'll do it in half the time—[*The men come from the glass door to the front of the stage. KITTY goes up to RANDOM, begins courtesying, looks in his face, drops the flowers, and screams.*]

Kitty. Oh!

Rand. Ha! the young lady's taken ill.

[*Running to her.*

Lady. Mercy on me! Why, girl! why, Kitty! What's the matter with you?

[*They put her in a chair.*

Kitty. Nothing, mamma—nothing—but something that—

Rand. Something that was in the flowers, Madam, I believe.

Kitty. Yes, yes,—a great—

Rand. A great wasp. I heard it buz by me, as you dropt 'em.

Kitty. Yes, a wasp: it was so. I declare it has so flurried me; seeing what I so little expected.—

[*Looking at RANDOM.*

Rand. How do you find yourself now, Madam? A little flurried still, I'm afraid.

Lady. And I to be without my smelling-bottle too—Bless me, why, Harriet, you give no more assistance than—[*SCRUPLE at the beginning of the bustle goes round to HARRIET.*]

Har. Excuse me, Madam; but seeing my sister so suddenly taken ill—

Scru. Has quite affected Miss Harriet's spirits. One turn in the air will relieve them. If the young lady will give me leave to attend her into the garden—

Lady. You're extremely kind, Sir: go, my love—Poor, dear, sympathetic girl! The gentleman will assist you.

Scru. I'll take the tenderest care of her, be assured, Madam.

[*Exit SCRUPLE with HARRIET through the glass door.*

Rand. If your ladyship would favour us with a little hartshorn—

Lady. Lord! that I should be so stupid as to leave my salts on the dressing-table. I'll run for them myself in a minute. Sit still, Kitty, my dear; a little of Dalmahoy's pungent will relieve you presently, I warrant. [*Exit.*

Rand. And now, my dear Kitty!

Kitty. [*Rising.*] Hush, hush! lud! you have frighted me out of my wits: I have hardly breath to ask you a question. Where did you come from? Who brought you here? How long do you stay? And who do you go away with?

Rand. I came from London; brought here by your father; stay till to-night; and go away with you, my angel.—So much for question and answer.

Kitty. With me! you might have asked my consent first, I think.

Rand. Nay, nay, we have no time for forms now. Your mother will be back instantly, and we may want opportunities: your father knows nothing of me nor my friend; but picked us up at the inn with a common invitation: but delays might produce some cross accident to make our designs known, and defeat our plan. The family retires early, I find: we shall order a post-coach to the garden wall at eleven. Now, Kitty, if we could but find the outside of a certain chamber door—

Kitty. O gemini! you must not venture along the gallery. You and Mr. Scruple will be at the farther end of it. All the visitors will sleep there. Papa and mamma next to you, and Harriet and I beyond them. I would not venture out for the world.

Rand. No, but if Scruple and I were to venture.

Kitty. Oh! it would be to no purpose. We shall have nothing to do with it: you may creep about in the dark as much as you please, we won't assist you, I promise you.—We won't—no—we won't even put a chair on the outside of the door, that you may know our room from the others.

Rand. Thanks! thanks! my dear, sweet, charming, bewitching, little—[*Embracing her.*]

Enter LADY DUNDER, hastily.

Lady. Here are the salts.

Rand. [*Changing his tone, but without letting KITTY go.*] That's right, Madam: lean upon me: walking about will be of infinite service, I am certain.

Lady. You're very good, indeed, Mr. Random. How are you now, Kitty?

Kitty. Recovered vastly. Much easier since you left us, mamma.—[*Quitting RANDOM.*]

Lady. Ay, ay, I knew it would be soon over foolish girl, to be in a flutter at such a trifle! but come, we have troubled Mr. Random too much already: we'll take our leaves, and dress for the day.—To be alarmed at an insect indeed!

Kitty. La, mamma, why not?

Rand. Certainly there's more in it than your ladyship imagines.

Lady. Well, well; you're very good—Bu-ha, ha, ha! Sir David will laugh finely at this

—tottering in a chair—and—you won't forget to tell it at dinner, I dare say—

Kitty. Well, I deserve to be laughed at, I see: foolish enough, to be sure. Come, mamma—
[*Taking her arm, and looking archly at RAN-*
dom as she goes out.] You won't forget the chair, I dare say, Mr. Random.

[*Exeunt KITTY and LADY.*]

Rand. So; this even exceeds my warmest expectations. If Scruple follows Harriet up closely, our success is certain: but he is so shilly shally. Damn it, if he lets her reflect we are lost. Women were never born for reflection; and whenever they have any, it's generally used to turn all our schemes topsy turvy.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Garden belonging to Dunder Hall.

HARRIET and SCRUPLE.

Scru. Why, Harriet! why torture me with these needless objections?

Har. Needless! good heavens! How can I accept your proposals? the indelicacy, the consequences which may follow; the steps, too, your friend is taking with my younger sister—

Scru. My life on't, are guided by honour; and the emergency, the occasion, every thing conspires in urging us to take advantage of the moment. The scheme I have proposed is—

Har. In your present situation rash, even to madness: time too, without so hasty a proceeding, may produce circumstances in our favour. A little delay—

Scru. Will occasion, perhaps, an eternal separation: you know my situation; know that, with prudence, a virtue, which, I confess, I have hitherto neglected,) it may be essentially altered for the better: but the anxieties I shall suffer by delay; the engagements, which the commands of a father may oblige you to subscribe to; all convince me, if your regard continues, you will favour my warmest wishes. This very evening, Harriet—

Har. Impossible! Press no further, I beseech you. The peace of a family depends on my conduct. Parents have ties on me, Mr. Scruple, which I should shudder to violate.

Scru. Absurd! have not they proposed a match for you—

Har. A detested one, I own: but a thousand accidents may prevent its going forward; and, till I see the strongest necessity for securing my own happiness, I dare not risk the happiness of others, so very, very near to me.

Scru. Still, still, Harriet, this delay! why take pleasure in tormenting me?

Har. It is not in my nature: bred up in the country, I have imbibed notions, which the refinement of a town education might term romantic; for I have preferred happiness to splendour; nor have I blushed to own to you, the affections of an honest, generous mind, have much more weight with me than the allurements of pomp and fortune: apprised of these sentiments, tempt me no more, I beg, Sir; nor strive to take advantage of a partiality, which would be ill-placed on one who would recommend to me so inconsiderate a behaviour.

[*Warmly.*]

Scru. Confusion! But I am to blame, Madam; I have relied too much on that partiality, which I see cannot surmount the slightest obstacles. I see

I have offended; I shall soon quit a house, Madam, where I find my presence is disagreeable—

[*Going.*]

Har. Unkind! ungenerous man! you, too, who read my heart; who see its tenderness, and what this struggle costs me: but prudence urges your departure; go then; I cannot, dare not, follow you: my actions are not at my disposal. Ah! if they were, I'd share my fortunes with you to be happy.

Scru. Dear, sweet simplicity! O, Harriet, forgive my petulance; pardon a passion, whose warmth consumes all bonds. Yes, yes, I will be prudent for your sake, Harriet; and yet I must not lose you; but wish and wait for happier times.

Har. The times will come, assure yourself. My father may put off this match.

Scru. If he should hasten it?

Har. Why then—Nay, nay, you know my weakness.

Scru. Then I will be content; you must at last be mine. [*Taking her hand.*] Till then I'll watch with anxious care about you; still cherish hopes, still curb them at your bidding. Prudence shall chasten passion; prudence, which, like this fan, my Harriet, tempers the bosom's heat, but never chills it.

Har. Then keep it: [*Giving the fan.*] keep it as an emblem of your conduct; and when I claim it, which one day, no doubt, I shall, be it from difficulties—removed or yet increasing, or from whatever cause, when once I take it, account me all your own.

Scru. My lovely girl! O may that day—

Sir D. [*Without.*] Hollo! girls? plague on't, why, where the deuce—
[*Enters.*] Oh! here you are, aha! got acquainted already—that's right: he's as pretty a promising sprig of a—what's he talking of? somewhat sensible? mentioning me?

Scru. We were just talking of you, indeed, Sir David.

Sir D. Like enough; what, you've got my young puss in a corner?

Scru. I was explaining to Miss Harriet, Sir.

Sir D. I know it; isn't she an apt scholar? had it all from me; sticks to a point, keeps close to a subject; harkye, Hal, got news for you; lookye, a letter from London.

Har. About me, papa?

Sir D. Every tittle. Full of flames, settlements, constancy, contracts, peace, and pin-money—made up the match: here it is, [*Showing the Letter.*] as neat a mixture of love and law; nothing but harmony and business; just like a drum: all music and parchment. You'll stay the wedding, won't you?

Scru. That I'm afraid will be out of my power.

Sir D. Pooh! Pr'ythee, 'twont be long; make us monstrous happy: Random and you now, eh! shall make no noise about it. Just a snug party. Only a few friends, a roasted ox, a blind fiddler, and a hop in the hall.

Scru. May I ask the gentleman's name?

Sir D. Lord Snolts. D'ye know him?

Scru. His person only; which is by no means in his favour: his lordship is somewhat gummy, extremely short too, Sir David.

Sir D. Ha! no great hopes of his growing neither. My lord will be five-and-forty come Lammas, I take it.

Scru. Rather an advanced age to begin making love.

Sir D. Right: we sha'n't lose a moment; he has been making money, however, this long time; rich as a Rabbi.

Scru. Money, I hear, Sir David, is not the only ingredient necessary in matrimony.

Sir D. No: what else?

Scru. The power of Cupid, sometimes.

Sir D. Curse Cupid! he has not a half-penny to buy him breeches. A love match won't light you a candle, egad.

Scru. And yet a stupid, old, ugly husband, is—

Sir D. I know it: like a heavy old fashioned piece of plate—always handsome when he's rich.

Har. [After reading the Letter.] Be here to-morrow! Bless me, this is so sudden, so unexpected!

Sir D. Right! the best way in the world in these cases. All settled now, but the ceremony; that we'll finish as soon as possible.—Marriage is a kind of cold bath, Hal! never stand trembling on the brink: dash away—one plunge, a slight shock, and the business is over.

Har. But you know, papa, I have scarcely ever seen his lordship: it will be so hasty.

Sir D. Be quiet! I know it; married so myself, Hal. Shouldn't have had my dear Lady Dunder, if I had not been hasty. All agreed on before we met; coupled in a quarter of an hour after I saw her; come together as people dance minnets; I bowed, she courtesied, and, egad, I had her by the left hand in a moment.

Scru. But the case here is different. Her ladyship had but little reasons for wishing delay: if all husbands, indeed, had equal accomplishments—

Sir D. Eh! why something in that; men ar'n't all alike; every body is not blessed with manner and style to—eh!—few such figures as I. But Hal, here, is grave, and studies the mind. My lord has told her his already, you know. So as soon as he comes, why—

Har. Let me entreat you, Sir, not to be so precipitate; let me take a little time to—

Sir D. Take time! Pooh, time steals too fast to be taken, now, Hal. My lord leaves London to-morrow, be here to dinner, to church, in the evening to—eh?—why, what ails you? Look as red, and as pale as—

Har. The weather, Sir; nothing more—the heat of the—

Sir D. Odso, true; forgot that. Been broiling here in the sun, like a lot of negroes: we'll walk to the house, and—

Har. I attend you; but it has really so over-come me—I—almost want strength to follow you. [Embarrassed.] I want—

Scru. Your fan, Madam.

Sir D. Ay, right: a few flaps in the face would bring her about in a second.

Scru. This, Madam, which you have just permitted me the honour of carrying for you.

Sir D. Eh! Did she? Give it her. Take it, Hal.

Har. Shall I, papa?

Sir D. To be sure. Can't well do without it, I think, at present. A mighty civil, dangle, well-bred sort of a—carries it o' purpose for you, you see, to give you on all occasions.

Har. If then, on this occasion, the gentleman will return it.

[Hesitating.]

Scru. With the utmost pleasure, believe me, Madam.

[Presenting it.]

Sir D. Well done, Dangle, egad! Flap away, Hal. Do you a deal of good.

Har. [Fanning.] How refreshing to the spirits!

Sir D. Yes, so it's a sign. En't it, you?

Scru. Certainly—it is—it is a sign, Sir David.

Sir D. I know it. Women can't do without 'em. All their airs and graces depend upon it. The tap, flap, flirt, crack, peep, pat, and a hundred uses besides, which I have no notion of.

Har. [Fanning.] It would not be proper, if you had, papa.

Sir D. Like enough: but let's in, and open our budget: quite delight my lady with the news: she'll be in a hell of a pucker. A fine fuss with preparations to-morrow, I warrant: up to the neck in beef, gowns, ducks, jewels, ribbons, and puff pastry. Come, Hal. [Going out.] Soon have your swain kissing your hand. [SCRUPLE kisses it.] Come along: soon settle this. Kitty will be coupled next. Cares are all over; and I can now safely swear that most of my uneasiness is behind me.

[Exeunt; SCRUPLE courting HARRIET, behind SIR DAVID, in dumb show.]

SCENE IV.—The Ship Inn.

Enter PEERY, meeting ROUNDLEE and QUIRK.

Paul P. I hope, gentlemen, you have every thing to your satisfaction.

Round. I wish we had, with all my heart.

Paul P. I am very sorry any thing should happen amiss. I do all for the best, your honours—for people in post-chaises.

[Aside.]

Quirk. Well, and how goes your house? are you tolerably full at present, eh, landlord?

Paul P. Um! Full enough in the larder, your honour. Plenty of fowls, ducks, geese, and pigeons; and butchers' meat in abundance: mutton chops, lamb chops—

Round. Damn chops: we don't want victuals, cram us with news.

Quirk. But what company have you? Any body of note now? Any body that makes a noise in your house?

Paul P. Let me see—first, there's my wife—

Round. Psha! we have nothing to do with your wife, man; we want an acquaintance or two.

Quirk. Ay, haven't you two—two young gentlemen, for instance, above stairs?

Paul P. Hum!—there's a very old one in the back parlour.

Round. Oh the devil!

Paul P. Two young gentlemen indeed came down from London about seven this morning, and they—

Both. What! What!

Paul P. Went away about eight, I believe.

Round. Damnation! I thought so.

Quirk. But were they tall or short, or fat or lean, or—

Paul P. Eh! One was in a gray coat, and the other in a green one—Very inquisitive.

[Aside.]

Round. [To QUIRK.] The very clothes we heard at the hotel they sat out in. What shall we do, Quirk? How shall we turn?

Quirk. Back.

Round. Let's inquire further, however—I sup-

nose now, landlord, you'd like to see two such gentlemen again in your house?

Paul P. Certainly, your honour! They are friends of yours, I imagine?

Quirk. Why, we should be glad to see 'em again, I promise you. Do you expect 'em back, shortly?

Paul P. Oh yes, in a day or two, I make no doubt.

Round. Indeed! I am rejoiced to hear it.

Paul P. Nay, perhaps sooner—I guess where they are gone; hardly out of sight of Dover.

Quirk. Ah! at Calais, no doubt—or at Boulogne, edging the coast, as you say, Mr. Roundfee.

Paul P. And from what I could gather from the servant, I make no doubt, but their occasions will make them come quickly to our town again.

Round. Rare news, Quirk—you're a very clever, sensible, intelligent fellow, landlord; I am so happy at the thought of seeing my old friends again—gad!—I begin to find my stomach returning—so you'll get us a chop, and half a pint of your best port.

Paul P. It shall be done, Sir. Stingy scoundrel! [*Aside.*] Here, Lewis.

Enter WAITER.

Lay a cloth in the back room, up two pair of stairs, d'ye hear?

Wait. Very well, Sir. There's the packet just put into the harbour, Sir.

Paul P. Ha! Any body particular?

Wait. Mr. Random and another gentleman are coming up the quay, Sir.

Round. Eh! Who?

Quirk. Random! Put back again, by all that's lucky.

Paul P. Odso! A rare customer! Run, Lewis. [*Exit WAITER.*] Your snack shall be ready presently, gentlemen, and—

Quirk. But stop and—

Paul P. And every thing to your satisfaction, gentlemen—and—

Round. We want to—

Paul P. Hot, and hot, gentlemen.

Round. Plague of your—

Paul P. And I am your very humble servant, gentlemen! Coming! [*Exit, bawling.*]

Round. Huzza! rare news, Quirk. The luckiest hit in the world! They are just come on shore, you see, and we shall come in for the cash, at least their persons, which is something towards it, directly. Come, come, we'll send for an officer whilst we are at dinner; and drinking a merry meeting.—Come, my dear Quirk, we'll soon settle the business, I warrant; and then, after our hot post-chaise scamper, and I've made sure of my money, we'll travel back slowly, at our ease, in the dilly. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Ship, at Dover.

Enter OLD RANDOM, leaning on CARNEY.

Old Rand. Gently, gently, good Carney! The cursed sea breeze has got hold of my hip, and I can no more move, at first setting off, than a post horse.

Car. There! there! gently—and now, Mr. Random, many welcomes to England again. We have been feeding on French air, like cameleons,

and you have grown as strong and as stout as a camel.

Old Rand. But I have a huge lump of cares on my back, notwithstanding.

Car. But health is the great thing to care about. Why you look as hale and as hearty as ever.

Old Rand. Indeed! do you think so, Carney?

Car. Think! I know it.

Old Rand. It has been of service. Before I went over I was as pale and as puffy—flesh without colour, and my face peeping through a parcel of wrappers.

Car. For all the world like a mummy

Old Rand. How! why don't you see now?—

Car. Oh! quite another thing, Sir.

Old Rand. Another thing, Sir! Why, you booby, I am as well as ever I was in my life, except a few pains, a gout, and a cough.

Car. Very true, Sir.

Old Rand. Very true! Then why are you so very costive in your congratulations? Oh, the South of France is the best physician in the world—if it can't cure it seldom kills, and that's more than most doctors can say for themselves. Then the pleasant time we have passed together; I nursing myself, and you keeping me company, in my room, all the while I was sick, in a fine, charming, warm climate!

Car. Ay, happy days, indeed, Mr. Random. The walks too I enjoyed, in imagination, looking out of your window.

Old Rand. And so you'd wish to have walked out, and be damned to you! taking your amusement abroad, while poor I was taking physic at home. Here's friendship for you! and a pretty return for the pleasure I found in keeping you close to my bed-side all the day long. Lord! Lord! what few folks feel for any body but themselves!

Car. Nay, I'm sure I suffered as much as you did yourself.

Old Rand. Well, well, you are the best of the bunch, I believe—the only man I can agree with. What can be the reason of it, Carney?

Car. The similarity of our dispositions, no doubt; for I talk, eat, drink, and think, exactly as you do, Mr. Random.

Old Rand. Something in that, I believe—but what a singular, cruel case mine is, that with so many connexions and a family to boot, I find such few proofs of people liking me—Plagued with a profligate dog of a son too—who, because I have indulged in a few trifling pleasures myself, thinks that he must be uninterrupted in his wild vagaries. Zounds! getting children is worse than getting a fever: they keep an incurable heat in one's blood, and cost a devilish deal of money into the bargain.

Car. But there is some prospect of a cure here, I hope?

Old Rand. No, no—past recovery, I promise you. The dog will be deucedly disappointed to see me so stout, again, I fancy. [*Coughing.*] Eh, Carney?

Car. Impossible, Mr. Random: I can't think him so depraved. I dare say he'll be overjoyed to see you. I am sure, for my part,—[*Pompously.*]

Old Rand. Ay, ay, you are a good soul, Carney, and don't know what ingratitude means—at least I think you don't, for you are continually telling me so—but he—Didn't I intend to make him my sole heir, and leave him every thing,

except my plate, and my pictures, and my houses, and my money? and see his gratitude! You are talking to me from morning to night of regard and attachment; now he has never made half a dozen of those fine professions in his life.

Car. Where is he now?

Old Rand. Rattling all over the town, I suppose, with his friend Mr. Scruple, without a guinea in his pocket; living like other fashionable puppies, on what he has least of, his wits; laughing at every man who has sense enough not to act and dress like himself—and this is *ton* and fashion now-a-days. Damme, he's hardly fit for any thing. What can I do with him, Carney?

Car. Um! Put him in the Guards, Mr. Random.

Enter PEERY.

Old Rand. Ha! honest Peery!

Paul P. I hope I see you well, Sir? your honour looks charmingly since I had the honour of seeing your honour.

Old Rand. See there! How the alteration strikes strangers. [*To CARNEY.*] And any news, Master Peery? any thing stirring lately?

Paul P. Nothing particular, except since your honour arrived—

Old Rand. Well, and what happened then? Any body inquiring after me? Who is it?

Paul P. Two very inquisitive people.

Old Rand. Oh! custom-house officers, I imagine.

Paul P. No, they came from London—they've asked a vast deal about your honour. Seem rejoiced to hear your honour's arrived.

Old Rand. Very civil of 'em. I see nothing particular in this, Master Peery.

Paul P. And I believe they have sent for a constable for your honour.

Old Rand. For me, Mr. Peery!

Car. Impossible! For what?

Paul P. Um! Perhaps they think his honour's a spy.

Car. Mercy on us! We shall be both apprehended for runners.

Old Rand. I apprehend that you are a block-head! runners! Why I can hardly walk, and never spy any thing without spectacles. Why, what's the meaning of all this?

Paul P. I can guess at no other reason they can have for taking up you, who are just come from France—but perhaps your honour may remember some capital crime you have committed. I am sure 'Squire Random, a gentleman of six thousand a year, can never want money.

Enter BAILIFF and Follower.

Bai. Is your name Random, Sir?

Old Rand. Well, Sir, suppose it is?

Bai. Then, Sir, you are my prisoner.

Old Rand. The devil I am?

Bai. At the suit of Ralph Roundfee, money scrivener of London, for three thousand pounds.

Paul P. The 'squire arrested for debt?—it can't be.

Car. I should sooner suspect myself.

Bai. And Mr. Scruple here for the same sum. [*Slaps CARNEY'S shoulder.*]

Car. Scruple! Who, I?

Old Rand. Scruple! Dick's crony, by Jupiter! and I and poor Carney arrested for the dog's debts

as soon as we set foot in England—a profligate a scoundrel! I'll—One moment, if you please—come here, Peery! you see this business?

Paul P. Plain enough.

Old Rand. Do you know of any Mr. Scruple he mentions?

Paul P. Odso! it's the two young merchants, as sure as a gun, that Sir David carried off in his carriage this morning.

Old Rand. Merchants!

Paul P. Yes, and now I recollect, one called the other Scruple, sure enough.

Old Rand. Well, well, you see the mistake—you must be bail in this business.

Paul P. Who, I! Lord, your honour!

Old Rand. Come, no words. Who is this Sir David, you talk of?

Paul P. Sir David Dunder, of Dunder Hall—lives hard by.

Old Rand. Order a post-chaise. I'll drive there immediately.

Paul P. But it's so late, your honour. Past ten o'clock.

Old Rand. No matter: I'll raise the house. Zounds; I'll raise the dead, but I'll be at the bottom of all this directly: and if you are shy about bail, why—I'll leave honest Carney here in pawn, till I come back.

Car. I had rather keep you company, if you please, Mr. Random.

Paul P. Why, as it appears like a mistake, Sir; and I have known you backwards and forwards so long, and your estate—and—

Old Rand. Well, trundle these fellows down stairs. You'll accept of his undertaking.

Bai. We desire no better.

Old Rand. As to this Mr. What's his name? Mr. Roundfee, who is in the house; not a word of it to him, till I return; for particular reasons.

Paul P. Every thing shall be done to your satisfaction, Sir. Come, gentlemen, we'll proceed to the cellar, if you please; the best lock-up house in Christendom.

Car. Mercy on us; what an escape!

Old Rand. An escape! a scoundrel! an abandoned—What do you think now of all this, Carney?

Car. Think! Why, I—What do you think?

Old Rand. That you are a blockhead, not to see the meaning of all this: that my son's a blockhead to behave so; and that I am a greater blockhead than any body to suffer it.—Zounds! I can hardly contain myself. I'll never see his face again. Come along, Carney: I'll be with him, and sooner than he suspects, I believe: I'll unkenel him, I warrant you: I'll disclaim him, I'll discard him, I'll undermine him, I'll undo him—damme, I'll unget him,—That's, disinherit him—He shall rot in a jail: rot me, if he shan't; I'll teach him what it is to run in debt in person, and get arrested by proxy. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Gallery in Dunder Hall.

Four chamber doors at equal distances in the back scene. A chair placed against the farthest door on the right hand; stage dark.

RANDOM opens the second door, on the left.

So! all quiet: not a soul stirring. [*Comes forward.*] Sir David, good man, thanks to early hours, is snoring away in the next room to me.

I heard him, like a high wind, through the cracks of the old family wainscot. He little dreams of what's to happen before he wakes. Where can Scruple be all this while? He promised to be on the watch, as soon as every thing was silent; but he's so cursed slow, and backward in this business! If I was not pretty sure that one woman is as much as any one can manage, I should be tempted to take his nymph away without waiting for him. It's so damned dark too, that there's no being certain of his door. The chair was a lucky thought; we should have made some confounded mistake without it, I believe. How the plague now shall I make him hear, without disturbing any one else.

Scru. [*Opens the farthest door on the left.*] St—St!

Rand. Scruple!

Scru. Random, is it you?

Rand. Yes!—softly!—all's snug. The baronet's as fast as a church.

Scru. And his wife!—

Rand. Pickling, I believe, below stairs in the store-room. The old woman's head is so full of this nonsensical match Sir David has told her of, that she'll be up with the house-keeper, I find, three parts of the night, to make preparations for the wedding.

Scru. 'Sdeath, we shall be discovered: we shall never get out without her hearing us.

Rand. Pooh! never have done with your doubts and objections?

Scru. Surely her being up is an objection of some weight.

Rand. Certainly, she's of great weight in the house—for which reason she's gone quite to the bottom of it. She must have devilish good ears to hear us there; for we shan't come within a mile of her. But have you heard any thing of Tiptoe?

Scru. No: do you expect him.

Rand. Yes: I sent him to Dover, with orders to bring the carriage and horses to the back gate of the garden. It's turned of eleven too, I take it. Look what's o'clock, will you?

Scru. Look! why it requires the eyes of a cat. It's as dark as a dungeon.

Rand. Odso, I had forgot; but he'll be here presently: I have been obliged to let him into the secret: he has procured a key of the back-door, and will slide up to my chamber; which he has had an opportunity of marking, he tells me, in his own way, to give us intelligence.

Scru. Well, if he is but punctual—

Rand. Oh! you may depend upon him: but, till he comes, we may as well prepare our fair companions. I'll try and find out the chair, which is against their dressing-room door; where they are in waiting. [*Feeling about.*] Their bed-chamber is beyond it; so I may enter without infringing the rules of etiquette, you know.

Scru. Hadn't I better go with you?

Rand. No, no; stay here as an outpost: I shall soon be back.

Scru. Gently, no mistakes now.

Rand. Never fear! So, here's the chair.

Scru. Remember—caution's the word.

Rand. Ay, and expedition too. The house must divide, you know: so the sooner we clear the gallery the better. [*Taps; door opens, and he enters into the women's chamber.*]

Scru. How awkward I feel in this business!

It's the first time I ever entered into a scheme of this sort; and am now convinced that no man thinks of running away, without being cursedly frightened.

Tiptoe. [*Singing without.*]—

So great a man, so great a man, I'll be?

Scru. Hark! What's that? Ha! a light. How the devil now am I to find out my room again? It comes nearer and nearer. I must venture. I have three chances to one of doing no mischief; and I dare say my unlucky stars (or rather my want of any stars at all) will direct me to Sir David. So, here's somebody's chamber; I must in, at all hazards. [*Goes into the same chamber he came out of.*]

Enter TIPTOE, with a dark lantern, singing, and drunk.

Tip. Here I am at last! What a plaguy parcel of turnings and windings, to get up to this old crazy gallery! umph! It has made me as giddy as a goose. Now for my masters, damn my masters! Scamper! Scamper! Scamper!—T won't do—No; never fit for me. Give me a regular, steady, sober family for my money. If it hadn't been for the lantern I begged of the old boy at the inn—I was forced to treat the drunken scoundrel before he would give it me—I might have tumbled over the bannisters. Mr. Random, now I think on't, ordered me to come in the dark! Umph! Gentlemen think no more of servants' necks now-a-days, they think we've one to spare, like the Swan in Lad-lane, I believe. But softly! softly! No noise. I must go to the chamber to tell him the carriage is ready. Let me see, it's the last door but one, at one end of the gallery; but whether it's to the right, or to the left, curse me if I recollect. Stay—[*Turning round, and counting the doors.*] One, two, three. Damme, how the doors dance! I shall never find the right, if they take it in their heads to run round so confoundedly. I remember, [*Taking the chair, and drawing it along.*] when I lived with old Lady Hobble she always sat still at Ranelagh to find out her company. Now, as these gentlemen here, [*Pointing to the doors.*] choose to take a Ranelagh round, I think I had better sit quiet in the middle of 'em, till any old acquaintance comes by. [*Pulls the chair against the next door, and sits down.*] Zounds! how fast somebody sleeps, Sir David, perhaps. I wonder if baronets ever snore. What the devil am I to do now? Get my head broke for not calling my master; and my bones broke, if I should happen to call any body else instead of him. As that is the case, I'll call nobody, egad!—I'll e'en go back to the carriage, and wait till they come for me. So, gently, steady.

[*Exit, singing.*]

Scru. [*After a pause, opens the door.*] Once more every thing is quiet. I can't conceive who it could be so long with a light in the gallery. I had best give Random notice of what has happened; that in case we are watched, he may be upon his guard. Hereabouts the door must be—[*Going to the door RANDOM entered.*] Eh! no chair—'sdeath, this is Sir David's! A pretty blunder I should have made! [*Goes to the next.*] O here it is at last. [*Taps at the door.*] What a number of accidents this little contrivance has prevented! I had better explain to him what has happened. In the inside of my chamber; for it's dangerous

waiting on the outside a moment, I find. What the deuce keeps him so long now? [*Taps again; Sir DAVID opens the door in his bed-gown and night-cap.*]

Sir D. Well?

Seru. Hush! it's I.

Sir D. I!

Seru. Softly! Softly! Zounds, you are so unguarded! Follow me! Quick, quick! Only follow me, and you shall hear all. [*Exit into his own chamber.*]

Sir D. Follow me! Damned, if I do though. Can't stir a step without running the risk of breaking my nose. Cursed queer! A fellow in the dark with no name, a rascal to rob the house, perhaps—gad, it has put me all in a twitter.

RANDOM comes out with a bundle from the women's chamber.

Rand. St! St!

Sir D. Eh!

Rand. 'Tis I.

Sir D. So! here's 'tother I.

Rand. Where are you? Here! hold this bundle. [*Thrusting it into his hands.*] Why, what makes you shake so? Are you cold here?

Sir D. Zounds, a thief!—He'll cut my throat if I cry out.

Rand. For shame, flurried at such a trifle as this! But there's no knowing even one's friends till they're tried, I see.

Sir D. Like enough. Most of your friends have been tried, I dare say.

Rand. Put we shall have a whole cargo to carry. Stay where you are now. Don't stir for your life, and I'll be back in an instant. We'll soon make an end, I warrant you.

[*Returns to the women's chamber.*]

Sir D. That you will, a pretty public one too, I take it. Mercy on me! How shall I get away? The dog's given me a bundle here as big as a child. I shall be brought in for a new kind of burglary—Cast for breaking into my own house, and hanged for robbing myself of property. My lady's locked up below, I suppose; bound back to back with the old housekeeper: or gagged and ravished, poor quiet soul, with the rest of the family females. If I could but contrive to—

[*Feeling about.*]

Seru. [*Putting out his head.*] Hollo!

Sir D. Oh, the devil! There's one in every corner, a whole banditti playing at bo-peep.

[*Aside.*]

Seru. Come, come, don't trifle now; I've something to say to you.

Sir D. The fellow don't know me in the dark. I'll deceive him.

[*Aside.*]

Seru. Nay, this delay will—

Sir D. Hush.

Seru. What's the matter? Any body coming?

Sir D. Yes, yes.

Seru. Ha! we are discovered. In, in.

[*Shuts the door.*]

Sir D. Now, if I could but crawl down this back stair case.

[*Meets RANDOM coming out, and runs against him.*]

Rand. Now, my dear Scruple, all's ready.

Sir D. Zounds, it's the two merchants!

[*Aside.*]

Rand. Our packing is all over.

Sir D. Indeed!

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Rand. Our two fair ones both equipped for flight.

Sir D. My Harriet?

Rand. Yes, and my Kitty—they'll be in our arms in an instant, you rogue! And we've nothing to do, but to lead 'em to the coach, and away as fast as love, money, and horses, can carry us. Didn't I tell you now, that your doubts were all nonsense? but, 'sdeath, you are so dull about it: your fears have so overcome you, that—why aren't you like me—all rapture, all passion?

Sir D. Hem! [*Showing signs of agitation.*]

Rand. Ay, this is right now! this is as it should be. But I'll go and bring 'em out. [*Going; turns back.*] Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think what a damned clatter Sir David will make by and by. His fat fussy wife too; cackling about the house, like an old hen that has lost her chickens.

Sir D. Old hen! Damme, I wish she had never sat to have brought such a brood.

[*Aside.*]

Rand. And he too. Did you ever see such a tedious booby in your life? But I'll go and conduct our charge. By the bye, has Tiptoe been here?

Sir D. No.

Rand. Careless scoundrel! But we shall find him at the gate with the carriage, I suppose. Now for it. Now to deliver our damsels from the clutches of an obstinate fool of a father. A block-head, to think to marry women to whom he pleases! No, no: whenever there's any forbidden fruit, it is not in human nature to rest easy till it is tasted.

[*Feeling for the door.*]

Sir D. Liquorish dogs!

[*Keeps back.*]

Seru. [*Coming out.*] Why, what could he mean? There's no noise: all's quiet as can be. Random!

Rand. Well.

Seru. Are you ready?

Rand. Yes, yes: didn't I tell you so? We're coming.

Seru. Well, well: Tiptoe has not been here.

Rand. Psha! Plague, I know it; you told me so already.

Seru. Did I? When?

Rand. Why, this instant; but you are in such a flutter, you can't remember a word you say. But you have taken care of the bundle I hope?

Seru. Bundle! What bundle?

Rand. That, that I gave you just now.

Seru. Just now! not you, indeed! Why, you're in a flutter yourself.

Rand. Pooh, pooh! I tell you the bundle I brought out of the room. The bundle that—

Seru. Damn the bundle! I never saw it, nor felt it in all my life.

Rand. Now, how can you be so cursed obstinate? I put it into your own hands, and you shook as if you'd an ague.

Seru. Shook! your memory is shook, I believe.

Rand. Gad, I could have sworn I had given it you, but we must not stand upon trifles now. Time's precious.—[*Opens the women's door; HARRIET and KITTY come out.*] This way, this way. Now, ladies, we attend you.

Kitty. Lud! it's as dark as pitch.

Rand. Never fear.

Har. Heavens! how I tremble.

Seru. Courage now, my Harriet, and we may soon defy every danger.

Rand. Well said, courage! well said Caesar, egad! 'Sdeath, Madam, if you draw back now, you spoil all. I'll bring you all through, I warrant you.

Har. I fear I shall never bear up. The step I am taking, the weight on my spirits—

Rand. Vapours! vapours, from being in the dark; nothing else, believe me, Madam.

Har. My mother too—what will not she feel?

Seru. Nay, pursue this no further.

Kitty. Mamma will be in a sweet bustle, I warrant. Rattling about Sir David's ears for bringing you into the house.

Sir D. [*Behind.*] Be quiet; I know it.

Kitty. Yes, that's exactly like him for all the world. Gemini, I shall never find my way.

Rand. Stay; take my arm. Come, Madam. Scruple—arm in arm all four, and then for our march.

Sir D. March! damme, but I'll muster among ye, though—

[*Aside.*]

[*SIR DAVID comes forward between them.*

KITTY takes hold of SIR DAVID'S and RANDOM'S arms, HARRIET of SIR DAVID'S and SCRUPLE'S; all arm in arm, SIR DAVID in the middle.

Rand. So; thus linked, he must be a cunning and a bold fellow too, that thinks of dividing us.

[*Going.*—*A loud ringing at the bell.*

Seru. Hark! somebody rings at the gate.

Har. Oh mercy! we shall be seen.

Kitty. Lud! there's a light! hide! hide us, for heaven's sake. It's mamma, as sure as I live.

Sir D. [*Aloud.*] No, no! stay where you are. Come along, my lady; a light will do us a deal of good.

Enter LADY DUNDER, with a light.

Servant, ladies and gentlemen.

Lady. Mercy on me! Sir David! girls! gentlemen!

Seru. Confusion!

Rand. Sir David!

Sir D. Yes, here we are—been frisking about like a parcel of rabbits. Our burrows are all empty.

Lady. Why, what's the meaning of—

Sir D. Be quiet—meaning? treachery—mean to bamboozle us. Dark night, rope ladders, garden gate, and Gretna Green—that's the meaning of it.

Lady. How! and is this the return for—

Sir D. Hush! ay, is this the return for my open, hospitable, generous—I that put salt in your porridge, bread in your mouth, and steaks in your stomach; crammed every thing into you, but gratitude.

Lady. And come here on purpose, I suppose, with a trumped-up story of—

Sir D. Trump! damme, this will be their last trump I take it. And you too! [*To the Women.*] You! [*To HARRIET.*] you that I intended to link to a lord; to go and give up a peer for a pedlar; a merchant; a fellow that lives like a lobster by salt water; a culler of pepper and spice; a trader in train oil, Greenland blubber, and China pipkins; or a black dealer in devils to sell at American markets.

Seru. 'Sdeath! What is all this?

Rand. If you'll give us leave, Sir, to—

Sir D. Give! gad, you'd have taken leave with-

out asking. French leave, if I had not been here: have smuggled my goods in the dark, trotted over the Tweed, and been hammered together by a bare-breeched blacksmith. A fine Scotch union, egad! my two rich roses here tied to a pair of poor pitiful thistles! but zounds! I'll have satisfaction.

Lady. For heaven's sake, my dear! cool your choler a little, Sir David.

Sir D. Be quiet. What! have I had a sword bobbing between my legs, at Dover hops, and quiet country meetings, for these twenty years; and now not rub off its rust, in the oily guts of a couple of whale catchers, for what I know to the contrary?

OLD RANDOM and CARNEY, without.

Old Rand. Come along, Carney: late as it is, my gentlemen can't escape now, I believe. [*They enter.*] Hey-day! the whole family collected!

Rand. My father! a pretty business we have made of it.

Old Rand. I beg pardon for this intrusion,—but if Sir David Dunder is here, and sees the occasion—

Sir D. I know it; see it all already: fine occasion, indeed: and you, too, [*To OLD RAND.*] act as accomplices, do you?—an old fellow—sham! What, you've a wig, now, I warrant, like a young counsellor's—squeezed over a toupee with a dapper tail peeping out between the ties.

Old Rand. How!

Car. My worthy old friend means, Sir—

Sir D. Hush!—he *is* an old one, is he? means to run away with my wife, then, I suppose.

Lady. I fancy he'd find it a difficult matter to carry me off.

Old Rand. Run away! Not I. I came here after a couple of youngsters, that—

Sir D. Did you! There they are. Take 'em away with you: as pretty a pair as any in England: you may match 'em against all Europe, egad.

Old Rand. So, you are two pretty gentlemen; are not you? And how dare you, Sir, look me in the face, after your profligate proceedings? [*To RAND.*] Not content neither in contracting debts, but you must have me, your poor father, you dog, arrested for 'em.

Car. Yes, and me too.

Rand. I am at a loss how to comprehend, Sir—

Old Rand. But that rascal, that rogue, Round-fee, I think they call him, he can, I believe. Here have I and poor Carney just been taken in custody for you, at Dover; while you have been playing your pranks at large all over the country.

Sir D. Eh! be quiet.—Cursed ungentle! though in you, if you are his father. Zounds! you have used me worse than they! Get yourself locked up for your son here, with a plague to you! that he and his friend may have time to run off with my daughters.

Old Rand. I! I have withdrawn my countenance long ago, I promise you.

Sir D. Ha! family failing. The son would have withdrawn his countenance too, if I'd let him.

Old Rand. How! what, attempt to—

Sir D. Be quiet.—I am the injured party: let me speak.

Lady. No, Sir David, I'll—

Seru. To end all confusion, I'll speak.

Rand. What the deuce can Doubtful say now, after all.

Seru. It is yourself, Sir David, who have been chiefly to blame.

Rand. He beats me all to nothing.

Seru. Your unguarded kindness to strangers might have been attended with much more disagreeable consequences. You took our characters from report, I see: characters which we never thought of assuming.

Sir D. Oh, damn Paul!

Seru. Our invitation was unsought; and though our manner of requiting your favours appears unjustifiable, you may congratulate yourself, that instead of being practised upon by men, unworthy your countenance, you have met with gentlemen.

Sir D. Here's two fine fellows! come into my house—going to carry off half on't on their shoulders—and then—I have met with gentlemen.

Seru. Our conduct, Sir David, is not so culpable as you imagine. A chance, like your present invitation, threw us in your daughters' way at Bath, and our continued affection (I think I may answer for my friend) may prove our motives are unguided by interest: as a further proof of it, we disclaim all views of their fortune.—Bestow but their hands, Sir David, and we shall be happy.

Sir D. Eh! zounds! something noble in that too.

Lady. But to think of carrying away our two dear rosy girls here; handsomer than all the pale chits of the county.

Sir D. Hush! handsomer? Ay, and richer too! with pockets full of money: housewives stuffed with bank notes; and work bags crammed with guineas.

Old Rand. Indeed, I begin to think Dick is not such a sad dog as I took him for. Eh! Carney?

Car. I am perfectly of your opinion, Mr. Random.

Lady. And what has the other gentleman to say for himself?

[To RANDOM.]

Kitty. Indeed, mamma, we are not much to blame neither.

Rand. Love, Madam, all-powerful love, must plead my excuse; a passion which may once have influenced your ladyship's delicate susceptible bosom.

Lady. Well, I vow the young man—pleads so prettily in his defence, that—

Rand. If your ladyship and my father could forget past occurrences, and join with me in my suit to Sir David for a union with his daughter—I hope my future conduct—

Old Rand. Um!—Why, as things are so, Sir David; and my connexions are pretty considerable—my estate pretty well known—

Car. A good six thousand a year.—I have known my good friend here some time; and have had his property under my eye for these five years.

Old Rand. And his friend, I am happy to tell you, is as well connected as he is.

Sir D. Is he?—Well, as matters are—and my lord might find a flaw here,—an ugly business, not much to his liking; I think we can but in honour be off—so, to prevent cursed country scandal, gabbling girls, ugly old maids, and all that—I think we may as well, my lady?

Lady. As you think proper, Sir David.—Harrist?

Hur. We are bound now, Madam, both by inclination and duty, to follow your commands.

Kitty. Yes, mamma, we are both bound.

Sir D. Well, then; there, there! take one another—no words.

Rand. And now, Kitty, I am your prisoner for life.

Old Rand. Remember, Roundfee, though;—there you might have been a prisoner not much to your liking.

Sir D. What! a usurer? Damme, let's duck him.

Old Rand. Oh! he and his gentlemen may be settled with at leisure. Their blunders have left them to our mercy, and they merit none, I promise you;—fellows, whose business it is to prey upon the unthinking, extort from the needy, and live upon the distresses of mankind, deserve very little compassion when they are distressed themselves.

Sir D. I know it. But here, however, they shall have no distresses to prey upon, no moping, melancholy looks now. All's well, I hope, at last, as it ought to be—and nothing ought to give any of us, here, so much pleasure as looking, tonight on a set of very merry faces.

[Exeunt.]

THE DEVIL TO PAY:

OR,

THE WIVES METAMORPHOSED;

A BALLAD FARCE,

BY CHARLES COFFEY, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS well-known little piece had as many hands concerned in its fabrication, as ever clubbed together in a business of so slight importance. It was originally written in three acts by a performer of the name of Jevon, afterwards altered considerably by Messrs. Coffey and Mottley, and again cut into a single act by Theophilus Cibber. From all the above copies, it was reproduced in its present state in 1731, and published with Mr. Coffey's name as the author. The celebrated Mrs. Clive is said to owe the rise of her great reputation to her success in the part of *Nell*; and Mr. Harper, the original in *Jobson*, considerably advanced in rank and salary by his excellent performance of that character.

In spite of the impossible absurdity whence all the characters derive their origin, this *petite piece* is tolerated and even seen with pleasure, from the easy humour of the dialogue, and the natural behaviour of the characters.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN, 1818.	COVENT GARDEN, 1818.
SIR JOHN LOVERULE,..... <i>Mr. Incedon.</i>	DOCTOR,..... <i>Mr. Chapman.</i>
BUTLER,..... <i>Mr. Treby.</i>	LADY LOVERULE,..... <i>Mrs. Gibbs.</i>
COOK,..... <i>Mr. King.</i>	LUCY,..... <i>Mrs. Coats.</i>
FOOTMAN,..... <i>Mr. Duruset.</i>	LETTICE,..... <i>Miss Cox.</i>
COACHMAN,..... <i>Mr. Atkins.</i>	NELL,..... <i>Mrs. Jordan.</i>
JOBSON,..... <i>Mr. Emery.</i>	

SCENE I.—JOBSON'S House.

Enter JOBSON and NELL.

Nell. Prythee, good Jobson, stay with me to-night, and for once make merry at home.

Job. Peace, peace, you jade, and go spin: for, if I lack any thread for my stitching, I will punish you by virtue of my sovereign authority.

Nell. Ay, marry, no doubt of that, whilst you take your swing at the alehouse, spend your substance, get as drunk as a beast, and then come home like a sot, and use one like a dog.

Job. Nounz! do you prate? Why, how now, brazen-face, as you speak ill of the government? Don't you know, hussy, that I am king in my own house, and that this is treason against my majesty?

Nell. Did ever one hear such stuff? But I pray you now, Jobson, don't go to the alehouse to-night.

Job. Well, I'll humour you for once; but don't grow saucy upon't; for I'm invited by Sir John Loverule's butler, and am to be princely drunk with punch at the hall-place: we shall have a bowl large enough to swim in.

Nell. But they say, husband, the new lady will not suffer a stranger to enter her doors; she grudges even a draught of small beer to her own servants: and several of the tenants have come home with broken heads from her ladyship's own hands, only for smelling strong beer in the house.

Job. A plague on her for a fanatical jade! She has almost distracted the good knight. But she's now abroad, feasting with her relations, and will

scarce come home to-night; and we are to have much drink, a fiddle, and merry gambols.

Nell. O, dear husband, let me go with you; we'll be as merry as the night's long.

Job. Why how now, you bold baggage! would you be carried to a company of smooth-faced, eating, drinking, lazy serving-men? No, no, you jade, I'll not be a cuckold.

Nell. I'm sure they would make me welcome: you promised I should see the house; and the family has not been here before, since you married and brought me home.

Job. Why, thou most audacious strumpet, dar'st thou dispute with me, thy lord and master? Get in and spin, or else my strap shall wind about thy ribs most comfoundedly.

AIR.

*He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life,*

*But for her, who will scold and will quarrel,
Let him cut her off short*

Of her meat and her sport,

*And ten times a day hoop her barrel, brave boys,
And ten times a day hoop her barrel.*

Nell. Well, we poor women must always be slaves, and never have any joy; but you men run and ramble at your pleasure.

Job. Why, you most pestilent baggage, will you be hooped? Be gone.

Nell. I must obey.

[*Going.*

Job. Stay; now I think on't, here's sixpence for you; get ale and apples, stretch and puff thyself up with lamb's wool, rejoice and revel by thyself, be drunk and wallow in thy own sty, like a grumbling sow as thou art.

*He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life, &c.* [Sings. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—SIR JOHN LOVERULE'S House.

Enter BUTLER, COOK, FOOTMAN, COACHMAN, LUCY, LETTICE, &c.

But. I would the blind fiddler and our dancing neighbours were here, that we might rejoice a little, while our termagant lady is abroad: I have made a most sovereign bowl of punch.

Lucy. We had need rejoice sometimes, for our devilish new lady will never suffer it in her hearing.

Enter Blind FIDDLER, JOBSON, and NEIGHBOURS.

But. Welcome, welcome all; this is our wish.—Honest old acquaintance, Goodman Jobson, how dost thou?

Job. By my troth, I am always sharp-set towards punch, and am now come with a firm resolution, though but a poor cobbler, to be as richly drunk as a lord: I am a true English heart, and look upon drunkenness as the best part of the liberty of the subject.

But. Come, Jobson, we'll bring out our bowl of punch in solemn procession; and then for a song to crown our happiness. [Exeunt.

Re-enter JOBSON, BUTLER, &c. with a bowl of Punch.

AIR.

*Come, jolly Bacchus, god of wine,
Crown this night with pleasure;
Let none at cares of life repine,
To destroy our pleasure:*

10

*Fill up the mighty sparkling bowl.
That every true and loyal soul
May drink and sing without control,
To support our pleasure.*

*Thus, mighty Bacchus, shalt thou be
Guardian of our pleasure;
That under thy protection we
May enjoy new pleasure.
And as the hours glide away,
We'll in thy name invoke their stay,
And sing thy praises, that we may
Live and die with pleasure.*

But. The king and the royal family in a brimmer.

AIR.

*Here's a good health to the king,
And send him a prosperous reign;
O'er hills and high mountains
We'll drink dry the fountains,
Until the sun rises again, brave boys,
Until the sun rises again.*

*Then here's to thee, my boy boon,
And here's to thee my boy boon;
As we've tarried all day
For to drink down the sun, [boys,
So we'll tarry and drink down the moon, brave
So we'll tarry and drink down the moon.*

Omnes. Huzza!

Enter SIR JOHN LOVERULE, and LADY LOVE-
RULE.

Lady L. O heaven and earth! what's here within my doors? Is hell broke loose? What troops of fiends are here? Sirrah, you impudent rascal, speak!

Sir J. For shame, my dear.—As this is a time of mirth and jollity, it has always been the custom of my house to give my servants liberty in this season, and to treat my country neighbours, that with innocent sports they may divert themselves.

Lady L. I say, meddle with your own affairs, I will govern my own house without your putting in an oar. Shall I ask your leave to correct my own servants?

Sir J. I thought, Madam, this had been my house, and these my tenants and servants.

Lady L. Did I bring a fortune, to be thus abused and snubbed before people? Do you call my authority in question, ungrateful man? Look to your dogs and horses abroad, but it will be my province to govern here; nor will I be controlled by e'era hunting, hawking knight in Christendom.

AIR.—SIR JOHN LOVERULE.

*Ye gods, you gave to me a wife,
Out of your grace and favour,
To be the comfort of my life,
And I was glad to have her;
But if your providence divine
For greater bliss design her,
T' obey your wills at any time,
I'm ready to resign her.*

This is to be married to a continual tempest: strife and noise, canting and hypocrisy, are eternally afloat.—'Tis impossible to bear it long.

Lady L. Ye filthy scoundrels, and odious jades I'll teach you to junket it thus, and steal my provisions; I shall be devoured, at this rate.

But. I thought, Madam, we might be merry once upon a holiday.

Lady L. Holiday, you popish cur! Is one

day more holy than another? And if it be, you'll be sure to get drunk upon it, you rogue. [*Beats him.*] You minx, you impudent flirt, are you jiggling it after an abominable fiddle?

[*Lugs LUCY by the ears.*]

Lucy. O lud! she has pulled off both my ears.

Sir J. Pray, Madam, consider your sex and quality: I blush for your behaviour.

Lady L. Consider your incapacity: you shall not instruct me. Who are you, thus muffled, you buzzard? [*She beats them off; JOBSON steals by.*]

Job. I am an honest, plain, psalm-singing cobbler, Madam: if your ladyship would but go to church, you might hear me above all the rest there.

Lady L. I'll try thy voice here first, villain.

[*Strikes him.*]

Job. Nounz! what a plague, what a devil ails you?

Lady L. O profane wretch! wicked varlet!

Sir J. For shame! your behaviour is monstrous!

Lady L. Was ever poor lady so miserable in a brutish husband as I am? I that am so pious and so religious a woman!

Job. [*Sings.*] *He that has the best wife,*

She's the plague of his life;

But for her that will scold and will quarrel.

[*Exit.*]

Lady L. O rogue! scoundrel! villain!

Sir J. Remember modesty.

Lady L. I'll rout you all with a vengeance—I'll spoil your squeaking treble.

[*Beats the fiddle about the blind Man's head.*]

Fid. O murder! murder!

Sir J. Here, poor fellow, take your staff and be gone; there's money to buy you two such; that's your way. [*Exit FIDDLER.*]

Lady L. Methinks you are very liberal, Sir. Must my estate maintain you in your profuseness?

Sir J. Go up to your closet, pray, and compose your mind.

Lady L. O wicked man! to bid me pray.

Sir J. A man can't be completely cursed, I see, without marriage: but since there is such a thing as separate maintenance, she shall to-morrow enjoy the benefit of it. [*Knocking at the door.*] Here, where are my servants? must they be frightened from me?—Within there—see who knocks.

Lady L. Within there—Where are my sluts? ye drabs, ye queans—Lights there.

Re-enter BUTLER.

But. Sir, it is a doctor that lives ten miles off; he practises physic, and is an astrologer; your worship knows him very well; he is a cunning man, makes almanacks, and can help people to their goods again.

Enter DOCTOR.

Doc. Sir, I humbly beg your honour's pardon for this unseasonable intrusion: but I am benighted, and 'tis so dark that I can't possibly find my way home; and knowing your worship's hospitality, desire the favour to be harboured under your roof to-night.

Lady L. Out of my house, you lewd conjurer, you magician.

Doc. Here's a turn? Here's a change!—Well, if I have any art, ye shall smart for this. [*Aside.*]

Sir J. You see, friend, I am not master of my own house; therefore, to avoid any uneasiness,

go down the lane about a quarter of a mile, and you'll see a cobbler's cottage; stay there a little, and I'll send my servant to conduct you to a tenant's house, where you'll be well entertained.

Doc. I thank you, Sir; I'm your most humble servant—But as for your lady there, she shall this night feel my resentment. [*Exit.*]

Sir J. Come, Madam, you and I must have some conference together.

Lady L. Yes; I will have a conference and a reformation too in this house, or I'll turn it upside down—I will. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—JOBSON'S House.

Enter NELL and the DOCTOR.

Nell. Pray, Sir, mend your draught, if you please; you are very welcome, Sir.

Doc. Thank you heartily, good woman; and to requite your civility, I'll tell you your fortune.

Nell. O, pray do, Sir; I never had my fortune told me in my life.

Doc. Let me behold the lines of your face.

Nell. I am afraid, Sir, 'tis none of the cleanest; I have been about dirty work all this day.

Doc. Come, come, 'tis a good face, be not ashamed of it; you shall show it in greater places suddenly.

Nell. O dear, Sir, I shall be mightily ashamed: I want dacity when I come before great folks.

Doc. You must be confident, and fear nothing; there is much happiness attends you.

Nell. Oh me! this is a rare man; heaven be thanked. [*Aside.*]

Doc. To-morrow, before the sun rise, you shall be the happiest woman in this country.

Nell. How, by to-morrow? alack-a-day, Sir, how can that be?

Doc. No more shall you be troubled with a surly husband, that rails at, and straps you.

Nell. Lud! how came he to know that? he must be a conjurer! [*Aside.*] Indeed my husband is somewhat rugged, and in his cups will beat me, but it is not much: he's an honest pains-taking man, and I let him have his way. Pray, Sir, take t'other cup of ale.

Doc. I thank you—Believe me, to-morrow you shall be the richest woman i'th' hundred, and ride in your own coach.

Nell. O father! you jeer me.

Doc. By my art, I do not. But mark my words, be confident, and bear all out, or worse will follow.

Nell. Never fear, Sir, I warrant you—O gemini! a coach.

Enter JOBSON.

Job. Where is this quean? Here, Nell! What a plague, are you drunk with your lamb's wool?

Nell. O husband! here's the rarest man—he has told me my fortune.

Job. Has he so! and planted my fortune too, a lusty pair of horns upon my head—Eh!—Is't not so?

Doc. Thy wife is a virtuous woman, and thou't be happy—

Job. Come out, you hang-dog, you juggler, you cheating, bamboozling villain; must I be cuckolded by such rogues as you are, mackmaticians, and almanack makers?

Nell. Prythee, peace, husband, we shall be rich, and have a coach of our own.

Job. A coach! a cart, a wheel-barrow, you jade.
By the mass, she's drunk, beastly drunk, most
confoundedly drunk—Get to bed, you strumpet.

[*Beats her.*]

Nell. O mercy on us! is this a taste of my
good fortune? Oh, you are the devil of a conjurer,
sure enough.

[*Exit.*]

Doc. You had better not have touched her, you
surly rogue.

Job. Out of my house you villain.

Doc. Farewell, you paltry slave.

Job. Get out you rogue.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—An open Country.

Enter DOCTOR.

AIR.

Doc. My little spirits, now appear,
Nadir and Abishog, draw near;
The time is short, make no delay;
Then quickly haste, and come away:
Nor moon, nor stars afford their light,
But all is wrapped in gloomy night:
Both men and beasts to rest incline,
And all things favour my design.

Spir. [*Within.*] Say, master, what is to be done?

Doc. My strict commands be sure attend,
For, ere this night shall have an end,
You must this cobbler's wife transform,
And to the knight's the like perform:
With all your most specific charms,
Convey each wife to diff'rent arms;
Let the delusion be so strong,
That none may know the right from wrong.

Spir. All this we will with care perform

In thunder, lightning, and in storm.

[*Thunder.* *Exit DOCTOR.*]

SCENE V.—JOBSON'S House.—The bed in view.

JOBSON discovered at work.

Job. What devil has been abroad to-night? I
never heard such claps of thunder in my life; I
thought my little hovel would have flown away;
but now all is clear again, and a fine star-light
morning it is. I'll settle myself to work. They
say, winter's thunder is summer's wonder.

AIR.

Of all the trades from east to west,
The cobbler's, past contending,
Is like in time to prove the best,
Which every day is mending.
How great his praise, who can amend
The soles of all his neighbours;
Nor is unmindful of his end,
But to his last still labours.

Lady L. [*In bed.*] Hey-day! what impudent
ballad-singing rogue is that, who dares wake me
out of my sleep? I'll have you flayed, you rascal.

Job. What a plague, does she talk in her sleep?
or is she drunk still?

AIR.

In Bath a wanton wife did dwell,
As Chaucer he did write,
Who wantonly did spend her time
In many a fond delight.
All on a time so sick she was,
And she at length did die;
And then her soul at Paradise
Did knock most mightily.

Lady L. Why, villain, rascal, screech-owl, who
maketh a worse noise than a dog hung in the
pales, or a hog in a high wind,—where are all my

servants? Somebody come and hamstring this
rogue.

[*Knocks.*]

Job. Why, how now, you brazen quean! you
must get drunk with the conjurer, must you? I'll
give you money another time to spend in lamb's
wool, you saucy jade, shall I?

Lady L. Monstrous! I can find no bell to
ring. Where are my servants? they shall toss
him in a blanket.

Job. Ay, the jade's asleep still: the conjurer
told her she should keep her coach, and she is
dreaming of her equipage.

[*Sings.*]

I will come in, in spite she said,
Of all such churls as thee;
Thou art the cause of all our pain,
Our grief and misery.
Thou first broke the commandment,
In honour of thy wife;
When Adam heard her say these words,
He ran away for life.

Lady L. Why, husband! Sir John! will you
suffer me to be thus insulted?

Job. Husband! Sir John! what a plague, has
she knighted me? and my name's Zekel too; a
good jest, faith.

Lady L. Ha! he's gone, he's not in the bed.
Heaven! where am I? Foh! what loathsome
smells are here? Canvass sheets, and a filthy
ragged curtain; a beastly rug, and a flock bed. Am
I awake, or is it all a dream? what rogue is that?
Sirrah! where am I? who brought me hither?
what rascal are you?

Job. This is amazing—I never heard such
words from her before? if I take my strap to you,
I'll make you know your husband, I'll teach you
better manners, you saucy drab.

Lady L. Oh, astonishing impudence! you my
husband, Sirrah? I'll have you hanged, you rogue;
I'm a lady. Let me know who has given me a
sleeping draught, and conveyed me hither, you
dirty varlet?

Job. A sleeping draught! yes, you drunken jade,
you had a sleeping draught, with a plague to ye.
What, has not your lamb's wool done working
yet?

Lady L. Where am I? where has my villanous
husband put me? Lucy! Lettice! where are my
queans?

Job. Ha, ha, ha! what does she call her maids
too? the conjurer has made her mad as well as
drunk.

Lady L. He talks of conjurers; sure I am be-
witched! ha! what clothes are here? a kinsey-
woolsey gown, a calico hood, a red baize petticoat;
I am removed from my own house by witchcraft.
What must I do? What will become of me?

[*Horns wind without.*]

Job. Hark! the hunters and the merry horns
are abroad. Why, Nell, you lazy jade, 'tis break
of day; to work, to work; come, and spin, you
drab, or I'll tan your hide for you. What a
plague, must I be at work two hours before you
in the morning?

Lady L. Why, Sirrah, thou impudent villain,
dost thou not know me, you rogue?

Job. Know you, yes I know you well enough,
and I'll make you know me before I have done
with you.

Lady L. I am Sir John Loverule's lady, how
came I here?

Job. Sir John Loverule's lady! no Nell, not

quite so bad neither; she plagues every one that comes near her—the whole country curses her.

Lady L. Nay, then I'll hold no longer—you rogue, you insolent villain, I'll teach you better manners.

[*Flings the bedstaff and other things at him.*]

Job. This is more than ever I saw by her. I never had an ill word from her before. Come, strap, I'll try your mettle; I'll sober you, I warrant you, quean.

[*He straps her; she flies at him.*]

Lady L. I'll pull your throat out; I'll tear out your eyes; I am a lady, Sirrah. O murder! murder! Sir John Loverule will hang you for this. Murder! murder!

Job. Come, hussy, leave fooling, and come to your spinning, or else I'll lamb you, you never were so lambed since you were an inch long. Take it up you jade.

[*She flings it down. He straps her.*]

Lady L. Hold, hold! I'll do any thing.

Job. O! I thought I should bring you to yourself again.

Lady L. What shall I do? I can't spin.

[*Aside.*]

Job. I'll into my stall; 'tis broad day now. [*Works and sings.*] Hey-day, I think the jade's brain is turned. What, have you forgot to spin, hussy?

Lady L. But I have not forgot to run. I'll e'en try my feet. I shall find somebody in the town, sure, that will succour me. [*She runs out.*]

Job. What! does she run for it?—I'll after her.

[*He runs out.*]

SCENE VI.—SIR JOHN LOVERULE'S House.

NELL discovered in Bed.

Nell. What pleasant dreams I have had to-night! Methought I was in Paradise, upon a bed of violets and roses, and the sweetest husband by my side! Ha, bless me! where am I now? What sweets are these? No garden in the spring can equal them.—Am I on a bed?—The sheets are saracen, sure; no linen ever was so fine.—What a gay silken robe have I got—O heaven! I dream!—Yet if this be a dream, I would not wish to wake again. Sure I died last night and went to heaven, and this is it.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Now, must I awake an alarm that will not lie still again till midnight at soonest; the first greeting I suppose will be jade, or slut. [*Aside.*]
—Madam! madam!

Nell. O gemini! who's this? What dost say, sweetheart?

Lucy. Sweetheart! O lud, sweetheart! The best names I have had these three months from her, have been slut or jade. [*Aside.*]
—What gown and ruffles will your ladyship wear to-day?

Nell. What does she mean? Ladyship! gown and ruffles!—Sure I am awake!—Oh! I remember the cunning man, now.

Lucy. Did your ladyship speak?

Nell. Ay, child; I'll wear the same I did yesterday.

Lucy. Mercy upon me!—Child!—Here's a miracle!

[*Aside.*]

Enter LETTICE.

Let. Is my lady awake?—Have you had her shoe or her slipper at your head yet?

[*Apart to LUCY.*]

Lucy. Oh, no, I'm overjoyed: she's in the kindest humour!—Go to the bed, and speak to her—Now is your time. [*Apart to LETTICE.*]

Let. Now's my time! what, to have another tooth beat out? [*Apart.*] Madam!

Nell. What dost say, my dear?—O father What would she have?

Let. What work will your ladyship please to have done to-day?

Nell. Work, child! 'tis holiday; no work to-day.

Let. Oh, mercy! Am I or thee awake? or do we both dream?—Here's a blessed change?

[*Apart to LUCY.*]

Lucy. If it continues, we shall be a happy family. [*Apart to LETTICE.*]

Let. Your ladyship's chocolate is ready.

Nell. Mercy on me! what's that? Some garment, I suppose. [*Aside.*] Put it on then, sweetheart.

Let. Put it on, Madam? I have taken it off; 'tis ready to drink.

Nell. I mean, put it by; I don't care for drinking now.

Enter COOK.

Cook. Now I go, like a bear to the stake, to know her scurvy ladyship's commands about dinner. How many rascally names must I be called?

[*Aside.*]

Let. Oh, John Cook! you'll be out of your wits to find my lady in so sweet a temper.

[*Apart to COOK.*]

Cook. What a devil, are they all mad?

[*Apart to LETTICE.*]

Lucy. Madam, here's the cook come about dinner.

Nell. Oh! there's a fine cook! He looks like one of your gentlefolks. [*Aside.*]
—Indeed, honest man, I'm very hungry now, pray get me a rasher upon the coals, a piece of milk cheese, and some white bread.

Cook. Hey! what's to do here? my head turns round. Honest man! I looked for rogue and rascal, at least. She's strangely changed in her diet, as well as her humour. [*Aside.*]
—I'm afraid, Madam, cheese and bacon will sit very heavy on your ladyship's stomach in a morning. If you please, Madam, I'll toss you up a white fricassee of chickens, in a trice, Madam; or what does your ladyship think of a veal sweetbread?

Nell. Even what you will, good cook.

Cook. Good cook! good cook! Ah! 'tis a sweet lady. [*Apart.*]

Enter BUTLER.

Oh! kiss me, chip, I am out of my wits—We have the kindest, sweetest lady.

[*Apart to BUTLER.*]

But. You shamming rogue, I think you are out of your wits, all of ye; the maids look merrily too. [*Apart to COOK.*]

Lucy. Here's the butler, Madam, to know your ladyship's orders.

Nell. Oh! pray, Mr. Butler, let me have some small beer when my breakfast comes in.

But. Mr. Butler! Mr. Butler! I shall be turned into stone with amazement. [*Aside.*]
—Would not your ladyship rather have a glass of Frontinac, or Montepulchiano.

Nell. O dear! what hard names are there;

out I must not betray myself. [*Aside.*—Well, which you please, Mr. Butler.

Enter COACHMAN.

But. Go, get you in, and be rejoiced, as I am.

[*Apart to COACHMAN.*

Coach. The cook has been making his game I know not how long. What do you banter too?

[*Apart to BUTLER.*

Lucy. Madam, the coachman.

Coach. I come to know if your ladyship goes out to-day, and which you'll have, the coach or chariot.

Nell. Good lack-a-day!—I'll ride in the coach, if you please.

Coach. The sky will fall, that's certain. [*Exit.*

Nell. I can hardly think I am awake yet. How well-pleased they all seem to wait upon me!—Oh, notable cunning man!—My head turns round!—I am quite giddy with my own happiness.

AIR.

*Though late I was a cobbler's wife,
In cottage most obscure-a,
In plain stuff gown, and short-ear'd coif,
Hard labour did endure-a.*

*The scene is chang'd, I'm alter'd quite,
And from poor humble Nell-a,
I'll learn to dance, to read, and write,
And from all bear the bell-a.*

[*Exit.*

Enter SIR JOHN LOVERULE, meeting his SERVANTS.

But. Oh, Sir! here's the rarest news!

Lucy. There never was the like, Sir! You'll be overjoyed and amazed!

Sir J. What, are ye mad?—What's the matter with ye?—How now? here's a new face in my family!—What's the meaning of all this?

But. Oh, Sir! the family's turned upside-down! We are almost distracted; the happiest people!

Lucy. Ay, my lady, Sir: my lady—

Sir J. What, is she dead?

But. Dead! heaven forbid!—O! she's the oest woman; the sweetest lady!

Sir J. This is astonishing!—I must go and inquire into this wonder. If this be true, I shall rejoice indeed.

But. 'Tis true, Sir, upon my honour. Long live Sir John and my lady! Huzza! [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter NELL.

Nell. I well remember the cunning man warn'd me to hear all out with confidence, or worse, he said, would follow.—I am ashamed, and know not what to do with all this ceremony! I am amazed and out of my senses!—I looked in the glass, and saw a gay fine thing I knew not!—Methought my face was not at all like that I have seen at home in a piece of looking-glass fastened upon the cupboard. But great ladies, they say, have flattering glasses, that show them far unlike themselves, whilst poor folks' glasses represent them e'en just as they are.

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. Oh, Madam! here's my master just returned from hunting.

Re-enter SIR JOHN LOVERULE.

Nell. O gemini! this fine gentleman my husband!

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[*Aside.*

Sir J. My dear, I am overjoyed to see my family thus transported with ecstasy, which you have occasioned!

Nell. Sir, I shall always be proud to do every thing that may give you delight, or your family satisfaction.

Sir J. By heaven I am charmed!—Dear creature, if thou continuest thus, I had rather enjoy thee than the Indies. But can this be real?—May I believe my senses?

Nell. All that's good above can witness for me, I am in earnest.

[*Kneels.*

Sir J. Rise, my dearest.—Now am I happy indeed.

DUET.—SIR JOHN LOVERULE and NELL.

Sir J. Was ever man possess'd of

So sweet, so kind a wife?

Nell. Dear Sir, you make me proud.

Be you but kind,

And you shall find

All the good I can boast of,

Shall end but with my life.

Sir J. Give me thy lips.

Nell. First let me, dear Sir, wipe 'em.

Sir J. Was ever so sweet a wife? [*Kisses her*

Nell. Thank you, dear Sir.

I vow and protest

I ne'er was so kiss'd.

Again, Sir!

Sir J. Again, and again, my dearest,

O may it last for life!

What joy thus to enfold thee!

Nell. What pleasure to behold thee!

Inclin'd again to kiss!

Sir J. How ravishing the bliss!

Nell. I little thought this morning

'Twould ever come to this.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY LOVERULE.

Lady L. Here's a fine rout and rioting! You Sirrah, butler, you rogue!

But. Why, how now? Who are you?

Lady L. Impudent varlet! don't you know your lady?

But. Lady!—Here, turn this mad woman out of doors.

Lady L. You rascal—take that, Sirrah.

[*Flings a glass at him.*

Foot. Have a care, hussy; there's a good pump without; we shall cool your courage for you.

Lady L. You, Lucy, have you forgot me too, you minx?

Lucy. Forgot you, woman! Why, I never remembered you; I never saw you before in my life.

Lady L. Oh, the wicked slut! I'll give you cause to remember me, I will, hussy.

[*Pulls her head-dress off.*

Lucy. Murder! murder! help!

Re-enter SIR JOHN LOVERULE and NELL.

Sir J. How now? What uproar's this?

Lady L. You, Lettice, you slut! won't you know me neither?

[*Strikes her.*

Let. Help! help!

Sir J. What's to do there?

But. Why, Sir, here's a mad woman calls herself my lady, and is beating and cuffing us all round.

Sir J. Thou my wife? poor creature, I pity thee.—I never saw thee before.

[*To LADY LOVERULE*

Lady L. Then it is in vain to expect redress from thee, thou wicked contriver of all my misery.

Nell. How am I amazed? Can that be I there, in my clothes, that have made all this disturbance? And yet I am here, to my thinking, in these fine clothes. How can this be? I am so confounded and affrighted, that I begin to wish I was with Zekel Jobson again.

[*Aside.*]

Lady L. To whom shall I apply myself, or whither can I fly?—Heaven! what do I see? Is not that I yonder, in my gown and petticoat I wore yesterday? How can it be? I cannot be in two places at once.

Sir J. Poor wretch! She's stark mad.

Lady L. What, in the devil's name, was I here before I came? Let me look in the glass.—Oh, heavens! I am astonished! I don't know myself!—If this be I that the glass shows me, I never saw myself before.

Sir J. What incoherent madness is this?

Enter JOBSON.

Lady L. There, that's the devil in my likeness, who has robbed me of my countenance.—He here too?

Job. Ay, hussy, and here's my strap, you quean!

Nell. O dear! I'm afraid my husband will beat me; that man on t'other side the room there.

Job. I hope your honours will pardon her; she was drinking with a conjurer last night, and has been mad ever since, and calls herself my Lady Loverule.

Sir J. Poor woman! take care of her; do not hurt her; she may be cured of this.

Job. Yes, and please your worship, you shall see me cure her presently.—Hussy, do you see this?

Nell. O! pray, Zekel, don't beat me!

Sir J. What says my love? Does she infect thee with madness too?

Nell. I am not well; pray lead me in.

[*Exeunt NELL and MAIDS.*]

Job. I beseech your worship don't take it ill of me; she shall never trouble you more.

Sir J. Take her home, and use her kindly.

Lady L. What will become of me?

[*Exeunt JOBSON and LADY LOVERULE.*]

Enter FOOTMAN.

Foot. Sir, the doctor who called here last night, desires you will give him leave to speak a word or two with you, upon very earnest business.

Sir J. What can this mean? Bring him in.

Enter DOCTOR.

Doc. Lo! on my knees, Sir, I beg forgiveness for what I have done, and put my life into your hands.

Sir J. What mean you?

Doc. I have exercised my magic art upon your lady; I know you have too much honour to take away my life, since I might still have concealed it, had I pleased.

Sir J. You have now brought me to a glimpse of misery too great to bear. Is all my happiness then turned into vision only?

Doc. Sir, I beg you, fear not; if any harm comes on it, I freely give you leave to hang me.

Sir J. Inform me what you have done.

Doc. I have transformed your lady's face so that she seems the cobbler's wife, and have charmed

her face into the likeness of my lady's: and last night, when the storm arose, my spirits conveyed them to each other's bed.

Sir J. Oh, wretch, thou hast undone me! I am fallen from the height of all my hopes, and must still be cursed with a tempestuous wife, a fury whom I never knew quiet since I had her.

Doc. If that be all, I can continue the charm for both their lives.

Sir J. Let the event be what it will, I'll hang you, if you do not end the charm this instant.

Doc. I will, this minute, Sir: and perhaps you'll find it the luckiest of your life: I can assure you, your lady will prove the better for it.

Sir J. Hold, there's one material circumstance I'd know.

Doc. Your pleasure, Sir?

Sir J. Perhaps the cobbler has—you understand me?

Doc. I do assure you, no; for ere she was conveyed to his bed, the cobbler was got up to work, and he has done nought but beat her ever since; and you are like to reap the fruits of his labour. He'll be with you in a minute.—Here he comes.

Re-enter JOBSON.

Sir J. So, Jobson, where's your wife?

Job. An't please your worship, she's here at the door; but indeed I thought I had lost her just now; for as she came into the hall, she fell into such a swoon, that I thought she would never come out on't again; but a tweak or two by the nose, and half a dozen straps, did the business at last.—Here, where are you hussy?

Re-enter LADY LOVERULE.

But. [*Holds up the candle, but lets it fall when he sees her.*] O heaven and earth! is this my lady?

Job. What does he say? My wife changed to my lady?

Cook. Ay, I thought the other was too good for our lady.

Lady L. Sir, you are the person I have most offended, and here confess I have been the worst of wives in every thing, but that I always kept myself chaste. If you can vouchsafe once more to take me to your bosom, the remainder of my days shall joyfully be spent in duty and observance of your will.

Sir J. Rise, Madam; I do forgive you; and if you are sincere in what you say, you'll make me happier than all the enjoyments in the world without you could do.

Job. What a plague! am I to lose my wife thus?

Re-enter LUCY and LETTICE.

Lucy. Oh, Sir, the strangest accident has happened—it has amazed us!—My lady was in so great a swoon, we thought she had been dead.

Let. And when she came to herself, she proved another woman.

Job. Ha, ha, ha! a bull, a bull!

Re-enter NELL.

Nell. My head turns round; I must go home. O, Zekel, are you there?

Job. O lud! is that fine lady my wife? Egad, I'm afraid to come near her. What can be the meaning of this?

Sir J. This is a happy change, and I'll have it

celebrated with all the joy I proclaimed for my late short-lived vision.

Lady L. To me 'tis the happiest day I ever knew.

Sir J. Here Jobson, take thy fine wife.

Job. But one word, Sir.—Did not your worship make a buck of me, under the rose?

Sir J. No, upon my honour, nor ever kissed her lips till I came from hunting; but since she has been the means of bringing about this happy change, I'll give thee five hundred pounds home with her, to buy a stock of leather.

Job. Brave boys! I'm a prince.—The prince of coblers! Come hither and kiss me, Nell; I'll never strap thee more.

Nell. Indeed, Zekel, I have been in such a dream that I'm quite weary of it. Forsooth, Madam, will you please to take your clothes, and let me have mine again.

[To LADY LOVERULE.

Job. Hold your tongue, you fool, they'll serve you to go to church.

[Apart to NELL.

Lady L. No; thou shalt keep them, and I'll preserve thine as relics.

Job. And can your ladyship forgive my strapping your honour so very much?

Lady L. Most freely. The joy of this blessed change sets all things right again.

Sir J. Let us forget every thing that is past, and think of nothing now but joy and pleasure.

Alr.

Lady L. *Let every face with smiles appear,
Be joy in every breast,
Since, from a life of pain and care,
We now are truly bless'd.*

Sir J. *May no remembrance of past time
Our present pleasure soil;
Be aught but mirth and joy a crime,
And sporting all our toil.*

Job.

I hope you'll give me leave to speak,

If I may be so bold:

Nought but the devil, and this good strap.

Could ever tame a scold.

[Exeunt.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. THEOPHILUS CIBBER.

In ancient Greece the comic muse appear'd,
Sworn foe to vice, by virtue's friends rever'd;

Impartial she indulg'd her noble rage,
And satire was the business of the stage.

No reigning ill was from her censure free,
No sex, no age of man, and no degree;

Whoe'er by passion was, or folly, led,
The laurell'd chief, or sacerdotal head,

The pedant sophist, or imperious dame,
She lash'd the evil, nor conceal'd the name.

How hard the fate of wives in those sad times,
When saucy poets would chastise their crimes!

When each cornuting mate, each rampant jilt,
Had her name branded, on the stage, with guilt!

Each fair may now the comic muse endure,
And join the laugh, though at herself, secure.

Link'd to a patient lord, this night behold
A wilful headstrong termagant, and scold:

Whom, though her husband did what man could
do,

The devil only could reclaim like you:
Like you, whose virtues bright embellish life,

And add a blessing to the name of wife.
A merry wag, to mend vexatious brides,

These scenes begun, which shook your father's
sides:

And we obsequious to your taste, prolong
Your mirth, by courting the supplies of song:

If you approve, we our desires obtain,
And by your pleasures shall compute our gain.

THE FAIR PENITENT:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY NICHOLAS ROWE.

REMARKS.

This tragedy, founded on the *Fatal Dowry* of Massinger, was produced in 1703, at the theatre in Lincoln's Fields; and is considered by Dr. Johnson, one of the most pleasing tragedies on the stage.

The story is domestic, and assimilated to common life; and the diction harmonious. The character of Lothario is supposed to have been expanded into Lovelace, by Richardson, in his inimitable romance of *Clarissa Harlowe*; but the British fair will scarcely sympathise with Calista, for the loss of so unworthy a lover. Some critics have observed, that the title of the play does not correspond with the behaviour of Calista, who at last shows no marks of real contrition, (best testified by amendment,) but is still enamoured of the villanous and vain boaster, who is the cause of her guilt.

Originally intended for the legal profession, and even called to the bar, the success of Rowe in the drama rendered the toils of practice unnecessary; as his noble patrons conferred on him many places of honour and emolument, in all which, it is said, he justified their choice; but alone acquired fame by his dramatic productions.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS, 1703. COVENT GARDEN, 1799. DRURY LANE, 1815.

SCIOLTO,	Mr. Bowman.....	Mr. Pope.....	Mr. Pope.
ALTAMONT,	Mr. Verbruggen...	Mr. Brunton.....	Mr. Wallace
HORATIO,	Mr. Betterton.....	Mr. Betterton.....	Mr. Rae.
LOTHARIO,	Mr. Powell.....	Mr. H. Johnston.....	Mr. Elliston.
ROSSANO,	Mr. Baily.....	Mr. Claremont.....	Mr. Crooke.
CALISTA,	Mrs. Barry.....	Mrs. St. Leger.....	Miss Walstein.
LAVINIA,	Mrs. Bracegirdle...	Miss Chapman.....	Miss Boyce.
LUCILLA,	Mrs. Prince.....	Miss Cox.....	Miss Cooke.

Servants to Sciolto, &c.

SCENE.—Sciolto's Palace and the Garden, with some part of the Street near it, in Genoa.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Garden belonging to SCIOLTO'S Palace.

Enter ALTAMONT and HORATIO.

Alt. Let this auspicious day be ever sacred,
No mourning, no misfortunes, happen on it:
Let it be mark'd for triumphs and rejoicings;
Let happy lovers ever make it holy,
Choose it to bless their hopes, and crown their wishes.

This happy day, that gives me my Calista.

Hor Yes, Altamont; to-day thy better stars
Are join'd to shed their kindest influence on thee;

Sciolto's noble hand, that rais'd thee first,
Half dead and drooping o'er thy father's grave,
Completes its bounty, and restores thy name
To that high rank and lustre which it boasted,
Before ungrateful Genoa had forgot
The merit of thy god-like father's arms;
Before that country, which he long had serv'd
In watchful councils and in winter camps,
Had cast off his white age to want and wretched-
ness,
And made their court to factions by his ruin.

Alt. Oh, great Sciolto! Oh, my more than father!

Let me not live, but at thy very name
My eager heart springs up, and leaps with joy.

When I forget the vast, vast debt I owe thee—
Forget! (but 'tis impossible) then let me
Forget the use and privilege of reason,
Be driven from the commerce of mankind,
To wander in the desert among brutes,
To be the scorn of earth, and curse of heaven!

Hor. So open, so unbounded was his goodness,
It reach'd even me, because I was thy friend.
When that great man I lov'd, thy noble father,
Bequeath'd thy gentle sister to my arms,
His last dear pledge and legacy of friendship,
That happy tie made me Sciolto's son;
He call'd us his, and, with a parent's fondness,
Indulg'd us in his wealth, bless'd us with plenty,
Heal'd all our cares, and sweeten'd love itself.

Alt. By heaven, he found my fortunes so
abandon'd,
'That nothing but a miracle could raise 'em:
My father's bounty, and the state's ingratitude,
Had stripp'd him bare, nor left him even a grave.
Undone myself, and sinking with his ruin,
I had no wealth to bring, nothing to succour him,
But fruitless tears.

Hor. Yet what thou couldst thou did'st,
And did'st it like a son; when his hard credi-
Urg'd and assisted by Lothario's father, [tors,
(Foe to thy house, and rival of thy greatness,)
By sentence of the cruel law forbade
His venerable corpse to rest in earth,
Thou gav'st thyself a ransom for his bones;
Heaven, who beheld the pious act, approv'd it.
And bade Sciolto's bounty be its proxy,
To bless thy filial virtue with abundance.

Alt. But see, he comes, the author of my hap-
piness,
The man who sav'd my life from deadly sorrow,
Who bids my days be bless'd with peace and
plenty,
And satisfies my soul with love and beauty.

Enter SCIOLTO; he embraces ALTAMONT.

Sci. Joy to thee, Altamont! joy to myself!
Joy to this happy morn, that makes thee mine;
'That kindly grants what nature had denied me,
And makes me father of a son like thee.

Alt. My father! Oh, let me unlade my breast,
Pour out the fulness of my soul before you:
Show every tender, every grateful thought,
This wondrous goodness stirs. But 'tis im-
possible,

And utterance all is vile; since I can only
Swear you reign here, but never tell how much.

Sci. O, noble youth! I swear, since first I
knew thee,
Even from that day of sorrow when I saw thee
Adorn'd and lovely in thy filial tears,
The mourner and redeemer of thy father,
I set thee down and seal'd thee for my own:
Thou art my son, even near me as Calista.
Horatio and Lavinia too are mine:

[*Embraces HOR.*
All are my children, and shall share my heart.
But wherefore waste we thus this happy day?
The laughing minutes summon thee to joy,
And with new pleasures court thee as they
pass:

[*ing,*
Thy waiting bride even chides thee for delay-
And swears thou com'st not with a bridegroom's
haste.

Alt. Oh! could I hope there was one thought
of Altamont,
One kind remembrance in Calista's breast,

The winds, with all their wings, would be too
slow,

To bear me to her feet. For, oh, my father!
Amidst the stream of joy that bears me on,
Bless'd as I am, and honour'd in your friendship,
There is one pain that hangs upon my heart.

Sci. What means my son?

Alt. When, at your intercession,
Last night, Calista yielded to my happiness,
Just ere we parted, as I seal'd my vows
With rapture on her lips, I found her cold,
As a dead lover's statue on his tomb:
A rising storm of passion shook her breast,
Her eyes a piteous shower of tears let fall,
And then she sigh'd as if her heart was breaking.
With all the tendrest eloquence of love
I begg'd to be a sharer in her grief:

But she, with looks averse, and eyes that froze
me,
Sadly replied, her sorrows were her own,
Nor in a father's power to dispose of.

Sci. Away! it is the coznage of their sex;
One of their common arts they practise on us:
To sigh and weep then when their hearts beat
high

With expectation of the coming joy. [bred,
Thou hast in camps and fighting fields been
Unknowing in the subtleties of women;
The virgin bride, who swoons with deadly fear,
To see the end of all her wishes near,
When, blushing, from the light and public eyes,
To the kind covert of the night she flies,
With equal fires to meet the bridegroom moves,
Melts in his arms, and with a loose she loves.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.

Loth. The father, and the husband!

Ros. Let them pass.

They saw us not.

Loth. I care not if they did;
Ere long I mean to meet 'em face to face,
And gall 'em with my triumph o'er Calista.

Ros. You lov'd her once.

Loth. I lik'd her, would have married her,
But that it pleas'd her father to refuse me,
To make this honourable fool her husband,
For which, if I forget him, may the shame
I mean to brand his name with, stick on mine.

Ros. She, gentle soul, was kinder than her
father.

Loth. She was, and oft in private gave me
hearing;

Till, by long list'ning to the soothing tale,
At length her easy heart was wholly mine.

Ros. I've heard you oft describe her, haughty,
insolent, [wonder,
And fierce with high disdain: it moves my
That virtue, thus defended, should be yielded
A prey to loose desires.

Loth. Hear then, I'll tell thee:

Once, in a lone and secret hour of night,
When every eye was closed, and the pale moon
And stars alone shone conscious of the theft,
Hot with the Tuscan grape, and high in blood,
Hap'ly I stole unheeded to her chamber.

Ros. That minute sure was lucky.

Loth. Oh, 'twas great!

I found the fond, believing, love-sick maid,
Loose, unattir'd, warm, tender, full of wishes;
Fierceness and pride, the guardians of her
honour, [waking.
Were charm'd to rest and love alone was

Within her rising bosom all was calm,
As peaceful seas that know no storms, and only
Are gently lifted up and down by tides.
I snatch'd the glorious, golden opportunity,
And with prevailing youthful ardour press'd her;
Till, with short sighs, and murmuring reluctance,
The yielding fair one gave me perfect happiness.
Even all the live-long night we pass'd in bliss.
In ecstasies too fierce to last for ever;
At length the morn and cold indiff'rence came:
When, fully sated with the luscious banquet,
I hastily took leave, and left the nymph
To think on what was past, and sigh alone.

Ros. You saw her soon again?

Loth. Too soon I saw her:
For, oh! that meeting was not like the former:
I found my heart no more beat high with transport;
No more I sigh'd and languish'd for enjoyment;
'Twas past, and reason took her turn to reign,
While every weakness fell before her throne.

Ros. What of the lady?

Loth. With uneasy fondness
She hung upon me, wept, and sigh'd, and swore
She was undone; talk'd of a priest and marriage;
Of flying with me from her father's power;
Call'd every saint and blessed angel down,
To witness for her that she was my wife.
I started at that name.

Ros. What answer made you?

Loth. None; but, pretending sudden pain and
illness,
Escap'd the persecution. Two nights since,
By message urg'd, and frequent importunity,
Again I saw her. Straight with tears and sighs,
With swelling breasts, with swooning and dis-
traction,

With all the subtleties and powerful arts
Of wilful woman, lab'ring for her purpose,
Again she told the same dull, nauseous tale.
Unmov'd, I begg'd her spare th' ungrateful subject,
Since I resolv'd, that love and peace of mind
Might flourish long inviolate betwixt us,
Never to load it with the marriage chain;
That I would still retain her in my heart,
My ever gentle mistress and my friend;
But for those other names of wife and husband,
They only meant ill nature, cares, and quarrels.

Ros. How bore she this reply?

Loth. At first her rage was dumb, and wanted
words; [loud;
But when the storm found way, 'twas wild and
Mad as the priestess of the Delphic god,
Enthusiastic passion swell'd her breast,
Enlarg'd her voice, and ruffled all her form.
Proud, and disdainful of the love I proffer'd,
She call'd me, villain! monster! base betrayer!
At last, in very bitterness of soul,
With deadly imprecations on herself,
She vow'd severely ne'er to see me more;
Then bid me fly this minute; I obey'd,
And, bowing, left her to grow cool at leisure.

Ros. She has relented since, else why this
message,

To meet the keeper of her secrets here

This morning?

Loth. See the person whom you nam'd.

Enter LUCILLA.

Well, my ambassadress, what must we treat of?
Come you to menace war and proud defiance,
Or does the peaceful olive grace your message?
Is your fair mistress calmer? does she soften?

And must we love again? perhaps she means
To treat in juncture with her new ally,
And make her husband party to th' agreemen..

Luc. Is this well done, my lord? have you
put off

All sense of human nature? keep a little,
A little pity to distinguish manhood; [you,
Lest other men, though cruel, should disclaim
And judge you to be number'd with the brutes.

Loth. I see thou'st learn'd to rail.

Luc. I've learn'd to weep:

That lesson my sad mistress often gives me:
By day she seeks some melancholy shade,
To hide her sorrows from the prying world;
At night she watches, all the long, long hours,
And listens to the winds and beating rain,
With sighs as loud, and tears that fall as fast.
Then ever and anon she wrings her hands,
And cries, False, false Lothario!

Loth. Oh, no more!

I swear, thou'lt spoil thy pretty face with crying.
And thou hast beauty that may make thy fortune:
Some keeping cardinal shall dote upon thee,
And barter his church treasure for thy freshness.

Luc. What! shall I sell my innocence and
youth,

For wealth or titles, to perfidious man?
To man, who makes his mirth of my undoing!
The base, profess'd betrayer of our sex!
Let me grow old in all misfortunes else,
Rather than know the sorrows of Calista!

Loth. Does she send thee to chide in her behalf?
I swear thou dost it with so good a grace,
That I could almost love thee for thy frowning.

Luc. Read there, my lord, there, in her own
sad lines, [Giving a letter.

Which best can tell the story of her woes,
That grief of heart which your unkindness gives
her.

Loth. [Reads.] *Your cruelty—Obedience to
my father—Give my hand to Altamont.*
By heaven, 'tis well! such ever be the gifts
With which I greet the man whom my soul
hates. [Aside.

But to go on—*wish—heart—honour—too faith-
less—weakness—to-morrow—last trouble—lost
Calista.*

Women, I see, can change as well as men.

She writes me here, forsaken as I am,
That I should bind my brows with mournful
willow,

For she has given her hand to Altamont:

Yet tell the fair inconstant—

Luc. How, my lord!

Loth. Nay, no more angry words: say to
Calista, [sure;

The humblest of her slaves shall wait her plea-

If she can leave her happy husband's arms,

To think upon so lost a thing as I am.

Luc. Alas! for pity come with gentler looks:

Would not her heart with this unmanly tri-
umph;

And though you love her not, yet swear you do:

So shall dissembling once be virtuous in you.

Loth. Ha! who comes here?

Luc. The bridegroom's friend, Horatio.

He must not see us here. To-morrow early
Be at the garden gate.

Loth. Bear to my love

My kindest thoughts, and swear I will not fail

[*Loth.* putting up the letter hastily, drops
it; *Exeunt.*

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Sure, 'tis the very error of my eyes!
Waking I dream, or I beheld Lothario;
He seem'd conferring with Calista's woman:
At my approach they started and retir'd.
What business could he have here, and with her?
I know he bears the noble Altamont
Profess'd and deadly hate.—What paper 's this?
Ha! To Lothario!—Sdeath! Calista's name!

[*Reads.*

*Your cruelty has at length determined me;
and I have resolved this morning to yield a perfect
obedience to my father, and to give my hand to
Altamont, in spite of my weakness for the false
Lothario. I could almost wish I had that heart
and that honour to bestow with it, which you
have robbed me of;*

Damnation! to the rest—

*But, oh! I fear; could I retrieve 'em, I should
again be undone by the too faithless, yet too lovely
Lothario. This is the last weakness of my pen,
and to-morrow shall be the last in which I will
indulge my eyes. Lucilla shall conduct you, if
you are kind enough, to let me see you: it shall
be the last trouble you shall meet with from the lost*
CALISTA.

The lost indeed! for thou art gone as far
As there can be perdition. Fire and sulphur!
Hell is the sole avenger of such crimes.
Oh, that the ruin were but all thy own!
Thou wilt even make thy father curse his age:
At sight of this black scroll, the gentle Altamont
(For, oh! I know his heart is set upon thee)
Shall droop and hang his discontented head,
Like merit scorn'd by insolent authority,
And never grace the public with his virtues—
What if I give this paper to her father?
It follows that his justice dooms her dead,
And breaks his heart with sorrow; hard return
For all the good his hand has heap'd on us!
Hold, let me take a moment's thought—

Enter LAVINIA.

Lav. My lord!

Trust me it joys my heart that I have found you.
Inquiring wherefore you had left the company,
Before my brother's nuptial rites were ended,
They told me you had felt some sudden illness.

Hor. It were unjust—No, let me spare my friend,
Lock up the fatal secret in my breast,
Nor tell him that which will undo his quiet.

Lav. What means my lord?

Hor. Ha! said'st thou, my Lavinia?

Lav. Alas! you know not what you make me
suffer. [eyes]

Whence is that sigh? And wherefore are your
Severely rais'd to heaven? The sick man thus,
Acknowledging the summons of his fate,
Lifts up his feeble hands and eyes for mercy,
And with confusion thinks upon his exit.

Hor. Oh, no! thou hast mistook my sickness
quite:

These pangs are of the soul. Would I had met
Sharpest convulsions, spotted pestilence,
Or any other deadly foe to life,
Rather than heave beneath this load of thought.

Lav. Alas! what is it? Wherefore turn you
from me?

Why did you falsely call me your Lavinia,
And swear I was Horatio's better half,
Since now you mourn unkindly by yourself,
And rob me of my partnership of sadness?

Hor. Seek not to know what I would hide
from all,

But most from thee. I never knew a pleasure,
Aught that was joyful, fortunate, or good,
But straight I ran to bless thee with the tidings,
And laid up all my happiness with thee:
But wherefore, wherefore should I give thee pain?
Then spare me, I conjure thee; ask no further;
Allow my melancholy thoughts this privilege,
And let 'em brood in secret o'er their sorrows.

Lav. It is enough; chide not, and all is well!
Forgive me if I saw you sad, Horatio,
And ask'd to weep out part of your misfortunes;
I wo' not press to know what you forbid me.
Yet, my lov'd lord, yet you must grant me this,
Forget your cares for this one happy day,
Devote this day to mirth, and to your Altamont;
For his dear sake, let peace be in your looks.
Even now the jocund bridegroom waits your
wishes.

He thinks the priest has but half bless'd his
marriage,
Till his friend hails him with the sound of joy.

Hor. Oh, never, never, never! Thou art in-
nocent;

Simplicity from ill, pure native truth,
And candour of the mind, adorn thee ever;
But there are such, such false ones, in the world,
'Twould fill thy gentle soul with wild amazement,
To hear their story told.

Lav. False ones, my lord!

Hor. Fatally fair they are, and in their smiles
The graces, little loves, and young desires in-
habit;

But all that gaze upon 'em are undone;
For they are false, luxurious in their appetites,
And all the heaven they hope for is variety:
One lover to another still succeeds,
Another, and another after that,
And the last fool is welcome as the former;
Till, having lov'd his hour out, he gives place,
And mingles with the herd that went before him.

Lav. Can there be such, and have they peace
of mind?

Have they, in all the series of their changing,
One happy hour? If women are such things,
How was I form'd so different from my sex?
My little heart is satisfy'd with you;
You take up all her room as in a cottage
Which harbours some benighted princely stranger,
Where the good man, proud of his hospitality,
Yields all his homely dwelling to his guest,
And hardly keeps a corner for himself.

Hor. Oh, were they all like thee, men would
adore 'em,

And all the business of their lives be loving;
The nuptial band should be the pledge of peace,
And all domestic cares and quarrels cease!
The world should learn to love by virtuous rules,
And marriage be no more the jest of fools.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

Enter CALISTA and LUCILLA.

Cal. Be dumb for ever, silent as the grave;
Nor let thy fond, officious love disturb
My solemn sadness with the sound of joy.
If thou wilt sooth me, tell some dismal tale
Of pining discontent, and black despair:
For, oh! I've gone around through all my thoughts,

But all are indignation, love, or shame,
And my dear peace of mind is lost for ever.

Luc. Why do you follow still that wand'ring
fire, [you]

That has misled your weary steps, and leaves
Benighted in a wilderness of wo;
That false Lothario! Turn from the deceiver;
Turn, and behold where gentle Altamont
Sighs at your feet, and woos you to be happy.

Cal. Away! I think not of him. My sad soul
Has form'd a dismal, melancholy scene,
Such a retreat as I would wish to find;
An unfrequented vale, o'ergrown with trees
Mossy and old, within whose lonesome shade
Ravens and birds ill-omen'd only dwell:
No sound to break the silence, but a brook
That bubbling winds among the weeds: no mark
Of any human shape that had been there,
Unless a skeleton of some poor wretch,
Who had long since, like me, by love undone,
Sought that sad place out to despair and die in.

Luc. Alas, for pity!

Cal. There I fain would hide me [shame;
From the base world, from malice, and from
For 'tis the solemn counsel of my soul
Never to live with public loss of honour:
'Tis fix'd to die, rather than bear the insolence
Of each affected she that tells my story,
And blesses her good stars that she is virtuous.
To be a tale for fools! Scorn'd by the women,
And pitied by the men! Oh, insupportable!

Luc. Oh, hear me, hear your ever faithful
creature!

By all the good I wish, by all the ill
My trembling heart forebodes, let me entreat you
Never to see this faithless man again;
Let me forbid his coming.

Cal. On thy life
I charge thee, no: my genius drives me on;
I must, I will behold him once again;
Perhaps it is the crisis of my fate,
And this one interview shall end my cares.
My lab'ring heart, that swells with indignation,
Heaves to discharge the burden; that once done,
The busy thing shall rest within its cell,
And never beat again.

Luc. Trust not to that:
Rage is the shortest passion of our souls:
Like narrow brooks that rise with sudden showers,
It swells in haste, and falls again as soon;
Still as it ebbs the softer thoughts flow in,
And the deceiver, love, supplies its place.

Cal. I have been wrong'd enough to arm my
temper
Against the smooth delusion; but, alas!
(Chide not my weakness, gentle maid, but pity me)
A woman's softness hangs about me still;
Then let me blush, and tell thee all my folly.
I swear I could not see the dear betrayer
Kneel at my feet and sigh to be forgiven,
But my relenting heart would pardon all,
And quite forget 'twas he that had undone me.

[*Exit LUC.*]

Ha! Altamont! Calista, now be wary,
And guard thy soul's excesses with dissembling:
Nor let this hostile husband's eyes explore
The warring passions and tumultuous thoughts
That rage within thee, and deform thy reason.

Enter ALTAMONT.

Alt. Be gone, my cares, I give you to the winds,
Far to be borne, far from the happy Altamont;

Calista is the mistress of the year;
She crowns the seasons with auspicious beauty,
And bids even all my hours be good and joyful.

Cal. If I were ever mistress of such happiness,
Oh! wherefore did I play th' unthrifty fool,
And, wasting all on others, leave myself
Without one thought of joy to give me comfort?

Alt. Oh, mighty love! Shall that fair face
profane

This thy great festival with frowns and sadness?
I swear it sha' not be, for I will woo thee

With sighs so moving, with so warm a trans-
port,

That thou shalt catch the gentle flame from me,
And kindle into joy.

Cal. I tell thee, Altamont,
Such hearts as ours were never pair'd above:

I'll suited to each other: join'd, not match'd;
Some sullen influence, a foe to both,

Has wrought this fatal marriage to undo us.
Mark but the frame and temper of our minds,

How very much we differ. Even this day,
That fills thee with such ecstasy and transport,

To me brings nothing that should make me
bless it,

Or think it better than the day before,

Or any other in the course of time,
That duly took its turn, and was forgotten.

Alt. If to behold thee as my pledge of happi-
ness,

To know none fair, none excellent, but thee;

If still to love thee with unwearied constancy,

Through every season, every change of life,

Be worth the least return of grateful love,

Then let my Calista bless this day

And set it down for happy.

Cal. 'Tis the day

In which my father gave my hand to Altamont;

As such, I will remember it for ever.

Enter SCIOLTO, HORATIO, and LAVINIA.

Sci. Let mirth go on, let pleasure know no
pause,

But fill up every minute of this day.

'Tis yours, my children, sacred to your loves;

The glorious sun himself for you looks gay;

He shines for Altamont and for Calista.

Let there be music, let the master touch

The sprightly string and softly breathing flute,

Till harmony rouse every gentle passion;

Teach the cold maid to lose her fears in love,

And the fierce youth to languish at her feet.

Begin: even age itself is cheer'd with music;

It wakes a glad remembrance of our youth,

Calls back past joys, and warms us into trans-
port.

[*Musie.*]

Take care my gates be open, bid all welcome;

All who rejoice with me to-day are friends:

Let each indulge his genius, each be glad,

Jocund, and free, and swell the feast with mirth;

The sprightly bowl shall cheerfully go round,

None shall be grave, nor too severely wise;

Losses and disappointments, cares and poverty,

The rich man's insolence, and great man's scorn,

In wine shall be forgotten all. To-morrow

Will be too soon to think and to be wretched.

Oh grant, ye powers, that I may see these happy,

[*Pointing to ALTAMONT and CALISTA.*]

Completely bless'd, and I have life enough!

And leave the rest indifferently to fate.

[*Exeunt.*]

Hor. What if, while all are here intent on revelling,
I privately went forth, and sought Lothario?
This letter may be forg'd! perhaps the wanton-

ness
Of his vain youth, to stain a lady's fame;
Perhaps his malice, to disturb my friend.
Oh, no! my heart forbodes it must be true.
Methought, even now, I mark'd the starts of
guilt [lation
That shook her soul; though damn'd dissimu-
Screen'd her dark thoughts, and set to public
view

A specious face of innocence and beauty.
With such smooth looks and many a gentle
word,

The first fair she beguil'd her easy lord;
Too blind with love and beauty to beware,
He fell unthinking in the fatal snare;
Nor could believe that such a heavenly face
Had bargain'd with the devil to damn her wretch-
ed race. [Exit.

SCENE II.—The Garden of SCIOLTO'S Palace.

Enter LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.

Loth. To tell thee then the purport of my
thoughts;
The loss of this fond paper would not give me
A moment of disquiet, were it not
My instrument of vengeance on this Altamont;
Therefore I mean to wait some opportunity
Of speaking with the maid we saw this morning.

Ros. I wish you, Sir, to think upon the danger
Of being seen; to-day their friends are round 'em;
And any eye that lights by chance on you,
Shall put your life and safety to the hazard.

[Exit.

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Still I must doubt some mystery of mis-
chief,
Some artifice beneath. Lothario's father!
I knew him well; he was sagacious, cunning,
Fluent in words, and bold in peaceful counsels,
But of a cold, unactive hand in war;
Yet with these coward's virtues, he undid
My unsuspecting, valiant, honest friend.
This son, if fame mistakes not, is more hot,
More open and unartful—

Re-enter LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.

Ha! he's here! [Seeing him.

Loth. Damnation! he again!—This second
time

To-day he has cross'd me like my evil genius.

Hor. I sought you, Sir.

Loth. 'Tis well then I am found.

Hor. 'Tis well you are. The man who wrongs
my friend

To the earth's utmost verge I would pursue.
No place, though e'er so holy, should protect him;
No shape that artful fear e'er form'd should hide
him,

Till he fair answer made, and did me justice.

Loth. Ha! dost thou know me? that I am
Lothario?

As great a name as this proud city boasts of.
Who is this mighty man, then, this Horatio,
That I should basely hide me from his anger,
Lest he should chide me for his friend's displea-
sure?

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Hor. The brave, 'tis true, do never shun the
light;
Just are their thoughts, and open are their
tempers,

Still are they found in the fair face of day,
And heaven and men are judges of their actions.

Loth. Such let 'em be of mine; there's not a
purpose

Which my soul e'er fram'd, or my hand acted,
But I could well have bid the world look on,
And what I once durst do, have dar'd to justify.

Hor. Where was this open boldness, this free
spirit,

When but this very morning I surpris'd thee,
In base dishonest privacy, consulting
And bribing a poor mercenary wretch,
To sell her lady's secrets, stain her honour,
And, with a forg'd contrivance, blast her virtue?
At sight of me thou fled'st.

Loth. Ha! fled from thee?

Hor. Thou fled'st, and guilt was on thee like a
thief,

A pilferer, descried in some dark corner
Who there had lodg'd, with mischievous intent,
To rob and ravage at the hour of rest,
And do a midnight murder on the sleepers.

Loth. Slave! villain! [Offers to draw.

Ros. Hold, my lord! think where you are,
Think how unsafe and hurtful to your honour
It were to urge a quarrel in this place,
And shock the peaceful city with a broil.

Loth. Then, since thou dost provoke my ven-
geance, know

I would not, for this city's wealth, for all
Which the sea wafts to our Ligurian shore,
But that the joys I reap'd with that fond wanton,
The wife of Altamont, should be as public
As is the noon-day sun, air, earth, or water
Or any common benefit of nature.

Think'st thou I meant that shame should be con-
ceal'd?

Oh, no! by hell and vengeance, all I wanted
Was some fit messenger, to bear the news
To the dull doting husband: now I have found
him,

And thou art he.

Hor. I hold thee base enough
To break through law, and spurn at sacred order,
And do a brutal injury like this.

Yet mark me well, young lord, I think Calista

Too nice, too noble, and too great of soul,

To be the prey of such a thing as thou art.

'Twas base and poor, unworthy of a man,

To forge a scroll so villanous and loose,

And mark it with a noble lady's name:

These are the mean, dishonest arts of cowards,

Who, bred at home in idleness and riot,

Ransack for mistresses th' unwholesome stew

And never know the worth of virtuous love.

Loth. Think'st thou I forg'd the letter?

Think so still,

Till the broad shame come staring in thy face,

And boys shall hoot the cuckold as he passes.

Hor. Away! no woman could descend so low.

A skipping, dancing, worthless tribe you are;

Fit only for yourselves, you herd together;

And when the circling glass warms your vain

hearts,

You talk of beauties that you never saw,

And fancy raptures that you never knew.

Loth. But that I do not hold it worth my
leisure,

I could produce such damning proof—

Hor. 'Tis false!

You blast the fair with lies, because they scorn you,

Hate you like age, like ugliness and impotence;
Rather than make you bless'd, they would die virgins,

And stop the propagation of mankind.

Loth. It is the curse of fools to be secure,
And that be thine and Altamont's. Dream on;
Nor think upon my vengeance till thou feel'st it.

Hor. Hold, Sir; another word, and then farewell.

Though I think greatly of Calista's virtue,
And hold it far beyond thy power to hurt;
Yet, as she shares the honour of my Altamont,
That treasure of a soldier, bought with blood,
And kept at life's expense, I must not have
(Mark me, young Sir) her very name profan'd.

Learn to restrain the license of your speech;
'Tis held you are too lavish. When you are met
Among your set of fools, talk of your dress,
Of dice, of whores, of horses, and yourselves;
'Tis safer, and becomes your understandings.

Loth. What if we pass beyond this solemn order,

And, in defiance of the stern Horatio,
Indulge our gayer thoughts, let laughter loose,
And use his sacred friendship for our mirth?

Hor. 'Tis well, Sir, you are pleasant—

Loth. By the joys
Which my soul yet has uncontrol'd pursu'd,
I would not turn aside from my least pleasure,
Though all thy force were arm'd to bar my way;
But, like the birds, great nature's happy com-
moners,
That haunt in woods, in meads, and flowery
gardens,

Rife the sweets, and taste the choicest fruits,
Yet scorn to ask the lordly owner's leave.

Hor. What liberty has vain presumptuous youth,

That thou should'st dare provoke me unchastis'd?
But henceforth, boy, I warn thee, shun my walks.
If in the bounds of this forbidden place
Again thou'rt found, expect a punishment,
Such as great souls, impatient of an injury,
Exact from those who wrong 'em much; even
death,

Or something worse: an injur'd husband's ven-
geance

Shall print a thousand wounds, tear thy fine form,
And scatter thee to all the winds of heaven.

Loth. Is then my way in Genoa prescrib'd

By a dependent on the wretched Altamont?

A talking Sir, that brawls for him in taverns,
And vouches for his valour's reputation?

Hor. Away! thy speech is fouler than thy
manners.

Loth. Or, if there be a name more vile, his
parasite;

A beggar's parasite!

Hor. Now learn humanity,

[*Offers to strike him: ROSSANO interposes.*
Since brutes and boys are only taught with blows.

Loth. Damnation! [*They draw.*

Ros. Hold, this goes no further here.

Loth. Oh, Rossano!

Or give me way, or thou'rt no more my friend.

Ros. Sciolto's servants, Sir, have taken th'
alarm;

You'll be oppress'd by numbers. Be advis'd

Or I must force you hence.

Loth. This wo' not brook delay;
West of the town a mile, among the rocks,
Two hours ere noon, to-morrow, I expect thee,
Thy single hand to mine.

Hor. I'll meet thee there.

Loth. To-morrow, oh, my better stars! to-
morrow

Exert your influence; shine strongly for me;

'Tis not a common conquest I would gain,
Since love as well as arms must grace my tri-
umph.

[*Exeunt* LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.

Hor. Two hours ere noon to-morrow! ha! ere
that

He sees Calista! Oh, unthinking fool—
What if I urg'd her with the crime and danger?
If any spark from heaven remain unquench'd
Within her breast, my breath perhaps may wake
it.

Could I but prosper there, I would not doubt
My combat with that loud vainglorious boaster.
Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom ye trust;
Did you but think how seldom fools are just,
So many of your sex would not in vain
Of broken vows, and faithless men, complain;
Of all the various wretches love has made,
How few have been by men of sense betray'd?
Convinced by reason, they your power confess,
Pleas'd to be happy, as you're pleas'd to bless,
And, conscious of your worth, can never love you
less. [*Exit*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in SCIOLTO'S Palace.

Enter SCIOLTO and CALISTA.

Scio. Now, by my life, my honour, 'tis too
much!

Have I not mark'd thee, wayward as thou art,
Perverse and sullen all this day of joy?
When every heart was cheer'd, and mirth went
round,
Sorrow, displeasure, and repining anguish,
Sat on thy brow.

Cal. Is then the task of duty half perform'd?
Has not your daughter given herself to Altamont,
Yielded the native freedom of her will
To an imperious husband's lordly rule,
To gratify a father's stern command?

Sci. Dost thou complain?

Cal. For pity, do not frown then,
If, in despite of all my vow'd obedience,
A sigh breaks out, or a tear falls by chance:
For, oh! that sorrow which has drawn your anger,
Is the sad native of Calista's breast.

Sci. Now by the sacred dust of that dear saint
That was thy mother; by her wondrous good-
ness,

Her soft, her tender, most complying sweetness,
I swear, some sullen thought that shuns the light,
Lurks underneath that sadness in thy visage.
But mark me well, though by yon heaven I love
thee

As much, I think, as a fond parent can;
Yet shouldst thou (which the powers above
forbid,)

E'er stain the honour of thy name with infamy,
I'll cast thee off, as one whose impious hands
Had rent asunder nature's nearest ties,

Which, once divided, never join again.
To-day I've made a noble youth thy husband!
Consider well his worth; reward his love;
Be willing to be happy, and thou art so.

[Exit SCIOLTO.]

Cal. How hard is the condition of our sex.
Through every state of life the slaves of man!
In all the dear delightful days of youth,
A rigid father dictates to our wills,
And deals out pleasure with a scanty hand.
To his, the tyrant husband's reign succeeds;
Proud with opinion of superior reason,
He holds domestic business and devotion
All we are capable to know, and shuts us,
Like cloister'd idiots, from the world's acquaintance,
And all the joys of freedom. Wherefore are we
Born with high souls, but to assert ourselves,
Shake off this vile obedience they exact,
And claim an equal empire o'er the world?

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. She's here! yet, ho! my tongue is at a loss;

Teach me, some power, that happy art of speech,
To dress my purpose up in gracious words;
Such as may softly steal upon her soul,
And never waken the tempestuous passions.
By heaven she weeps!—Forgive me, fair Calista,
If I presume, on privilege of friendship,
To join my grief to yours, and mourn the evils
That hurt your peace, and quench those eyes in tears.

Cal. To steal, unlook'd for, on my private sorrow,
Speaks not the man of honour, nor the friend,
But rather means the spy.

Hor. Unkindly said!

For, oh! as sure as you accuse me falsely,
I come to prove myself Calista's friend.

Cal. You are my husband's friend, the friend
of Altamont!

Hor. Are you not one? Are you not join'd by
heaven,
Each interwoven with the other's fate?
Then who can give his friendship but to one?
Who can be Altamont's, and not Calista's?

Cal. Force, and the wills of our imperious
rulers,

May bind two bodies in one wretched chain:
But minds will still look back to their own choice.

Hor. When souls, that should agree to will the
same,

To have one common object for their wishes,
Look different ways, regardless of each other;
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues;
Love shall be banished from the genial bed,
The night shall be lonely and unquiet,
And every day shall be a day of cares.

Cal. Then all the boasted office of thy friend-
ship,

Was but to tell Calista what a wretch she is.
Alas! what needed that?

Hor. Oh! rather say,
I came to tell her how she might be happy;
To soothe the secret anguish of her soul;
To comfort that fair mourner, that forlorn one,
And teach her steps to know the paths of peace.

Cal. Say thou, to whom this paradise is known,
Where lies the blissful region? Mark my way to
it,

For oh! 'tis sure I long to be at rest.

Hor. Then to be good is to be happy—Angels
Are happier than mankind, because they're
better.

Guilt is the source of sorrow! 'tis the fiend,
Th' avenging fiend, that follows us behind,
With whips and stings. The bless'd know none
of this,
But rest in everlasting peace of mind,
And find the height of all their heaven is good-
ness.

Cal. And what bold parasite's officious tongue
Shall dare to tax Calista's name with guilt?

Hor. None should; but 'tis a busy talking
world,

That with licentious breath blows, like the wind,
As freely on the palace as the cottage.

Cal. What mystic riddle lurks beneath thy
words,

Which thou wouldst seem unwilling to express,
As if it meant dishonour to my virtue?
Away with this ambiguous shuffling phrase,
And let thy oracle be understood.

Hor. Lothario!

Cal. Ha! What wouldst thou mean by him?

Hor. Lothario and Calista!—Thus they join
Two names, which heaven decreed should never
meet.

Hence have the talkers of this populous city
A shameful tale to tell, for public sport,
Of an unhappy beauty, a false fair one,
Who plighted to a noble youth her faith,
When she had given her honour to a wretch.

Cal. Death and confusion! Have I liv'd to
this?

Thus to be treated with unmanly insolence?
To be the sport of a loose ruffian's tongue!
Thus to be us'd! thus! like the vilest creature,
That ever was a slave to vice and infamy.

Hor. By honour and fair truth, you wrong me
much;

For, on my soul, nothing but strong necessity
Could urge my tongue to this ungrateful office.
I came with strong reluctance, as if death
Had stood across my way, to save your honour,
Yours and Sciolto's, yours and Altamont's;
Like one who ventures through a burning pile,
To save his tender wife, with all her brood
Of little fondlings, from the dreadful ruin.

Cal. Is this the famous friend of Altamont,
For noble worth and deeds of arms renown'd?
Is this the tale-bearing officious fellow,
That watches for intelligence from eyes?
This wretched Argus of a jealous husband,
That fills his easy ears with monstrous tales,
And makes him toss, and rave, and wreak at
length

Bloody revenge on his defenceless wife,
Who guiltless dies, because her fool ran mad?

Hor. Alas! this rage is vain; for if your fame
Or peace be worth your care, you must be calm,
And listen to the means are left to save 'em.
'Tis now the lucky minute of your fate.

By me your genius speaks, by me it warns you,
Never to see that curs'd Lothario more;
Unless you mean to be despis'd, be shunn'd,
By all our virtuous maids and noble matrons;
Unless you have devoted this rare beauty
To infamy, diseases, prostitution—

Cal. Dishonour blast thee, base, unmanner'd
slave!

That dar'st forget my birth, and sacred sex,
And shock me with the rude, unhallow'd sound!

Hor. Here kneel, and in the awful face of heaven

Breathe out a solemn vow, never to see,
Nor think, if possible, on him that ruin'd thee;
Or, by my Altamont's dear life, I swear,
This paper; nay, you must not fly—This paper,
This guilty paper shall divulge your shame.

Cal. What mean'st thou by that paper? What contrivance

Hast thou been forging to deceive my father;
To turn his heart against his wretched daughter;
That Altamont and thou may share his wealth?
A wrong like this will make me even forget
The weakness of my sex.—Oh, for a sword,
To urge my vengeance on the villain's head
That forg'd the scroll!

Hor. Behold! Can this be forg'd?

Cal. What mean'st thou by that paper? What

[*Showing the letter near.*

Cal. To atoms thus, [*Tearing it.*
Thus let me tear the vile, detested falsehood,
The wicked, lying evidence of shame.

Hor. Confusion!

Cal. Henceforth, thou officious fool,
Meddle no more, nor dare, even on thy life,
To breathe an accent that may touch my virtue.
I am myself the guardian of my honour,
And will not bear so insolent a monitor.

Enter ALTAMONT.

Alt. Where is my life, my love, my charming bride,

Joy of my heart, and pleasure of my eyes?
Disorder'd!—and in tears!—Horatio too!
My friend is in amaze—What can it mean?
Tell me, Calista, who has done thee wrong,
That my swift sword may find out the offender,
And do thee ample justice.

Cal. Turn to him.

Alt. Horatio!

Cal. To that insolent.

Alt. My friend!

Could he do this? Have I not found him just,
Honest as truth itself? and could he break
The sanctity of friendship? Could he wound
The heart of Altamont in his Calista?

Cal. I thought what justice I should find from thee!

Go fawn upon him, listen to his tale,
Thou art perhaps confederate in his mischief,
And wilt believe the legend, if he tells it.

Alt. Oh, impious! what presumptuous wretch shall dare

To offer at an injury like that?
Priesthood, nor age, nor cowardice itself,
Shall save him from the fury of my vengeance.

Cal. The man who dar'd to do it was Horatio;
Thy darling friend; 'twas Altamont's Horatio.
But mark me well; while thy divided heart
Dotes on a villain that has wrong'd me thus,
No force shall drag me to thy hated bed.
Nor can my cruel father's power do more
Than shut me in a cloister: there, well pleas'd,
Religious hardships will I learn to bear,
To fast and freeze at midnight hours of prayer:
Nor think it hard, within a lonely cell,
With melancholy speechless saints to dwell:
But bless the day I to that refuge ran,
Free from the marriage chain, and from that
tyrant, man. [*Exit.*

Alt. She's gone; and as she went, ten thousand fires

Shot from her angry eyes; as if she meant
Too well to keep the cruel vow she made.
Now, as thou art a man, Horatio, tell me,
What means this wild confusion in thy looks;
As if thou wert at variance with thyself,
Madness and reason combating with thee,
And thou wert doubtful which should get the
better?

Hor. I would be dumb for ever; but thy fate
Has otherwise decreed it. Thou hast seen
That idol of thy soul, that fair Calista;
Thou hast beheld her tears.

Alt. I have seen her weep;
I have seen that lovely one, that dear Calista,
Complaining, in the bitterness of sorrow,
That thou, my friend Horatio, thou hast wrong'd
her.

Hor. That I have wrong'd her! Had her eyes
been fed
From the rich stream which warms her heart,
and number'd

For every falling tear a drop of blood,
It had not been too much; for she has ruin'd thee,
Even thee, my Altamont. She has undone thee.

Alt. Dost thou join ruin with Calista's name?
What is so fair, so exquisitely good?
Is she not more than painting can express,
Or youthful poets fancy when they love?
Does she not come, like wisdom or good fortune,
Replete with blessings, giving wealth and honour?

Hor. It had been better thou hadst liv'd a
beggar,

And fed on scraps at great men's surly doors,
Than to have match'd with one so false, so fatal.

Alt. It is too much for friendship to allow thee,
Because I tamely bore the wrong thou didst her,
Thou dost avow the barb'rous, brutal part,
And urge the injury even to my face.

Hor. I see she has got possession of thy heart,
She has charm'd thee, like a Syren, to her bed,
With looks of love, and with enchanting sounds:
Too late the rocks and quicksands will appear,
When thou art wreck'd upon the faithless shore,
Then vainly wish thou hadst not left thy friend,
To follow her delusion.

Alt. If thy friendship
Does churlishly deny my love a room,
It is not worth my keeping; I disclaim it.

Hor. Canst thou soon forget what I've been to
thee?

I shar'd the task of nature with thy father,
And form'd with care thy inexperienced youth
To virtue and to arms.

Thy noble father, oh, thou light young man!
Would he have us'd me thus? One fortune fed
us;

For his was ever mine, mine his, and both
Together flourish'd, and together fell.

He call'd me friend, like thee: would he have left
me

Thus for a woman, and a vile one, too?

Alt. Thou canst not, dar'st not mean it! Speak
again,

Say, who is vile; but dare not name Calista.

Hor. I had not spoke at first, unless compell'd
And forc'd to clear myself; but since thus urg'd
I must avow, I do not know a viler.

Alt. Thou wert my father's friend; he lov'd
thee well;

A kind of venerable mark of him
Hangs round thee, and protects thee from my
vengeance.

I cannot, dare not lift my sword against thee,
But henceforth never let me see thee more.

[*Going out.*]

Hor. I love thee still, ungrateful as thou art,
And must and will preserve thee from dishonour,
Even in spite of thee.

[*Holds him.*]

Alt. Let go my arm.

Hor. If honour be thy care, if thou wouldst live

Without the name of credulous, wittol husband,
Avoid thy bride, shun her detested bed,
The joys it yields are dash'd with poison—

Alt. Off!

To urge me but a minute more is fatal.

Hor. She is polluted, stain'd—

Alt. Madness and raging!

But hence—

Hor. Dishonour'd by the man you hate—

Alt. I pry thee loose me yet, for thy own sake,
If life be worth thy keeping—

Hor. By Lothario.

Alt. Perdition take thee, villain, for the falsehood!

[*Strikes him.*]

Now, nothing but thy life can make atonement.

Hor. A blow! thou hast us'd me well—

[*Draws.*]

Alt. This to thy heart—

Hor. Yet hold—By heaven his father's in his face!

[*tenderness.*]

Spite of my wrongs, my heart runs o'er with
And I could rather die myself than hurt him.

Alt. Defend thyself; for by my much wrong'd love,

I swear, the poor evasion shall not save thee.

Hor. Yet hold—thou know'st, I dare.

[*They fight.*]

Enter LAVINIA, who runs between their swords.

Lav. My brother, my Horatio! Is it possible?
Oh, turn your cruel swords upon Lavinia.

If you must quench your impious rage in blood,
Behold, my heart shall give you all her store,
To save those dearer streams that flow from yours.

Alt. 'Tis well thou hast found a safeguard:
none but this,

No power on earth, could save thee from my fury.

Hor. Safety from thee!

Away, vain boy! Hast thou forgot the rev'rence
Due to my arm, thy first, thy great example,
Which pointed out thy way to noble daring,
And show'd thee what it was to be a man?

Lav. What busy, meddling fiend, what foe to goodness,

Could kindle such a discord?

Hor. Ask'st thou what made us foes? 'Twas base ingratitude,

[*mercy.*]

'Twas such a sin to friendship, as heaven's
That strives with man's untoward, monstrous wickedness,

Unwearied with forgiving, scarce could pardon.

He who was all to me, child, brother, friend,
With barb'rous bloody malice, sought my life.

Alt. Thou art my sister, and I would not make thee

The lonely mourner of a widow'd bed;

Therefore thy husband's life is safe: but warn him,

No more to know this hospitable roof.

He has but ill repaid Sciolto's bounty.

We must not meet; 'tis dangerous. Farewell.

[*He is going, LAVINIA holds him.*]

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Lav. Stay, Altamont, my brother, stay!

Alt. It cannot, sha' not be—you must not hold me.

Lav. Look kindly, then.

Alt. Each minute that I stay,

Is a new injury to fair Calista.

From thy false friendship, to her arms I'll fly;

Then own, the joys which on her charms attend,

Have more than paid me for my faithless friend.

[*Breaks from LAVINIA, and exit.*]

Hor. Oh, raise thee, my Lavinia, from the earth.

It is too much; this time of flowing grief,

This wondrous waste of tears, too much to give

To an ungrateful friend, and cruel brother.

Lav. Is there not cause for weeping? Oh, Horatio!

A brother and a husband were my treasure,
'Twas all the little wealth that poor Lavinia
Sav'd from the shipwreck of her father's fortunes.

One half is lost already. If thou leav'st me,
If thou shouldst prove unkind to me, as Altamont,

Whom shall I find to pity my distress,

To have compassion on a helpless wanderer,

And give her where to lay her wretched head?

Hor. Why dost thou wound me with thy soft complainings?

Though Altamont be false, and use me hardly,

Yet think not I impute his crimes to thee.

Talk not of being forsaken; for I'll keep thee

Next to my heart, my certain pledge of happiness.

Lav. Then you will love me still, cherish me ever,

And hide me from misfortune in your bosom?

Hor. But for the love I owe the good Sciolto,

From Genoa, from falsehood, and inconstancy,

To some more honest, distant clime I'd go;

Nor would I be beholden to my country,

For aught but thee, the partner of my flight.

Lav. And I would follow thee; forsake, for thee,

My country, brother, friends, even all I have.

Though mine's a little all, yet were it more,

And better far, it should be left for thee,

And all that I would keep should be Horatio.

So, when a merchant sees his vessel lost,

Though richly freighted from a foreign coast,

Gladly for life, the treasure he would give,

And only wishes to escape and live:

Gold and his gains no more employ his mind;

But, driving o'er the billows with the wind,

Cleaves to one faithful plank, and leaves the rest behind.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

LOTHARIO and CALISTA discovered.

Loth. Weep not, my fair; but let the god of love

Laugh in thy eyes, and revel in thy heart,

Kindle again his torch, and hold it high,

To light us to new joys. Nor let a thought

Of discord, or disquiet past, molest thee;

But to a long oblivion give thy cares,

And let us melt the present hour in bliss.

Cal. Seek not to sooth me with thy false endearments,

To charm me with thy softness: 'tis in vain:

Thou canst no more betray, nor I be ruin'd.

The hours of folly and of fond delight
Are wasted all, and fled; those that remain
Are doom'd to weeping, anguish, and repentance.
I come to charge thee with a long account
Of all the sorrows I have known already,
And all I have to come; thou hast undone me.

Loth. Unjust Calista! dost thou call it ruin
To love as we have done; to melt, to languish,
To wish for somewhat exquisitely happy,
And then be bless'd even to that wish's height?
To die with joy, and straight to live again:
Speechless to gaze, and with tumultuous trans-
port—

Cal. Oh, let me hear no more; I cannot bear it;
'Tis deadly to remembrance. Let that night,
That guilty night, be blotted from the year:
For 'twas the night that gave me up to shame,
To sorrow, to the false Lothario.

Loth. Hear this, ye powers! mark, how the fair
deceiver

Sadly complains of violated truth;
She calls me false, even she, the faithless she,
Whom day and night, whom heaven and earth,
have heard

Sighing to vow, and tenderly protest,
Ten thousand times, she would be only mine;
And yet, behold, she has given herself away,
Fled from my arms, and wedded to another,
Even to the man whom most I hate on earth.—

Cal. Art thou so base to upbraid me with a
crime,

Which nothing but thy cruelty could cause?
If indignation, raging in my soul
For thy unmanly insolence and scorn,
Urg'd me to do a deed of desperation,
And wound myself to be reveng'd on thee,
Think whom I should devote to death and hell,
Whom curse as my undoer, but Lothario?
Hadst thou been just, not all Sciolto's power,
Not all the vows and prayers of sighing Altamont,
Could have prevail'd, or won me to forsake thee.

Loth. How have I fail'd, in justice or in love?
Burns not my flame as brightly as at first?
Even now my heart beats high, I languish for
thee,

My transports are as fierce, as strong my wishes,
As if thou ne'er hadst bless'd me with thy
beauty.

Cal. How didst thou dare to think that I would
live

A slave to base desires and brutal pleasures,
To be a wretched wanton for thy leisure,
To toy and waste an hour of idle time with?
My soul disdains thee for so mean a thought.

Loth. The driving storm of passion will have
way,

And I must yield before it. Wert thou calm,
Love, the poor criminal whom thou hast doom'd,
Has yet a thousand tender things to plead,
To charm thy rage, and mitigate his fate.

Enter ALTAMONT behind.

Alt. Ha! do I live and wake? [*Aside.*

Cal. Hadst thou been true, how happy had I
been!

Not Altamont, but thou, hadst been my lord.
But wherefore nam'd I happiness with thee?
It is for thee, for thee, that I am curs'd;
For thee my secret soul each hour arraigns me,
Calls me to answer for my virtue stain'd,
My honour lost to thee: for thee it haunts me,
With stern Sciolto vowing vengeance on me,

With Altamont complaining for his wrongs—

Alt. Behold him here— [*Coming forward.*

Cal. Ah! [*Starting.*

Alt. The wretch! whom thou hast made.
Curses and sorrows hast thou heap'd upon him,
And vengeance is the only good that's left.

[*Drawing.*

Loth. Thou hast ta'en me somewhat unawares,
'tis true:

But love and war take turns, like day and night,
And little preparation serves my turn,
Equal to both, and arm'd for either field.

We've long been foes; this moment ends our
quarrel;

Earth, heaven, and fair Calista, judge the combat!

[*They fight; LOTHARIO falls.*

Oh, Altamont! thy genius is the stronger!
Thou hast prevail'd!—My fierce, ambitious soul
Declining droops, and all her fires grow pale;
Yet let not this advantage swell thy pride,
I conquer'd in my turn, in love I triumph'd.
Those joys are lodg'd beyond the reach of fate;
That sweet revenge comes smiling to my thoughts,
Adorns my fall, and cheers my heart in dying.

[*Dies.*

Cal. And what remains for me, beset with
shame,

Encompass'd round with wretchedness? There is
But this one way to break the toil, and 'scape.

[*She catches up LOTHARIO'S sword, and
offers to kill herself; ALTAMONT wrests
it from her.*

Alt. What means thy frantic rage?

Cal. Off! let me go.

Alt. Oh! thou hast more than murder'd me;
yet still, [*horror,*

Still art thou here! and my soul starts with
At thought of any danger that may reach thee.

Cal. Think'st thou I mean to live? to be for-
given?

Oh, thou hast known but little of Calista!

If thou hadst never heard my shame, if only
The midnight moon and silent stars had seen
it,

I would not bear to be reproach'd by them,
But dig down deep to find a grave beneath,
And hide me from their beams.

Sci. [*Within.*] What, ho! my son!

Cal. Is it the voice of thunder, or my father?

Madness! Confusion! let the storm come on,

Let the tumultuous roar drive all upon me;

Dash my devoted bark, ye surges, break it!

'Tis for my ruin that the tempest rises.

When I am lost, sunk to the bottom low,
Peace shall return, and all be calm again.

Enter SCIOLTO.

Sci. Even now Rossano leap'd the garden
wall—

Ha! death has been among you—Oh, my fears!
Last night thou hadst a difference with thy friend,
The cause thou gav'st me for it was a damn'd
one.

Didst thou not wrong the man who told the truth?
Answer me quick—

Alt. Oh! I press me not to speak;
Even now my heart is breaking, and the mention
Will lay me dead before you. See that body,
And guess my shame! my ruin! Oh, Calista!

Sci. It is enough! but I am slow to execute,
And justice lingers in my lazy hand;
Thus let me wipe dishonour from my name,

And cut thee from the earth, thou stain to goodness—

[*Offers to kill CALISTA; ALTAMONT holds him.*]

Alt. Stay thee, Sciolto, thou rash father, stay,
Or turn the point on me, and through my breast
Cut out the bloody passage to Calista;
So shall my love be perfect, while for her
I die, for whom alone I wish'd to live.

Cal. No, Altamont; my heart, that scorn'd
thy love,

Shall never be indebted to thy pity.
Thus torn, defac'd, and wretched as I seem,
Still I have something of Sciolto's virtue.
Yes, yes, my father, I applaud thy justice:
Strike home, and I will bless thee for the blow;
Be merciful, and free me from my pain;
'Tis sharp, 'tis terrible, and I could curse
The cheerful day, men, earth, and heaven, and
thee,

Even thee, thou venerable, good old man,
For being author to a wretch like me.

Sci. Thy pious care has given me time to think,
And sav'd me from a crime; then rest, my sword,
To honour have I kept thee ever sacred,
Nor will I stain thee with a rash revenge.
But, mark me well, I will have justice done:
Hope not to bear away thy crimes unpunish'd:
I will see justice executed on thee,
Even to a Roman strictness; and thou, nature,
Or whatsoever thou art that plead'st within me,
Be still; thy tender strugglings are in vain.

Cal. Then am I doom'd to live, and bear your
triumph? [*braiding.*]
To groan beneath your scorn and fierce up-
Daily to be reproach'd, and have my misery
At morn, at noon, at night, told over to me?
Is this, is this, the mercy of a father?
I only beg to die, and he denies me.

Sci. Hence from my sight! thy father cannot
bear thee;

Fly with thy infamy to some dark cell,
Where, on the confines of eternal night,
Mourning, misfortune, cares, and anguish dwell;
Where ugly shame hides her opprobrious head,
And death and hell detested rule maintain;
There howl out the remainder of thy life,
And with thy name may be no more remember'd.

Cal. Yes, I will fly to some such dismal place,
And be more curs'd than you can wish I were;
This fatal form, that drew on my undoing,
Fasting, and tears, and hardships, shall destroy;
Nor light, nor food, nor comfort, will I know,
Nor aught that may continue hated life.
Then when you see me meagre, wan, and chang'd,
Stretch'd at my length, and dying in my cave,
On that cold earth, I mean shall be my grave,
Perhaps you may relent, and sighing say,
At length her tears have wash'd her stains away;
At length 'tis time her punishment should cease;
Die, thou poor suffer'ing wretch, and be at peace.
[*Exit.*]

Sci. Who of my servants wait there?

Enter two or three SERVANTS.

Raise that body, and bear it in. On your lives
Take care my doors be guarded well, that none
Pass out, or enter, but by my appointment.

[*Exit SERVANTS, with LOTHARIO'S body.*]

Alt. There is a fatal fury in your visage,
It blazes fierce, and menaces destruction,
I tremble at the vengeance which you meditate

On the poor, faithless, lovely, dear Calista.

Sci. Hast thou not read what brave Virginius
did?

With his own hand he slew his only daughter,
To save her from the fierce Decemvir's lust.
He slew her yet unspotted, to prevent
The shame which she might know. Then what
should I do?

But thou hast tied my hand.—I wo' not kill her;
Yet, by the ruin she has brought upon us,
The common infamy that brands us both,
She sha' not scape.

Alt. You mean that she shall die then?

Sci. Ask me not what, nor how, I have resolv'd;
For all within is anarchy and uproar.

Oh, Altamont! what a vast scheme of joy
Has this one day destroyed? Well did I hope
This daughter would have bless'd my latter days;
That I should live to see you the world's wonder,
So happy, great, and good, that none were like
you.

While I, from busy life and care set free,
Had spent the evening of my age at home,
Among a little prattling race of yours:
There, like an old man, talk'd awhile, and then
Laid down and slept in peace. Instead of this,
Sorrow and shame must bring me to my grave—
Oh, damn her! damn her!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Arm yourself, my lord:
Rossano, who but now escap'd the garden,
Has gather'd in the street a band of rioters,
Who threaten you and all your friends with ruin,
Unless Lothario be return'd in safety. [*Exit.*]

Sci. By heaven their fury rises to my wish,
Nor shall misfortune know my house alone;
But thou, Lothario, and thy race, shall pay me
For all the sorrows which my age is curs'd with.
I think my name as great, my friends as potent,
As any in the state; all shall be summon'd;
I know that all will join their hands to ours,
And vindicate thy vengeance. When our force
Is full and arm'd, we shall expect thy sword
To join with us, and sacrifice to justice. [*Exit.*]

Alt. There is a heavy weight upon my senses;
A dismal, sullen stillness, that succeeds
The storm of rage and grief, like silent death,
After the tumult and the noise of life.
Would it were death, as sure 'tis wondrous like it,
For I am sick of living; my soul's pall'd,
She kindles not with anger or revenge;
Love was th' informing, active fire within;
Now that is quench'd, the mass forgets to move,
And longs to mingle with its kindred earth.
[*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A room hung with black.

On one side LOTHARIO'S Body on a Bier; on the
other a Table, with a Scull and other bones, a
Book and a Lamp on it.—CALISTA is discover-
ed on a couch, in black; her hair hanging
loose and disordered. After soft music, she
rises and comes forward.

Cal. 'Tis well! these solemn sounds, this pomp
of horror,
Are fit to feed the frenzy in my soul.
Here's room for meditation even to madness,
Till the mind burst with thinking. This dull
flame

Sleeps in the socket. Sure the book was left
To teach me something;—for instruction then—
He teaches holy sorrow and contrition,
And penitence.—Is it become an art then?
A trick that lazy, dull, luxurious gownmen
Can teach us to do over? I'll no more on't;

[*Throwing away the Book.*]

I have more real anguish in my heart,
Than all their pedant discipline e'er knew.
What charnel has been rifled for these bones?
Fie! this is pageantry;—they look uncouthly.
But what of that, if he or she that own'd 'em
Safe from disquiet sit, and smile to see
The farce their miserable relics play?
But here's a sight is terrible indeed!
Is this that haughty, gallant, gay Lothario,
That dear, perfidious—Ah!—how pale he looks!
And those dead eyes!
Ascend, ye ghosts, fantastic forms of night,
In all your different dreadful shapes ascend,
And match the present horror, if you can.

Enter SCIOLO.

Sci. This dread of night, this silent hour of
darkness,

Nature for rest ordain'd, and soft repose;
And yet distraction and tumultuous jars
Keep all our frightened citizens awake:
Amidst the general wreck, see where she stands,

[*Pointing to CALISTA.*]

Like Helen, in the night when Troy was sack'd,
Spectatress of the mischief which she made.

Cal. It is Sciolto! Be thyself, my soul,
Be strong to bear his fatal indignation,
That he may see thou art not lost so far,
But somewhat still of his great spirit lives
In the forlorn Calista.

Sci. Thou wert once
My daughter.

Cal. Happy were it I had died,
And never lost that name.

Sci. That's something yet;
Thou wert the very darling of my age:
I thought the day too short to gaze upon thee;
That all the blessings I could gather for thee,
By cares on earth, and by my prayers to heaven,
Were little for my fondness to bestow,
Why didst thou turn to folly then, and curse me?

Cal. Because my soul was rudely drawn from
yours,

A poor, imperfect copy of my father;
It was because I lov'd, and was a woman.

Sci. Hadst thou been honest, thou hadst been
a cherub:

But of that joy, as of a gem long lost,
Beyond redemption gone, think we no more.
Hast thou e'er dar'd to meditate on death?

Cal. I have, as on the end of shame and sor-
row.

Sci. Ha! answer me! Say, hast thou coolly
thought?

'Tis not the stoic's lessons got by rote,
The pomp of words, and pedant dissertations,
That can sustain thee in that hour of terror:
Books have taught cowards to talk nobly of it,
But when the trial comes they stand aghast;
Hast thou consider'd what may happen after it?
How thy account may stand, and what to answer?

Cal. I've turn'd my eyes inward upon myself,
Where foul offence and shame have laid all waste;
Therefore my soul abhors the wretched dwelling,
And longs to find some better place of rest.

Sci. 'Tis justly thought, and worthy of that
spirit [Rome
That dwell in ancient Latian breasts, when
Was mistress of the world. I would go on,
And tell thee all my purpose; but it sticks
Here at my heart, and cannot find a way.

Cal. Then spare the telling, if it be a pain,
And write the meaning with your poniard here.

Sci. Oh! truly guess'd—seest thou this trem-
bling hand? [*Holding up a Dagger.*
Thrice justice urg'd—and thrice the slack'ning
sinews

Forgot their office, and confess'd the father.
At length the stubborn virtue has prevail'd;
It must, it must be so—Oh! take it then,

[*Gives the Dagger.*
And know the rest untaught.

Cal. I understand you.

It is but thus, and both are satisfied.

[*Offers to kill herself; SCIOLO catches
her arm.*]

Sci. A moment, give me yet a moment's space.
The stern, the rigid judge has been obey'd;
Now nature, and the father, claim their turns.
I've held the balance with an iron hand,
And put off every tender human thought,
To doom my child to death; but spare my eyes
The most unnatural sight, lest their strings
crack,

My old brain split, and I grow mad with horror.

Cal. Ha! is it possible? and is there yet
Some little, dear remain of love and tenderness
For poor, undone Calista, in your heart?

Sci. Oh! when I think what pleasure I took in
thee,

What joys thou gav'st me in thy prattling in-
fancy,

Thy sprightly wit, and early blooming beauty;
How have I stood and fed my eyes upon thee,
Then, lifting up my hands and wond'ring, bless'd
thee;

By my strong grief, my heart even melts within
me;

I could curse nature, and that tyrant honour,
For making me thy father and thy judge;
Thou art my daughter still.

Cal. For that kind word,
Thus let me fall, thus humbly to the earth,
Weep on your feet, and bless you for this good
ness.

Oh! 'tis too much for this offending wretch,
This parricide, that murders with her crimes,
Shortens her father's age, and cuts him off
Ere little more than half his years be number'd.

Sci. Would it were otherwise—but thou must
die.—

Cal. That I must die, it is my only comfort:
Death is the privilege of human nature,
And life without it were not worth our taking:
Come then,

Thou meagre shade; here let me breathe my last
Charm'd with my father's pity and forgiveness,
More than if angels tun'd their golden viols,
And sung a requiem to my parting soul.

Sci. I'm summon'd hence; ere this my friends
expect me.

There is, I know not what of sad presage,
That tells me I shall never see thee more;
If it be so, this is our last farewell,
And these the parting pangs, which nature feels,
When anguish rends the heart-strings—Oh, my
daughter! [*Exit*]

Cal. Now think, thou curs'd Calista, now behold
The desolation, horror, blood, and ruin,
Thy crimes and fatal folly spread around,
That loudly cry for vengeance on thy head;
Yet heaven, who knows our weak imperfect natures,
How blind with passions, and how prone to evil,
Makes not too strict inquiry for offences,
But is aton'd by penitence and prayer:
Cheap recompense! here 'twould not be receiv'd;
Nothing but blood can make the expiation,
And cleanse the soul from inbred deep pollution.
And see, another injur'd wretch appears,
To call for justice from my tardy hand.

Enter ALTAMONT.

All. Hail to you, horrors! hail, thou house of death!
And thou, the lovely mistress of these shades,
Whose beauty gilds the more than midnight darkness,
And makes it grateful as the dawn of day.
Oh, take me in a fellow-mourner, with thee,
I'll number groan for groan, and tear for tear;
And when the fountains of thy eyes are dry,
Mine shall supply the stream, and weep for both.

Cal. I know thee well, thou art the injur'd Altamont;
Thou com'st to urge me with the wrongs I've done thee.

But know I stand upon the brink of life,
And in a moment mean to set me free
From shame and thy upbraiding.

Alt. Falsely, falsely
Dost thou accuse me! O, forbid me not
To mourn thy loss,
To wish some better fate had rul'd our loves,
And that Calista had been mine, and true.

Cal. Oh, Altamont! 'tis hard for souls like mine,

Haughty and fierce, to yield they've done amiss.
But, oh, behold! my proud, disdainful heart,
Bends to thy gentler virtue. Yes, I own,
Such is thy truth, thy tenderness, and love,
That, were I not abandon'd to destruction,
With thee I might have liv'd for ages bless'd,
And died in peace within thy faithful arms.

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Now mourn indeed, ye miserable pair!
For now the measure of your woes is full.

The great, the good Sciolto dies this moment.
Cal. My father!

Alt. That's a deadly stroke, indeed.

Hor. Not long ago, he privately went forth,
Attended but by few, and those unbidden.
I heard which way he took, and straight pursued him;

But found him compass'd by Lothario's faction,
Almost alone, amidst a crowd of foes.
Too late we brought him aid, and drove them back:

Ere that, his frantic valour had provok'd
The death he seem'd to wish for from their swords.

Cal. And dost thou bear me yet, thou patient earth?

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Dost thou not labour with thy murd'rous weight?
And you, ye glitt'ring, heavenly host of stars,
Hide your fair heads in clouds, or I shall blast you;

For I am all contagion, death, and ruin;
And nature sickens at me. Rest, thou world,
This parricide shall be thy plague no more;
Thus, thus I set thee free. [*Stabs herself.*]
Hor. Oh, fatal rashness!

Enter SCIOLTO, pale and bloody, supported by Servants.

Cal. Oh, my heart! [*fed*]
Well may'st thou fail; for see, the spring that
Thy vital stream, is wasted, and runs low.
My father! will you now, at last, forgive me,
If, after all my crimes, and all your suff'rings,
I call you once again by that dear name?
Will you forget my shame, and those wide wounds?

Lift up your hand and bless me, ere I go
Down to my dark abode!

Sci. Alas, my daughter!
Thou hast rashly ventur'd in a stormy sea,
Where life, fame, virtue, all were wreck'd and lost. [*anguish,*]

But sure thou hast borne thy part in all the
And smarted with the pain. Then rest in peace
Let silence and oblivion hide thy name,
And save thee from the malice of posterity;
And may'st thou find with heaven the same forgiveness,

As with thy father here.—Die, and be happy.

Cal. Celestial sounds! peace dawns upon my soul, [*mont!*]

And every pain grows less—Oh, gentle Altamont!
Think not too hardly of me when I'm gone;
But pity me—Had I but early known
Thy wondrous worth, thou excellent young man,

We had been happier both—Now, 'tis too late;
And yet my eyes take pleasure to behold thee;
Thou art their last dear object—Mercy, heaven!

[*Dies.*]
Sci. Oh, turn thee from that fatal object,
Altamont!

Come near, and let me bless thee ere I die.
To thee and brave Horatio I bequeath
My fortunes—Lay me by thy noble father,
And love my memory as thou hast his;
For thou hast been my son—Oh, gracious heaven!

Thou that hast endless blessings still in store
For virtue and for filial piety,
Let grief, disgrace, and want be far away;

But multiply thy mercies on his head. [*him,*]
Let honour, greatness, goodness, still be with
And peace in all his ways— [*Dies.*]

Hor. The storm of grief bears hard upon his youth,

And bends him, like a drooping flower, to earth.
By such examples are we taught to prove
The sorrows that attend unlawful love.
Death, or some worse misfortune, soon divide
The injur'd bridegroom from his guilty bride.
If you would have the nuptial union last,
Let virtue be the bond that ties it fast.

[*Exeunt*]

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

REMARKS.

THE busy variety of this lively comedy, produced at the Theatre, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, in the year 1713, has always procured it a great share of popular favour; notwithstanding its numerous offences against probability, decorum, and nature.

In the principal characters, there is great scope for that rich comic talent, which is always displayed, to the delight of their audiences, at the Theatres Royal of this great metropolis.

The fair authoress says, in her Prologue,

"To-night we come upon a bold design,
To try to please without one borrow'd line;
Our plot is new and regularly clear,
And not one single tittle from *Moliere*;
O'er buried poets we with caution tread,
And parish sextons leave to rob the dead."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN, 1774.

DRURY LANE, 1814

COLONEL FEIGNWELL,	Mr. Woodward.	Mr. Bannister.
SIR PHILIP MODELOVE,	Mr. Booth.	Mr. Penley.
PERIWINKLE,	Mr. Quick.	Mr. Munden.
TRADELOVE,	Mr. Dunstall.	Mr. Penson.
OBADIAH PRIM,	Mr. Shuter.	Mr. Downton.
FREEMAN,	Mr. Whitefield.	Mr. Wallack.
SIMON PURE,	Mr. Wewitzer.	Mr. Oxberry.
SACKBUT,	Mr. Fearon.	Mr. Palmer.
ANNE LOVELY,	Miss Macklin.	Mrs. Glover.
MRS. PRIM,	Mrs. Pitt.	Mrs. Sparks.
BETTY,	Mrs. Evans.	Miss Tidswell.

Stock-brokers, Gentlemen, Travellers, Coachmen, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Tavern.

COLONEL FEIGNWELL and FREEMAN over a bottle.

Free. Come, colonel, his majesty's health.—You are as melancholy as if you were in love! I wish some of the beauties of Bath ha'n't snapt your heart.

Col. F. Why, 'faith, Freeman, there is something in't: I have seen a lady at Bath, who has kindled such a flame in me, that all the waters there can't quench.

Free. Is she not to be had, colonel?

Col. F. That's a difficult question to answer; however, I resolve to try; perhaps you may be able to serve me; you merchants know one another. The lady told me herself she was under the charge of four persons.

Free. Odso! 'tis Miss Anne Lovely.

Col. F. The same—do you know her?

Free. Know her? ay—Faith, colonel, your condition is more desperate than you imagine: why, she is the talk and pity of the whole town; and it is the opinion of the learned, that she must die a maid.

Col. F. Say you so? That's somewhat odd, in this charitable city.—She's a woman, I hope?

Free. For aught I know—but it had been as well for her had nature made her any other part of the creation. The man who keeps this house served her father; he is a very honest fellow, and may be of use to you: we'll send for him to take a glass with us: he'll give you her whole history, and 'tis worth your hearing.

Col. F. But may one trust him?

Free. With your life: I have obligations enough upon him, to make him do any thing: I serve him with wine. [Rings.]

Col. F. Nay, I know him very well myself. I once used to frequent a club that was kept here.

Enter DRAWER.

Draw. Gentlemen, d'ye call?

Free. Ay, send up your master.

Draw. Yes, Sir. [Exit.]

Col. F. Do you know any of this lady's guardians, Freeman?

Free. I know two of them very well.

Enter SACKBUT.

Free. Here comes one will give you an account of them all. Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a glass with us. 'Tis a maxim among the friends of the bottle, that as long as the master is in company, one may be sure of good wine.

Sack. Sir, you shall be sure to have as good wine as you send in. Colonel, your most humble servant: you are welcome to town.

Col. F. I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. I am as glad to see you as I should a hundred tun of French claret, custom free.—My service to you, Sir, [Drinks.] You don't look so merry as you used to do; aren't you well, colonel?

Free. He has got a woman in his head, landlord: can you help him?

Sack. If 'tis in my power, I shan't scruple to serve my friend.

Col. F. 'Tis one perquisite of your calling.

Sack. Ay, at 'tother end of the town, where you officers use, women are good forcers of trade: a well-customed house, a handsome bar-keeper, with clean obliging drawers, soon get the master an estate; but our citizens seldom do any thing but cheat within the walls.—But as to the lady, colonel, point you at particulars? or have you a good Champagne stomach? Are you in full pay, or reduced, colonel?

Col. F. Reduced, reduced, landlord!

Free. To the miserable condition of a lover!

Sack. Pish! that's preferable to half-pay: a woman's resolution may break before the peace: push her home, colonel, there's no parleying with the fair sex.

Col. F. Were the lady her own mistress, I have some reasons to believe I should soon command in chief.

Free. You know Miss Lovely, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Know her! Ay, poor Nancy: I have carried her to school many a frosty morning. Alas! if she's the woman, I pity you, colonel:

her father, my old master, was the most whimsical, out-of-the-way-tempered man I ever heard of, as you will guess by his last will and testament.—This was his only child; and I have heard him wish her dead a thousand times. He died worth thirty thousand pounds, which he left to his daughter, provided she married with the consent of her guardians, but that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the care of four men, as opposite to each other as the four elements: each has his quarterly rule, and three months in the year she is obliged to be subject to each of their humours; and they are pretty different, I assure you.—She is just come from Bath.

Col. F. 'Twas there I saw her.

Sack. Ay, Sir, the last quarter was her beau guardian's. She appears in all public places during his reign.

Col. F. She visited a lady who boarded in the same house with me: I liked her person, and found an opportunity to tell her so. She replied, she had no objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile contradictions, I must not think of her, for that she was condemned to the caprice of four persons, who never yet agreed in any one thing, and she was obliged to please them all.

Sack. 'Tis most true, Sir: I'll give you a short description of the men, and leave you to judge of the poor lady's condition. One is a kind of a virtuoso, a silly half-witted fellow, but positive and surly, fond of every thing antique and foreign, and wears his clothes of the fashion of the last century, dotes upon travellers, and believes more of Sir John Mandeville than he does of the Bible.

Col. F. That must be a rare odd fellow.

Sack. Another is a change-broker: a fellow that will out-lie the devil for the advantage of stock, and cheat his father that got him in a bargain: he is a great stickler for trade, and hates every man that wears a sword.

Free. He is a great admirer of the Dutch management, and swears they understand trade better than any nation under the sun.

Sack. The third is an old beau, that has May in his fancy and dress, but December in his face and his heels: he admires all new fashions, and those must be French; loves operas, balls, masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole company on a birth-day.

Col. F. These are pretty opposite one to another, truly; and the fourth, what is he, landlord?

Sack. A very rigid quaker, whose quarter began this day. I saw Miss Lovely go in, not above two hours ago. Sir Philip set her down. What think you now, colonel? Is not the poor lady to be pitied?

Col. F. Ay, and rescued too, landlord.

Free. In my opinion, that's impossible.

Col. F. There is nothing impossible to a lover! What would not a man attempt for a fine woman and thirty thousand pounds? Besides, my honour is at stake: I promised to deliver her, and she bid me win her and wear her.

Sack. That's fair, 'faith!

Free. If it depended upon knight-errantry, I should not doubt your setting free the damsel; but to have avarice, impertinence, hypocrisy, and pride, at once to deal with, requires more cunning than generally attends a man of honour.

Col. F. My fancy tells me I shall come off with glory. I resolve to try, however. Do you know all the guardians, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Very well; they all use my house.

Col. F. And will you assist me, if occasion requires?

Sack. In every thing I can, colonel.

Free. I'll answer for him.

Col. F. First I'll attack my beau guardian: where lives he?

Sack. 'Faith, somewhere about St. James'; though to say in what street I cannot: but any chairman will tell you where Sir Philip Modelove lives.

Free. Oh! you'll find him in the Park at eleven every day; at least I never pass through at that hour without seeing him there—But what do you intend?

Col. F. To address him in his own way, and find what he designs to do with the lady.

Free. And what then?

Col. F. Nay, that I can't tell; but I shall take my measures accordingly.

Sack. Well, 'tis a mad undertaking, in my mind; but here's to your success, colonel.

[*Drinks.*]

Col. F. 'Tis something out of the way, I confess; but fortune may chance to smile, and I succeed.

*Bold was the man who ventur'd first to sea,
But the first vent'ring lovers bolder were.
The path of love's a dark and dang'rous way,
Without a land-mark or one friendly star.
And he, that runs the risk, deserves the fair.*

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—An Apartment in PRIM'S House.

Enter MISS LOVELY, and her maid BETTY.

Betty. Bless me, Madam! why do you fret and tease yourself so? This is giving them the advantage, with a witness.

Miss L. Must I be condemned all my life to the preposterous humours of other people, and pointed at by every boy in town!—Oh! I could tear my flesh and curse the hour I was born.—Isn't it monstrously ridiculous that they should desire to impose their quaking dress upon me at these years? When I was a child, no matter what they made me wear; but now—

Betty. I would resolve against it, Madam; I'd see 'em hanged before I'd put on the pinched cap again.

Miss L. Then I must never expect one moment's ease: she has rung such a peal in my ears already, that I shan't have the right use of them this month.—What can I do?

Betty. What can you not do, if you will but give your mind to it? Marry, Madam.

Miss L. What! and have my fortune go to build churches and hospitals?

Betty. Why, let it go.—If the colonel loves you, as he pretends, he'll marry you without a fortune, Madam; and I assure you a colonel's lady is no despicable thing.

Miss L. So you would advise me to give up my own fortune, and throw myself upon the colonel's!

Betty. I would advise you to make yourself easy, Madam.

Miss L. That's not the way, I'm sure. No, no, girl, there are certain ingredients to be mingled with matrimony, without which I may as well change for the worse as the better. When

the woman has fortune enough to make the man happy, if he has either honour or good manners, he'll make her easy. Love makes but a slovenly figure in a house, where poverty keeps the door.

Betty. And so you resolve to die a maid, do you, Madam?

Miss L. Or have it in my power to make the man I love master of my fortune.

Betty. Then you don't like the colonel so well as I thought you did, Madam, or you would not take such a resolution.

Miss L. It is because I do like him, Betty, that I do take such a resolution.

Betty. Why, do you expect, Madam, the colonel can work miracles? Is it possible for him to marry you with the consent of all your guardians?

Miss L. Or he must not marry me at all, and so I told him; and he did not seem displeased with the news.—He promised to set me free; and I, on that condition, promised to make him master of that freedom.

Betty. Well! I have read of enchanted castles, ladies delivered from the chains of magic, giants killed, and monsters overcome; so that I shall be the less surprised if the colonel shall conjure you out of the power of your four guardians: if he does, I am sure he deserves your fortune.

Miss L. And shall have it, girl, if it were ten times as much.—For I'll ingenuously confess to thee, that I do love the colonel above all the men I ever saw:—There's something so *jantee* in a soldier, a kind of *je ne sçais quoi* air, that makes them more agreeable than all the rest of mankind.—They command regard, as who shall say, We are your defenders; we preserve your beauties from the insults of rude and unpolished foes, and ought to be preferred before those lazy indolent mortals, who, by dropping into their father's estates, set up their coaches, and think to rattle themselves into our affections.

Betty. Nay, Madam, I confess that the army has engrossed all the prettiest fellows—A laced coat and a feather have irresistible charms.

Miss L. But the colonel has all the beauties of the mind as well as the body.—O all ye powers that favour happy lovers, grant that he may be mine! Thou god of love, if thou be'st aught but name, assist my Feignwell!

*Point all thy darts to aid his just design,
And make his plots as prevalent as thine.*

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Park.

SIR PHILIP MODELOVE on a bench, with a WOMAN masked.

Sir P. Well but, my dear, are you really constant to your keeper?

Wom. Yes, really, Sir.—Hey-day! who comes yonder? He cuts a mighty figure.

Sir P. Ha! a stranger, by his equipage keeping so close at his heels.—He has the appearance of a man of quality.—Positively French, by his dancing air.

Wom. He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.

Sir P. He has a mind to make love to thee child.

Enter COLONEL.

Wom. It will be to no purpose if he does.

Sir P. Are you resolved to be cruel then?

Col. F. You must be very cruel indeed, if you can deny any thing to so fine a gentleman, Madam.

[Takes out his watch.

Wom. I never mind the outside of a man.

Col. F. And I'm afraid thou art no judge of the inside.

Sir P. I am positively of your mind, Sir; for creatures of her function seldom penetrate beyond the pocket.

Wom. Coxcombs!

[Aside, and exit.

Sir P. Pray, what says your watch? mine is down.

Col. F. I want thirty-six minutes of twelve, Sir.

[Puts up his watch, and takes out his snuff-box.

Sir P. May I presume, Sir.

Col. F. Sir, you honour me.

[Presenting the box.

Sir P. He speaks good English—though he must be a foreigner. [Aside.]—This snuff is extremely good—and the box prodigious fine: the work is French, I presume, Sir.

Col. F. I bought it in Paris, Sir.—I do think the workmanship pretty neat.

Sir P. Neat! 'tis exquisitely fine, Sir. Pray, Sir, if I may take the liberty of inquiring—what country is so happy to claim the birth of the finest gentleman in the universe? France, I presume.

Col. F. Then you don't think me an Englishman?

Sir P. No, upon my soul, don't I.

Col. F. I am sorry for't.

Sir P. Impossible you should wish to be an Englishman! Pardon me, Sir, this island could not produce a person of such alertness.

Col. F. As this mirror shows you, Sir. [Puts up a pocket-glass to Sir PHILIP's face.] I know not how to distinguish you, Sir: but your mien and address speak you right honourable.

Sir P. Thus great souls judge of others by themselves—I am only adorned with knighthood: that's all, I assure you, Sir: my name is Sir Philip Modelove.

Col. F. Of French extraction?

Sir P. My father was French.

Col. F. One may plainly perceive it—There is a certain gaiety peculiar to my nation (for I will own myself a Frenchman) which distinguishes us every where.—A person of your figure would be a vast addition to a coronet.

Sir P. I must own I had the offer of a barony about five years ago, but I abhorred the fatigue which must have attended it.—I could never yet bring myself to join with either party.

Col. F. You are perfectly in the right, Sir Philip—a fine person should not embark himself in the slovenly concern of politics: dress and pleasure are objects proper for the soul of a fine gentleman.

Sir P. And love—

Col. F. Oh! that's included under the article of pleasure.

Sir P. Parbleu! il est un homme d'esprit. May I crave your name, Sir?

Col. F. My name is La Feignwell, Sir, at your service.

Sir P. The La Feignwells are French, I know; though the name is become very numerous

in Great Britain of late years. I was sure you were French the moment I laid my eyes upon you; I could not come into the supposition of your being an Englishman: this island produces few such ornaments.

Col. F. Are you married, Sir Philip?

Sir P. No; nor do I believe I shall ever enter into that honourable state: I have an absolute tendre for the whole sex.

Col. F. That's more than they have for you, I dare swear. [Aside.] I find I was very much mistaken—I imagined you had been married to that young lady whom I saw in the chariot with you this morning in Gracechurch-street.

Sir P. Who, Nancy Lovely? I am a piece of a guardian to that lady: you must know, her father, I thank him, joined me with three of the most preposterous old fellows—that, upon my soul, I am in pain for the poor girl: she must certainly lead apes, ha, ha!

Col. F. That's a pity, Sir Philip. If the lady would give me leave, I would endeavour to avert that curse.

Sir P. As to the lady, she'd gladly be rid of us at any rate, I believe; but here's the mischief: he who marries Miss Lovely, must have the consent of us all four—or not a penny of her portion.—For my part, I shall never approve of any but a man of figure—and the rest are not only averse to cleanliness, but have each a peculiar taste to gratify.—For my part, I declare I would prefer you to all men I ever saw.

Col. F. And I her to all women—

Sir P. I assure you, Mr. Feignwell, I am for marrying her, for I hate the trouble of a guardian, especially among such wretches; but resolve never to agree to the choice of any one of them—and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any proposal of mine yet.

Col. F. I wish I had leave to try them, Sir Philip.

Sir P. With all my soul, Sir; I can refuse a person of your appearance nothing.

Col. F. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Sir P. But do you really like matrimony?

Col. F. I believe I could with that lady.

Sir P. The only point in which we differ.—But you are master of so many qualifications, that I can excuse one fault: for I must think it a fault in a fine gentleman: and that you are such, I'll give it under my hand.

Col. F. I wish you'd give me your consent to marry Miss Lovely, under your hand, Sir Philip.

Sir P. I'll do't, if you'll step into St. James' Coffee-house, where we may have pen and ink—though I can't foresee what advantage my consent will be to you, without you can find a way to get the rest of the guardians.—But I'll introduce you, however. She is now at a quaker's, where I carried her this morning, when you saw us in Gracechurch-street.—I assure you she has an odd ragout of guardians, as you will find when you hear the characters, which I'll endeavour to give you as we go along.—Hey! Pierre, Jacques, Renno.—Where are you all, scoundrels?—Order the chariot to St. James' Coffee-house.

Col. F. Le Noir, La Brun, La Blanc—Morbleu, ou sont ces coquins la? Allons, Monsieur le Chevalier.

Sir P. Ah, pardonnez moi, Monsieur.

Col. F. Not one step, upon my soul, Sir Philip.

Sir P. The best bred man in Europe, positively. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—OBADIAH PRIM'S House.

Enter MISS LOVELY and MRS. PRIM.

Mrs. P. Then thou wilt not obey me: and thou dost really think those fal-lals become thee?

Miss L. I do, indeed.

Mrs. P. Now will I be judged by all sober people, if I don't look more like a modest woman than thou dost, Anne.

Miss L. More like a hypocrite, you mean, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Ah! Anne, Anne, that wicked Philip Modelove will undo thee.—Satan so fills thy heart with pride, during the three months of his guardianship, that thou becomest a stumblingblock to the upright.

Miss L. Pray, who are they? Are the pinched cap and formal hood the emblems of sanctity? Does your virtue consist in your dress, Mrs. Prim?

Mrs. P. It doth not consist in cut hair, spotted face, and a bare neck.—Oh the wickedness of the generation! the primitive women knew not the abomination of hooped petticoats.

Miss L. No; nor the abomination of cant neither. Don't tell me, Mrs. Prim, dont.—I know you have as much pride, vanity, self-conceit, and ambition among you, couched under that formal habit and sanctified countenance, as the proudest of us all; but the world begins to see your prudery.

Mrs. P. Prudery! What! do they invent new words as well as new fashions? Ah! poor fantastic age, I pity thee.—Poor deluded Anne, which dost thou think most resembleth the saint, and which the sinner, thy dress or mine? Thy naked bosom allureth the eye of the by-stander—encourageth the frailty of human nature—and corrupteth the soul with evil longings.

Miss L. And pray who corrupted your son Tobias with evil longings? Your maid Tabitha wore a handkerchief, and yet he made the saint a sinner.

Mrs. P. Well, well, spit thy malice. I confess Satan did buffet my son Tobias, and my servant Tabitha: the evil spirit was at that time too strong, and they both became subject to its workings—not from any outward provocation—but from an inward call: he was not tainted with the rottenness of the fashions, nor did his eyes take in the drunkenness of beauty.

Miss L. No! that's plainly to be seen.

Mrs. P. Tabitha is one of the faithful: he fell not with a stranger.

Miss L. So! then you hold wenching no crime, provided it be within the pale of your own tribe.—You are an excellent casuist, truly!

Enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Obad. Not stripped of thy vanity yet, Anne! Why dost thou not make her put it off, Sarah?

Mrs. P. She will not do it.

Obad. Verily, thy naked bosom troubleth my utward man: I pray thee hide it, Anne: put on a handkerchief, Anne Lovely.

Miss L. I hate handkerchiefs when 'tis not cold weather, Mr. Prim.

Obad. I have seen thee wear a handkerchief, nay, and a mask to boot, in the middle of July.

Miss L. Ay, to keep the sun from scorching me.

Obad. If thou couldst not bear the sunbeams, how dost thou think man can bear thy beams? Those breasts inflame desire: let them be hid, I say.

Miss L. Let me be quiet, I say. Must I be tormented thus for ever? Sure no woman's condition ever equalled mine! Foppery, folly, avarice, and hypocrisy, are, by turns, my constant companions—I cannot think my father meant this tyranny! No, you usurp an authority which he never intended you should take.

Obad. Hark thee, dost thou call good counsel tyranny? Do I or my wife tyrannise, when we desire thee in all love to put off thy tempting attire?

Miss L. I wish I were in my grave! Kill me rather than treat me thus.

Obad. Kill thee! ha, ha! thou thinkest thou art acting some lewd play sure.—Kill thee? Art thou prepared for death, Anne Lovely? No, no, thou wouldst rather have a husband, Anne.—Thou watest a gilt coach, with six lazy fellows behind, to flaunt it in the ring of vanity, among the princes and rulers of the land—who pamper themselves with the fatness thereof; but I will take care that none shall squander away thy father's estate; thou shalt marry none such, Anne.

Miss L. Would you marry me to one of your own canting sect.

Obad. Yea, verily, no one else shall ever get my consent, I do assure thee, Anne.

Miss L. And I do assure thee, Obadiah, that I will as soon turn papist, and die in a convent.

Mrs. P. O wickedness!

Miss L. O stupidity!

Obad. O blindness of heart!

Miss L. Thou blinder of the world, don't provoke me—lest I betray your sanctity, and leave your wife to judge of your purity.—What were the emotions of your spirit—when you squeezed Mary by the hand last night in the pantry?—When she told you, you bussed so filthily? Ah! you had no aversion to naked bosoms, when you begged her to show you a little, little, little, bit of her delicious bosom—Don't you remember those words, Mr. Prim?

Mrs. P. What does she say, Obadiah?

Obad. She talketh unintelligibly, Sarah.—Which way did she hear this? This should not have reached the ears of the wicked ones:—verily, it troubleth me. [Aside.]

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Philip Modelove, whom they call Sir Philip, is below, and such another with him: shall I send them up?

Obad. Yea.

[Exit SERVANT.]

Enter SIR PHILIP MODELÖVE and COLONEL FEIGNWELL.

Sir P. How dost thou do, friend Prim? Odsol my she friend here too! What, are you documenting Miss Nancy? Reading her a lecture upon the pinched coif, I warrant ye!

Mrs. P. I am sure thou didst never read her any lecture that was good.—My flesh so riseth at these wicked ones, that prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their sight. [Exit.]

Col. F. Oh, that I could find means to speak

with her! How charming she appears! I wish, I could get this letter into her hand. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. Well, Miss, I hope thou hast got the better of them.

Miss L. The difficulties of my life are not to be surmounted, Sir Philip.—I hate the impertinence of him as much as the stupidity of the other. [*Aside.*]

Obad. Verily, Philip, thou wilt spoil this maiden.

Sir P. I find we still differ in opinion; but that we may none of us spoil her, pr'ythee, Prim, let us consent to marry her.—I have sent for our brother guardians to meet me here about this very thing.—Madam, will you give me leave to recommend a husband to you?—Here's a gentleman, whom, in my mind, you can have no objection to.

[*Presents COLONEL; she looks another way.*]

Miss L. Heaven deliver me from the formal and the fantastic fool!

Col. F. A fine woman—a fine horse, and fine equipage, are the finest things in the universe: and if I am so happy to possess you, Madam, I shall become the envy of mankind, as much as you outshine your whole sex.

[*As he takes her hand, he tries to put a letter into it: it drops—PRIM takes it up.*]

Miss L. I have no ambition to appear conspicuously ridiculous, Sir. [*Turning from him.*]

Col. F. So fail the hopes of Feignwell.

Miss L. Ha! Feignwell! 'tis he! What have I done? Prim has the letter, and it will be discovered. [*Aside.*]

Obad. Friend, I know not thy name, so cannot call thee by it; but thou seest thy letter is unwelcome to the maiden; she will not read it.

Miss L. Nor shall you; [*Snatches the letter.*] I'll tear it in a thousand pieces, and scatter it, as I will the hopes of all those that any of you shall recommend to me. [*Tears the letter.*]

Sir P. Ha! Right woman, 'faith!

Col. F. Excellent woman! [*Aside.*]

Obad. Friend, thy garb savoureth too much of the vanity of the age for my approbation; nothing that resembleth Philip Modelove shall I love; mark that,—therefore, friend Philip, bring no more of thy own apes under my roof.

Sir P. I am so entirely a stranger to the monsters of thy breed, that I shall bring none of them, I am sure.

Col. F. I am likely to have a pretty task by the time I have gone through them all; but she's a city worth taking, and 'egad I'll carry on the siege: if I can but blow up the outworks, I fancy I am pretty secure of the town. [*Aside.*]

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Toby Periwinkle and Thomas Trade-love demand to see thee. [*To SIR PHILIP.*]

Sir P. Bid them come up. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

Miss L. Deliver me from such an inundation of noise and nonsense. Oh, Feignwell! whatever thy contrivance be, prosper it, heaven.

[*Exit.*]

Sir P. Sic transit gloria mundi!

Enter PERIWINKLE and TRADELOVE.

These are my brother guardians, Mr. Feignwell. Pr'ythee, observe the creatures.

[*Aside to COLONEL FEIGNWELL.*]

Trade. Well, Sir Philip, I obey your summons.

Per. Pray, what have you to offer for the good of Miss Lovely, Sir Philip?

Sir P. First, I desire to know what you intend to do with that lady? Must she be sent to the Indies for a venture—or live an old maid, and then be entered amongst your curiosities, and shown for a monster, Mr. Periwinkle?

Col. F. Humph, curiosities; that must be the virtuosos. [*Aside.*]

Per. Why, what would you do with her?

Sir P. I would recommend this gentleman to her for a husband, Sir—a person whom I have picked out from the whole race of mankind.

Obad. I would advise thee to shuffle him again with the rest of mankind; for I like him not.

Col. F. Pray, Sir, without offence to your formality, what may be your objections?

Obad. Thy person, thy manners, thy dress, thy acquaintance,—thy every thing, friend.

Sir P. You are most particularly obliging friend. Ha, ha!

Trade. What business do you follow, pray, Sir?

Col. F. Humph, by that question he must be the broker. [*Aside.*] Business, Sir! the business of a gentleman.

Trade. That is as much as to say, you dress fine, feed high, lie with every woman you like, and pay your surgeon's bills better than your tailor's or your butcher's.

Col. F. The court is much obliged to you, Sir, for your character of a gentleman.

Trade. The court, Sir! What would the court do without us citizens?

Sir P. Without your wives and daughters, you mean, Mr. Trade-love.

Per. Have you ever travelled, Sir?

Col. F. That question must not be answered now. [*Aside.*] In books I have, Sir.

Per. In books! That's fine travelling indeed!—Sir Philip, when you present a person I like, he shall have my consent to marry Miss Lovely; till when, your servant. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. I'll make you like me before I have done with you, or I am mistaken. [*Aside.*]

Trade. And when you can convince me that a beau is more useful to my country than a merchant, you shall have mine; till then, you must excuse me. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. So much for trade—I'll fit you too. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. In my opinion this is very inhuman treatment, as to the lady, Mr. Prim.

Obad. Thy opinion and mine happen to differ as much as our occupations, friend: business requireth my presence, and folly thine; and so I must bid thee farewell. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Here's breeding for you, Mr. Feignwell!—Gad take me.

Half my estate I'd give to see 'em bit.

Col. F. I hope to bite you all, if my plot hit.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Tavern.

COLONEL FEIGNWELL in an Egyptian dress, with SACKBUT.

Sack. A lucky beginning, colonel—you have got the old beau's consent.

Col. F. Ay, he's a reasonable creature; but the other three will require some pains. Shall I pass upon him, think you? 'Egad, in my mind, I look as antique as if I had been preserved in the ark.

Sack. Pass upon him! ay, ay, if you have assurance enough.

Col. F. I have no apprehension from that quarter; assurance is the cockade of a soldier.

Sack. Ay, but the assurance of a soldier differs much from that of a traveller—Can you lie with a good grace?

Col. F. As heartily, when my mistress is the prize, as I would meet the foe when my country called and king commanded: so don't you fear that part: if he don't know me again, I am safe.—I hope he'll come.

Sack. I wish all my debts would come as sure: I told him you had been a great traveller, had many valuable curiosities, and was a person of most singular taste: he seemed transported, and begged me to keep you till he came.

Col. F. Ay, ay, he need not fear my running away.—Let's have a bottle of sack, landlord; our ancestors drank sack.

Sack. You shall have it.

Col. F. And whereabouts is the trap-door you mentioned?

Sack. There's the conveyance, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. Now, if I should cheat all these roguish guardians, and carry off my mistress in triumph, it would be what the French call a grand *coup d'éclat*.—Odso! here comes Periwinkle.—Ah! deuce take this beard; pray Jupiter, it does not give me the slip, and spoil all.

Enter SACKBUT with wine, PERIWINKLE following.

Sack. Sir, this gentleman, hearing you have been a great traveller, and a person of fine speculation, begs leave to take a glass with you: he is a man of a curious taste himself.

Col. F. The gentleman has it in his face and garb; Sir, you are welcome.

Per. Sir, I honour a traveller and men of your inquiring disposition; the oddness of your habit pleases me extremely: 'tis very antique, and for that I like it.

Col. F. 'Tis very antique, Sir:—this habit once belonged to the famous Claudius Ptolemeus, who lived in the year one hundred and thirty-five.

Sack. If he keeps up to the sample, he shall lie with the devil for a bean-stack, and win it every straw. [*Aside.*]

Per. A hundred and thirty-five! why, that's prodigious now!—Well, certainly 'tis the finest thing in the world to be a traveller.

Col. F. For my part, I value none of the modern fashions a fig-leaf.

Per. No more don't I, Sir: I had rather be the jest of a fool than his favourite—I am laughed at here for my singularity.—This coat, you must know, Sir, was formerly worn by that ingenious and very learned person, Mr. John Tradescant, of Lambeth.

Col. F. John Tradescant! Let me embrace you, Sir—John Tradescant was my uncle, by my mother's side; and I thank you for the honour you do his memory; he was a very curious man indeed.

Per. Your uncle, Sir—Nay, then it is no won-

der that your taste is so refined; why you have it in your blood.—My humble service to you, Sir; to the immortal memory of John Tradescant, your never-to-be-forgotten uncle. [*Drinks.*]

Col. F. Give me a glass, landlord.

Per. I find you are primitive, even in your wine: Canary was the drink of our wise forefathers; 'tis balsamic, and saves the charge of 'pothecaries' cordials—Oh! that I had lived in your uncle's days! or rather, that he were now alive!—Oh! how proud he'd be of such a nephew!

Sack. Oh pox! that would have spoiled the jest. [*Aside.*]

Per. A person of your curiosity must have collected many rarities.

Col. F. I have some, Sir, which are not yet come ashore; as, an Egyptian idol.

Per. Pray what may that be?

Col. F. It is, Sir, a kind of an ape, which they formerly worshipped in that country: I took it from the breast of a female mummy.

Per. Ha, ha! our women retain part of their idolatry to this day; for many an ape lies on a lady's breast, ha, ha!

Sack. A smart old thief. [*Aside.*]

Col. F. Two tusks of an hippopotamus, two pair of Chinese nut-crackers, and one Egyptian mummy.

Per. Pray, Sir, have you never a crocodile?

Col. F. Humph! the boatswain brought one with a design to show it, but, touching at Rotterdam, and hearing it was no rarity in England, he sold it to a Dutch poet.—Lookye, Sir, do you see this little vial?

Per. Pray you, what is it?

Col. F. This is called *poluflosboio*.

Per. *Poluflosboio*!—It has a rumbling sound.

Col. F. Right, Sir; it proceeds from a rumbling nature—This water was part of those waves which bore Cleopatra's vessel, when she sailed to meet Antony.

Per. Well, of all that travelled, none had a taste like you.

Col. F. But here's the wonder of the world. This, Sir, is called *zona*, or *moros musphonon*: the virtues of this are inestimable.

Per. *Moros musphonon*! What in the name of wisdom can that be?—to me, it seems a plain belt.

Col. F. This girdle has carried me all the world over.

Per. You have carried it, you mean.

Col. F. I mean as I say.—Whenever I am girded with this, I am invisible! and by turning this little screw, can be in the court of the great mogul, the grand signior, and king George, in as little time as your cook can poach an egg.

Per. You must pardon me, Sir, I can't believe it.

Col. F. If my landlord pleases, he shall try the experiment immediately.

Sack. I thank you kindly, Sir; but I have no inclination to ride post haste to the devil.

Col. F. No, no, you sha'n't stir a foot; I'll only make you invisible.

Sack. But if you could not make me visible again.

Per. Come, try it upon me, Sir; I am not afraid of the devil nor all his tricks.—'Sbud, I'll stand 'em all.

Col. F. There, Sir, put it on.—Come, landlord,

you and I must face the east. [*They turn.*] Is it on, Sir?

Per. 'Tis on. [*They turn again.*]

Sack. Heaven protect me! where is he?

Per. Why here, just where I was.

Sack. Where, where, in the name of virtue? Ah, poor Mr. Periwinkle!—'Egad, look to't, you had best, Sir; and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burned for a wizard.

Col. F. Have patience, good landlord.

Per. But really don't you see me now?

Sack. No more than I see my grandmother, that died forty years ago.

Per. Are you sure you don't lie? Methinks I stand just where I did, and see you as plain as I did before.

Sack. Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

Col. F. Take off the girdle, Sir.

Sack. Ah, Sir, I am glad to see you with all my heart. [*He takes it off.*]

Per. This is very odd; certainly there must be some trick in't.—Pray, Sir, will you do me the favour to put it on yourself? [*Embraces him.*]

Col. F. With all my heart.

Per. But first I'll secure the door.

Col. F. You know how to turn the screw, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. Yes, yes—Come, Mr. Periwinkle, we must turn full east.

[*They turn; COLONEL sinks by the trap-door.*]

Col. F. 'Tis done; now turn. [*They turn.*]

Per. Ha! mercy upon me; my flesh creeps upon my bones.—This must be a conjurer, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. He's the devil, I think.

Per. Oh, Mr. Sackbut, why do you name the devil, when perhaps he may be at your elbow?

Sack. At my elbow! Marry, heaven forbid!

Col. F. Are you satisfied?

[*From under the Stage.*]
Per. Yes, Sir, yes—How hollow his voice sounds!

Sack. Yours seemed just the same—'Faith, I wish this girdle were mine, I'd sell wine no more. Harkye, Mr. Periwinkle, [*Takes him aside till the COLONEL rises again.*] if he would sell this girdle, you might travel with great expedition.

Col. F. But it is not to be parted with for money.

Per. I am sorry for't, Sir, because I think it the greatest curiosity I ever heard of.

Col. F. By the advice of a learned physiognomist in Grand Cairo, who consulted the lines in my face, I returned to England, where he told me I should find a rarity in the keeping of four men, which I was born to possess for the benefit of mankind: and the first of the four that gave me his consent, I should present him with this girdle.—Till I have found this jewel, I shall not part with the girdle.

Per. What can this rarity be? Didn't he name it to you?

Col. F. Yes, Sir: he called it a chaste, beautiful, unaffected woman.

Per. Pish! women are no rarities; women are the very gewgaws of the creation; playthings for boys, who when they write man they ought to throw aside.

Sack. A fine lecture to be read to a circle of ladies! [*Aside.*]

Per. What woman is there, dressed in all the

pride and foppery of the times, can boast of such a foretop as the cockatoo?

Col. F. I must humour him. [*Aside.*] Such a skin as the lizard?

Per. Such a shining breast as the humming-bird?

Col. F. Such a shape as the antelope?

Per. Or, in all the artful mixture of their various dresses, have they half the beauty of one box of butterflies?

Col. F. No; that must be allowed. For in part, if it were not for the benefit of mankind, I have nothing to do with them; for they are as in different to me as a sparrow or a flesh-fly.

Per. Pray, Sir, what benefit is the world to reap from this lady?

Col. F. Why, Sir, she is to bear me a son, who shall revive the art of embalming, and the old Roman manner of burying the dead; and for the benefit of posterity, he is to discover the longitude so long sought for in vain.

Per. 'Od! these are valuable things, Mr. Sackbut!

Sack. He hits it off admirably; and t'other swallows it like sack and sugar. [*Aside.*] Certainly this lady must be your ward, Mr. Periwinkle, by her being under the care of four persons.

Per. By the description, it should—'Egad, if I could get that girdle, I'd ride with the sun, and make the tour of the world in four-and-twenty hours. [*Aside.*] And you are to give that girdle to the first of the four guardians that shall give his consent to marry that lady, say you, Sir?

Col. F. I am so ordered, when I can find him.

Per. I fancy I know the very woman—her name is Anne Lovely.

Col. F. Excellent!—He said, indeed, that the first letter of her name was L.

Per. Did he really?—Well, that's prodigiously amazing, that a person in Grand Cairo should know any thing of my ward.

Col. F. Your ward!

Per. To be plain with you, Sir, I am one of those four guardians.

Col. F. Are you indeed, Sir? I am transported to find that the man who is to possess this moros musphonon is a person of so curious a taste—Here is a writing drawn up by that famous Egyptian, which if you will please to sign, you must turn your face full north, and the girdle is yours.

Per. If I live till the boy is born, I'll be embalmed, and sent to the Royal Society, when I die.

Col. F. That you shall, most certainly.

Enter DRAWER.

Draw. Here's Mr. Staytape, the tailor, inquires for you, colonel.

Col. F. Who do you speak to, you son of a whore?

Per. Ha! colonel.

Col. F. Confound the blundering dog! [*Aside.*]

Draw. Why to colonel—

Sack. Get you out, you rascal.

[*Kicks him out.*]

Draw. What the devil is the matter?

Col. F. This dog has ruined all my schemes, I see by Periwinkle's looks. [*Aside.*]

Per. How finely I should have been choused—Colonel, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your title before—it was pure ignorance,

'faith it was. Pray—hem—hem! Pray, colonel, what post had this learned Egyptian in your regiment?

Col. F. A pox of your sneer! [*Aside.*] I don't understand you, Sir.

Per. No, that's strange! I understand you, colonel—An Egyptian of Grand Cairo! ha, ha, ha! I am sorry such a well-invented tale should do you no more service. We old fellows can see as far into a millstone as them that pick it. I am not to be tricked out of my trust—mark that.

Col. F. The devil! I must carry it off; I wish I were fairly out. [*Aside.*] Lookye, Sir, you may make what jest you please, but the stars will be obeyed, Sir; and depend upon't I shall have the lady, and you none of the girdle. Now for Mr. Freeman's part of the plot. [*Aside; exit.*]

Per. The stars! ha, ha! No star has favoured you, it seems. The girdle! ha, ha, ha! none of your legerdmain tricks can pass upon me. Why, what a pack of trumpery has this rogue picked up—His pagod, polufosboio, his zonos, moros musphonons, and the devil knows what—But I'll take care—Ha, gone! Ay, 'twas time to sneak off. Soho! the house!

Enter SACKBUT.

Where is this trickster? Send for a constable; I'll have this rascal before the lord mayor; I'll Grand Cairo him, with a pox to him—I believe you had a hand in putting this imposture upon me, Sackbut.

Sack. Who, I, Mr. Periwinkle? I scorn it. I perceived he was a cheat, and left the room on purpose to send for a constable to apprehend him, and endeavoured to stop him when he went out—But the rogue made but one step from the stairs to the door, called a coach, leaped into it, and drove away like the devil, as Mr. Freeman can witness, who is at the bar, and desires to speak with you; he is this minute come to town.

Per. Send him in. [*Exit SACKBUT.*] What a scheme this rogue has laid! How I should have been laughed at, had it succeeded!

Enter FREEMAN, booted and spurred.

Mr. Freeman, I had like to have been imposed on by the veriest rascal—

Free. I am sorry to hear it—The dog flew for't: he had not 'scap'd me, had I been aware of him; Sackbut struck at him, but missed his blow, or he had done his business for him.

Per. I believe you never heard of such a contrivance, Mr. Freeman, as this fellow had found out.

Free. Mr. Sackbut has told me the whole story, Mr. Periwinkle; but now I have something to tell you of much more importance to yourself—I happened to lie one night at Coventry, and knowing your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, I paid him a visit, and, to my great surprise, found him dying.

Per. Dying!

Free. Dying, in all appearance; the servants weeping, the room in darkness; the 'pothecary, shaking his head, told me the doctors had given him over; and then there are small hopes, you know.

Per. I hope he has made his will—he always told me he would make me his heir.

Free. I have heard you say as much, and therefore resolved to give you notice. I should think

it would not be amiss if you went down to-morrow morning.

Per. It is a long journey, and the roads very bad.

Free. But he has a great estate, and the land very good—Think upon that.

Per. Why that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it. In the mean time, I give you many thanks for your civility, Mr. Freeman, and should be glad of your company to dine with me.

Free. I am obliged to be at Jonathan's Coffee-house at two, and now it is half an hour after one; if I despatch my business, I'll wait on you; I know your hour.

Per. You shall be very welcome, Mr. Freeman, and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL and SACKBUT.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! I have done your business, colonel; he has swallowed the bait.

Col. F. I overheard all, though I am a little in the dark. I am to personate a highwayman, I suppose—that's a project I am not fond of; for though I may fright him out of his consent, he may fright me out of my life when he discovers me, as he certainly must in the end.

Free. No, no; I have a plot for you without danger; but first we must manage Tradelove—Has the tailor brought your clothes?

Sack. Yes, pox take the thief.

Free. Well, well, no matter; I warrant we have him yet—But now you must put on the Dutch merchant.

Col. F. The deuce of this trading plot—I wish he had been an old soldier, that I might have attacked him in my own way, heard him fight over all the battles of the late war. But, for trade, by Jupiter, I shall never do it.

Sack. Never fear, colonel: Mr. Freeman will instruct you.

Free. You'll see what others do: the coffee-house will instruct you.

Col. F. I must venture, however—But I have a further plot in my head upon Tradelove, which you must assist me in, Freeman; you are in credit with him, I heard you say.

Free. I am, and will scruple nothing to serve you, colonel.

Col. F. Come along then. Now for the Dutchman—Honest Ptolemy, by your leave.

*Now must bob-wig and business come in play;
A thirty thousand pound girl leads the way.*

[*Exeunt*]

ACT IV.

*SCENE I.—JONATHAN'S Coffee-house in
'Change Alley.*

*Enter TRADELOVE and STOCK-JOBBERS, with
rolls of paper.*

I Stock. South-sea at seven-eighths; who buys?

Trade. Harkye, Gabriel, you'll pay the difference of that stock we transacted for t'other day?

Gab. Ay, Mr. Tradelove, here's a note for the money.

Trade. I would fain bite the spark in the browr coat: he comes very often into the alley, but never employs a broker.

Enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL and FREEMAN.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, your servant. Who is that gentleman?

Free. A Dutch merchant just come to England; but, harkye, Mr. Tradelove—I have a piece of news will get you as much as the French king's death did, if you are expeditious. [*Showing him a letter.*] Read there; I received it just now from one that belongs to the emperor's minister.

Trade. [*Reads.*] Sir,—As I have many obligations to you, I cannot miss any opportunity to show my gratitude: this moment my lord has received a private express, that the Spaniards have raised their siege from before Cagliari. If this proves of any advantage to you, it will answer both the ends and wishes of, Sir, your most obliged humble servant,

HENRICUS DUSSELDORP.

P. S. In two or three hours the news will be public.

May one depend upon this, Mr. Freeman?

[*Aside to FREEMAN.*]

Free. You may—I never knew this person send me a false piece of news in my life.

Trade. Sir, I am much obliged to you: 'egad, 'tis rare news—Who sells South-sea, for next week?

Stock. [*All together.*] I sell; I, I, I, I, I, I sell.

1 Stock. I'll sell five thousand for next week, at five eighths.

2 Stock. I'll sell ten thousand, at five eighths, for the same time.

Trade. Nay, nay; hold, hold; not all together, gentlemen: I'll be no bull; I'll buy no more than I can take: will you sell ten thousand pounds, at a half, for any day next week, except Saturday?

1 Stock. I'll sell it you, Mr. Tradelove.

[*FREEMAN whispers to one of the Gentlemen.*]

1 Gent. The Spaniards raised the siege of Cagliari? I don't believe one word of it.

[*Aside.*]

2 Gent. Raised the siege! as much as you have raised the Monument.

Free. 'Tis raised, I assure you, Sir.

2 Gent. What will you lay on't?

Free. What you please.

1 Gent. Why I have a brother upon the spot, in the emperor's service: I am certain, if there were any such thing, I should have had a letter.

2 Gent. I'll hold you fifty pounds 'tis false.

Free. 'Tis done.

2 Gent. I'll lay you a brace of hundreds upon the same.

Free. I'll take you.

Trade. I'll lay any man a brace of thousands the siege is raised.

Free. The Dutch merchant is your man to take in.

[*Aside to TRADELOVE.*]

Trade. Does he not know the news?

Free. Not a syllable; if he did he would bet a hundred thousand pounds as soon as one penny—he's plaguy rich, and a mighty man at wagers.

[*To TRADELOVE.*]

Trade. Say you so?—'Egad, I'll bite him, if possible—Are you from Holland, Sir?

Col. F. Ya, mynheer.

Trade. Had you the news before you came away?

Col. F. What believe you, mynheer?

Trade. What do I believe? Why I believe that the Spaniards have actually raised the siege of Cagliari.

Col. F. What duyvel's news is dat? 'Tis niet waer, mynheer—'tis no true, Sir.

Trade. 'Tis so true, mynheer, that I'll lay you two thousand pounds on it.

Col. F. Two duysend pound, mynheer, 'tis gadaen—dis gentleman sal hold de gelt.

[*Gives FREEMAN money.*]

Trade. With all my heart—this binds the wager.

Free. You have certainly lost, mynheer; the siege raised indeed.

Col. F. Ik gelyt niet, mynheer Freeman, ik sal ye dubbeld honden, if you please.

Free. I am let into the secret, therefore wont win your money.

Trade. Ha, ha, ha! I have snapped the Dutchman, 'faith, ha, ha! this is no ill day's work.—Pray, may I crave your name, mynheer?

Col. F. Myn naem, mynheer? myn naem is Jan Van Tintamtirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell.

Trade. Zounds, 'tis a damned long name; I shall never remember it—Myn Heer Van, Tim, Tim—What the devil is it?

Free. Oh! never heed: I know the gentleman, and will pass my word for twice the sum.

Trade. That's enough.

Col. F. You'll hear of me sooner than you wish, old gentleman, I fancy. [*Aside.*] You'll come to Sackbut's, Freeman?

[*Aside to FREEMAN.*]

Free. Immediately. [*Aside to the COLONEL.*]

Trade. Mr. Freeman, I give you many thanks for your kindness—

Free. I fear you'll repent when you know all.

[*Aside.*]

Trade. Will you dine with me?

Free. I am engaged at Sackbut's: adieu.

[*Exit.*]

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—The Tavern.

Enter FREEMAN and COLONEL FEIGNWELL.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! the old fellow swallowed the bait as greedily as a gudgeon.

Col. F. I have him, 'faith, ha, ha, ha! His two thousand pounds secure—If he would keep his money, he must part with the lady, ha, ha!

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Joy, joy, colonel! the luckiest accident in the world.

Col. F. What say'st thou?

Sack. This letter does your business.

Col. F. [*Reads.*] To OBADIAH PRIM, Hosier, near the Building called the Monument, in London.

Free. A letter to Prim! How came you by it?

Sack. Looking over the letters our post-woman brought, as I always do, to see what letters are directed to my house, (for she can't read, you must know,) I spied this, directed to Prim, so paid for it among the rest. I have given the old jade a pint of wine, on purpose to delay time, till you see if the letter be of any service; then I'll seal it up again, and tell her I took it by mistake.—I have read it, and fancy you'll like the project.—Read, read, colonel.

Col. F. [*Reads.*] Friend Prim, there is arrived from Pennsylvania, one Simon Pure, a leader of the faithful, who hath sojourned with

us eleven days, and hath been of great comfort to the brethren.—He intendeth for the quarterly meeting in London; I have recommended him to thy house. I pray thee treat him kindly, and let thy wife cherish him, for he's of a weakly constitution—he will depart from us the third day; which is all from thy friend in the faith,

AMINADAB HOLDFAST.

Ha, ha! excellent! I understand you, landlord: I am o personate this Simon Pure, am I not?

Sack. Don't you like the hint?

Col. F. Admirably well!

Free. 'Tis the best contrivance in the world, if the right Simon gets not there before you—

Col. F. No, no, the quakers never ride post; and suppose, Freeman, you should wait at the Bristol coach, that if you see any such person, you might contrive to give me notice—

Free. I will.

[Bell rings.

Sack. Coming, coming!

[Exit.

Free. Thou must despatch Periwinkle first—Remember his uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is an old bachelor of seventy-five—that he has seven hundred a year, most in abbey-land—that he was once in love with your mother; shrewdly suspected by some to be your father—That you have been thirty years his steward—and ten years his gentleman—remember to improve these hints.

Col. F. Never fear; let me alone for that—but what's the steward's name?

Free. His name is Pillage.

Col. F. Enough—Now for the country put.

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Zounds! Mr. Freeman, yonder is Trade-love in the damned'st passion in the world.—He swears you are in the house—he says you told him you were to dine here.

Free. I did so, ha, ha, ha! he has found himself bit already.

Col. F. The devil! he must not see me in this dress now.

Sack. I told him I expected you here, but you were not come yet.

Free. Very well—make you haste out, colonel, and let me alone to deal with him: where is he?

Sack. In the King's-head.

Free. Ay, ay, very well. Landlord, let him know I am come in—and now, Mr. Pillage, success attend you.

[Exit SACKBUT.

Col. F. Mr. Proteus rather—

*From changing shape, and imitating Jove,
I draw the happy omens of my love.*

*I'm not the first young brother of the blade,
Who made his fortune in a masquerade.*

[Exit.

Enter TRADELOVE.

Free. Zounds! Mr. Tradelove, we're bit, it seems.

Trade. Bit, do you call it, Mr. Freeman! I'm ruined.—Pox on your news.

Free. Pox on the rascal that sent it me—

Trade. Sent it you! Why Gabriel Skinfint has been at the minister's, and spoke with him; and he has assured him 'tis every syllable false; he received no such express.

Free. I know it: I this minute parted with my friend, who protested he never sent me any such letter.—Some roguish stock-jobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my money, that's cer-

tain: I wish I knew who he was; I'd make him repent it—I have lost three hundred pounds by it.

Trade. What signifies your three hundred pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand pounds to that Dutchman with a cursed long name, besides the stock I bought: the devil! I could tear my flesh—I must never show my face upon 'Change more;—for, by my soul, I can't pay it.

Free. I am heartily sorry for it! What can I serve you in? Shall I speak to the Dutch merchant, and try to get you time for the payment?

Trade. Time! Ad's heart! I shall never be able to look up again.

Free. I am very much concerned that I was the occasion, and wish I could be an instrument of retrieving your misfortunes; for my own, I value it not. Adso, a thought comes into my head, that, well improved, may be of service.

Trade. Ah! there's no thought can be of any service to me, without paying the money or running away.

Free. How do ye know? What do you think of my proposing Miss Lovely to him? He is a single man—and I heard him say he had a mind to marry an English woman—nay, more than that, he said somebody told him you had a pretty ward—he wished you had betted her instead of your money.

Trade. Ay, but he'd be hanged before he'd take her instead of the money: the Dutch are too covetous for that; besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose.

Free. So much the better; you may venture to give him your consent, if he'll forgive you the wager. It is not your business to tell him that your consent will signify nothing.

Trade. That's right, as you say; but will he do it, think you?

Free. I can't tell that; but I'll try what I can do with him.—He has promised to meet me here an hour hence; I'll feel his pulse, and let you know. If I find it feasible, I'll send for you; if not, you are at liberty to take what measures you please.

Trade. You must extol her beauty, double her portion, and tell him I have the entire disposal of her, and that she can't marry without my consent—and that I am a covetous rogue, and will never part with her without a valuable consideration.

Free. Ay, ay, let me alone for a lie at a pinch.

Trade. 'Egad, if you can bring this to bear, Mr. Freeman, I'll make you whole again: I'll pay the three hundred pounds you lost with all my soul.

Free. Well, I'll use my best endeavours.—Where will you be?

Trade. At home: pray heaven you prosper!—If I were but the sole trustee now, I should not fear it.

Free. Ha, ha, ha!—he has it.

[Exit.
[Exit.

SCENE III.—PERIWINKLE'S House.

Enter PERIWINKLE on one side, a FOOTMAN on the other.

Foot. A gentleman from Ccventry inquires for you, Sir.

Per. From my uncle, I warrant you: bring him up.—This will save me the trouble, as well as the expense, of a journey.

Enter COLONEL, as MR. PILLAGE.

Col. F. Is your name Periwinkle, Sir?

Per. It is, Sir.

Col. F. I am sorry for the message I bring.—My old master, whom I served these forty years, claims the sorrow due from a faithful servant to an indulgent master.

[*Weeps.*]

Per. By this I understand, Sir, my uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is dead.

Col. F. He is, Sir, and has left you heir to seven hundred a year, in as good abbey-land as ever paid Peterpence to Rome. I wish you long to enjoy it, but my tears will flow when I think of my benefactor.—[*Weeps.*] Ah! he was a good man—he has not left many of his fellows, the poor lament him sorely.

Per. I pray, Sir, what office bore you?

Col. F. I was his steward, Sir.

Per. I have heard him mention you with much respect: your name is—

Col. F. Pillage, Sir.

Per. Ay, Pillage, I do remember he called you Pillage. Pray, Mr. Pillage, when did my uncle die?

Col. F. Monday last, at four in the morning. About two he signed his will, and gave it into my hands, and strictly charged me to leave Coventry the moment he expired; and deliver it to you with what speed I could; I have obeyed him, Sir, and there is the will. [*Gives it to PERIWINKLE.*]

Per. 'Tis very well; I'll lodge it in the Commons.

Col. F. There are two things which he forgot to insert, but charged me to tell you, that he desired you'd perform them as readily as if you had found them written in the will, which is to remove his corpse, and bury him by his father, at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and to give all his servants mourning.

Per. That will be a considerable charge; a pox of all modern fashions. [*Aside.*] Well! it shall be done, Mr. Pillage. I will agree with one of death's fashion-mongers, called an undertaker, to go down, and bring up the body.

Col. F. I hope, Sir, I shall have the honour to serve you in the same station I did your worthy uncle: I have not many years to stay behind him, and would gladly spend them in the family, where I was brought up.—[*Weeps.*]—He was a kind and tender master to me.

Per. Pray don't grieve, Mr. Pillage, you shall hold your place, and every thing else which you held under my uncle.—You make me weep to see you so concerned. [*Weeps.*] He lived to a good old age, and we are all mortal.

Col. F. We are so, Sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign this lease: you'll find, Sir Toby has taken particular notice of it in his will—I could not get it time enough from the lawyer, or he had signed it before he died.

[*Gives him a Paper.*]

Per. A lease! for what?

Col. F. I rented a hundred a year farm from Sir Toby upon lease, which lease expires at Lady-day next. I desire to renew for twenty years—that's all, Sir.

Per. Let me see. [*Looks over the lease.*] Very well—Let me see what he says in his will about it. [*Lays the lease upon the table, and looks on the will.*] Ho, here it is—*The farm lying—now in possession of SAMUEL PILLAGE—suffer him*

to renew his lease—at the same rent.—Very well, Mr. Pillage, I see my uncle does mention it, and I'll perform his will.—Give me the lease.—[*COLONEL gives it him, he looks upon it, and lays it upon the table.*] Pray you step to the door, and call for pen and ink, Mr. Pillage.

Col. F. I have a pen and ink in my pocket, Sir, [*Pulls out an ink-horn.*] I never go without that.

Per. I think it belongs to your profession.—[*He looks upon the pen while the COLONEL changes the lease and lays down the contract.*] I doubt this is but a sorry pen, though it may serve to write my name. [*Writes.*]

Col. F. Little does he think what he signs. [*Aside.*]

Per. There is your lease, Mr. Pillage. [*Gives him the paper.*] Now I must desire you to make what haste you can down to Coventry, and take care of every thing, and I'll send down the undertaker for the body; do you attend it up, and whatever charges you are at I'll repay you.

Col. F. You have paid me already, I thank you, Sir. [*Aside.*]

Per. Will you dine with me?

Col. F. I would rather not: there are some of my neighbours whom I met as I came along, who leave the town this afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad of their company down.

Per. Well, well, I won't detain you. I will give orders about mourning. [*Exit COLONEL.*] Seven hundred a year! I wish he had died seventeen years ago:—what a valuable collection of rarities might I have had by this time!—I might have travelled over all the known parts of the globe, and made my own closet rival the Vatican at Rome—Odsso, I have a good mind to begin my travels now—let me see—I am but sixty: my father, grandfather, and great grandfather, reached ninety odd; I have almost forty years good: let me consider! what will seven hundred a year amount to in—ay; in thirty years, I say but thirty—thirty times seven is seven times thirty—that is—just twenty-one thousand pounds—'tis a great deal of money—I may very well reserve sixteen hundred of it for a collection of such rarities as will make my name famous to posterity—I would not die like other mortals, forgotten in a year or two, as my uncle will be—No,

*With nature's curious works I'll raise my fame,
That men till doomsday may repeat my name.*

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—A Tavern.

FREEMAN and TRADELOVE over a bottle.

Trade. Come, Mr. Freeman, here's mynheer Jan, Van, Tim, Tam, Tam,—I shall never think of that Dutchman's name.

Free. Mynheer Jan Van Tintamtirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell.

Trade. Ay, Heer Van Feignwell: I never heard such a confounded name in my life—here's his health, I say.

Free. With all my heart.

Trade. Faith, I never expected to have found so generous a thing in a Dutchman.

Free. As soon as I told him your circumstances, he replied, he would not be the ruin of any man for the world—and immediately made this proposal himself. Let him take what time he

will for the payment, said he; or, if he'll give me his word, I'll forgive him the debt.

Trade. Well, Mr. Freeman, I can but thank you. 'Egad, you have made a man of me again! and if ever I lay a wager more, may I rot in jail.

Free. I assure you, Mr. Tradelove, I was very much concerned, because I was the occasion, though very innocently, I protest.

Trade. I dare swear you was, Mr. Freeman.

Enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL, dressed as a Dutch merchant.

Col. F. Ha, mynheer Tradelove, Ik been soory voor your troubles—maer Ik sal you easie maken, Ik will de gelt die hebben—

Trade. I shall for ever acknowledge the obligation, Sir.

Free. But you understand upon what condition, Mr. Tradelove; Miss Lovely.

Col. F. Ya, de frow sal al te regt setten, mynheer.

Trade. With all my heart, mynheer; you shall have my consent to marry her freely.

Free. Well then, as I am a party concerned between you, mynheer Jan Van Tintamtirélereletta Heer Van Feignwell shall give you a discharge of your wager under his own hand—and you shall give him your consent to marry Miss Lovely under yours—that is the way to avoid all manner of disputes hereafter.

Col. F. Ya, weeragtig.

Trade. Ay, ay, so it is, Mr. Freeman: I'll give it under mine this minute. [*Sits down to write.*]

Col. F. And so Ik sal. [*Does the same.*]

Free. So ho, the house!

Enter DRAWER.

Bid your master come up—I'll see there be witness enough to the bargain. [*Aside.*]

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Do you call, gentlemen?

Free. Ay, Mr. Sackbut, we shall want your hand here.

Trade. There, mynheer, there's my consent as amply as you can desire; but you must insert your own name, for I know not how to spell it: I have left a blank for it.

[*Gives the COLONEL a paper.*]

Col. F. Ya, Ik sal dat well doen—

Free. Now, Mr. Sackbut, you and I will witness it. [*They write.*]

Col. F. Daer, mynheer Tradelove, is your discharge. [*Gives him a paper.*]

Trade. Be pleased to witness this receipt too, gentlemen.

[*FREEMAN and SACKBUT put their hands.*]

Free. Ay, ay, that we will.

Col. F. Well, mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most myn voorsprach te de frow syn.

Free. He means you must recommend him to the lady—

Trade. That I will, and to the rest of my brother guardians.

Col. F. Wat voor, de duyvel heb you meer guardians?

Trade. Only three, mynheer.

Col. F. What donder heb ye myn betrocken, mynheer?—Had Ik dat gewoeten, Ik soude eaven met you geweest syn.

Sack. But Mr. Tradelove is the principal, and he can do a great deal with the rest, Sir.

Free. And he shall use his interest, I promise you, mynheer.

Trade. I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, mynheer; and if you please, I'll introduce you to the lady.

Col. F. Well, dat is waer—Maer ye must first spreken of myn te de frow, and to oudere gentlemen.

Free. Ay, that's the best way—and then I and the Heer Feignwell will meet you there.

Trade. I will go this moment, upon honour. Your most obedient humble servant. My speaking will do you little good, mynheer: ha, ha! we have bit you, faith: ha, ha!

Well—my debt's discharg'd, and as for Nan, He has my consent—to get her, if he can. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. Ha, ha, ha! this was a masterpiece of contrivance, Freeman.

Free. He hugs himself with his supposed good fortune, and little thinks the luck's on our side! But come, pursue the fickle goddess, while she's in the mood—Now for the quaker.

Col. F. That's the hardest task.

Of all the counterfeits perform'd by man, A soldier makes the simplest puritan.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in PRIM'S House.

MRS. PRIM and MISS LOVELY, in Quaker's dresses, meeting.

Mrs. P. So, now I like thee, Anne: art thou not better without thy monstrous hoop-coat and patches? If heaven should make thee so many black spots upon thy face, would it not fright thee, Anne?

Miss L. If it should turn you inside outward, and show all the spots of your hypocrisy, 'twould fright me worse!

Mrs. P. My hypocrisy! I scorn thy words, Anne: I lay no baits.

Miss L. If you did, you'd catch no fish.

Mrs. P. Well, well, make thy jests—but I'd have thee to know, Anne, that I could have catched as many fish (as thou call'st them) in my time, as ever thou didst with all thy fooltraps about thee.

Miss L. Is that the reason of your formality, Mrs. Prim? Truth will out: I ever thought, indeed, there was more design than godliness in the pinched cap.

Mrs. P. Go, thou art corrupted with reading lewd plays, and filthy romances—Ah! I wish thou art not already too familiar with the wicked ones.

Miss L. Too familiar with the wicked ones! Pray, no more of those freedoms, Madam—I am familiar with none so wicked as yourself—How dare you thus talk to me! you, you, you, unworthy woman, you. [*Bursts into tears.*]

Enter TRADELOVE.

Trade. What, in tears, Nancy? What have you done to her, Mrs. Prim, to make her weep?

Miss L. Done to me! I admire I keep my senses among you; but I will rid myself of your tyranny, if there be either law or justice to be had. I'll force you to give me up my liberty.

Mrs. P. Thou hast more need to weep for thy sins, Anne—Yea, for thy manifold sins.

Miss L. Don't think that I'll be still the fool which you have made me. No, I'll wear what I please—go when and where I please—and keep what company I think fit, and not what you shall direct—I will.

Trade. For my part, I do think all this very reasonable, Miss Lovely; 'tis fit you should have your liberty, and for that very purpose I am come.

Enter PERIWINKLE and OBADIAH PRIM, with a letter in his hand.

Per. I have bought some black stockings of your husband, Mrs. Prim, but he tells me the glover's trade belongs to you; therefore, I pray you look me out five or six dozen of mourning gloves, such as are given at funerals, and send them to my house.

Obad. My friend, Periwinkle, has got a good windfall to-day—seven hundred a year.

Mrs. P. I wish thee joy of it, neighbour.

Trade. What, is Sir Toby dead then?

Per. He is! You'll take care, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Yea, I will, neighbour.

Obad. This letter recommendeth a speaker; 'tis from Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol: peradventure he will be here this night; therefore, Sarah, do thou take care for his reception.

[*Gives her the letter.*]

Mrs. P. I will obey thee. [*Exit.*]

Obad. What art thou in the dumps for, Anne?

Trade. We must marry her, Mr. Prim.

Obad. Why truly, if we could find a husband worth having, I should be as glad to see her married as thou wouldst neighbour.

Per. Well said, there are but few worth having.

Trade. I can recommend you a man now, that I think you can none of you have an objection to!

Enter SIR PHILIP MODELOVE.

Per. You recommend? Nay, whenever she marries, I'll recommend the husband—

Sir P. What, must it be a whale, or a rhinoceros, Mr. Periwinkle? ha, ha, ha!

Per. He shall be none of the fops at your end of the town, with full perukes and empty skulls,—nor yet any of our trading gentry, who puzzle the heralds to find arms for their coaches. No, he shall be a man famous for travels, solidity, and curiosity—one who has searched into the profundity of nature! When heaven shall direct such a one, he shall have my consent, because it may turn to the benefit of mankind.

Miss L. The benefit of mankind! What, would you anatomize me?

Sir P. Ay, ay, Madam, he would dissect you.

Trade. Or, pore over you through a microscope, to see how your blood circulates from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot—ha, ha! but I have a husband for you, a man that knows how to improve your fortune; one that trades to the four corners of the globe.

Miss L. And would send me for a venture per-haps.

Trade. One that will dress you in all the pride of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—a Dutch merchant, my girl.

Sir P. A Dutchman! ha, ha! there's a husband for a fine lady.—Ya frow, will you meet myn slapen—ha, ha! he'll learn you to talk the language of the hogs, Madam, ha, ha!

Trade. He'll teach you that one merchant is

of more service to a nation than fifty coxcombs. 'Tis the merchant makes the belle. How would the ladies sparkle in the box, without the merchant? the Indian diamond! the French brocade! the Italian fan! the Flanders lace! the fine Dutch holland! how would they vent their scandal over the teatables? and where would your beaux have Champagne to toast their mistresses, were it not for the merchant?

Obad. Verily, neighbour Tradelove, thou dost waste thy breath about nothing—All that thou hast said tendeth only to debauch youth, and fill their heads with the pride and luxury of this world.—The merchant is a very great friend to Satan, and sendeth as many to his dominions as the Pope.

Per. Right; I say, knowledge makes the man.

Obad. Yea, but not thy kind of knowledge—it is the knowledge of truth—Search thou for the light within, and not for baubles, friend.

Miss L. Ah, study your country's good, Mr. Periwinkle, and not her insects.—Rid you of your homebred monsters, before you fetch any from abroad.—I dare swear you have maggots enough in your own brain to stock all the virtuosos in Europe with butterflies.

Sir P. By my soul, Miss Nancy's a wit.

Obad. That is more than she can say of thee, friend.—Lookye, 'tis in vain to talk; when I meet a man worthy of her, she shall have my leave to marry him.

Miss L. Provided he be of the faithful—Was there ever such a swarm of caterpillars to blast the hopes of a woman! [*Aside.*] Know this, that you contend in vain: I'll have no husband of your choosing, nor shall you lord it over me long.—I'll try the power of an English senate—Orphans have been redressed and wills set aside—and none did ever deserve their pity more.—O Feignwell! where are thy promises to free me from these vermin? Alas! the task was more difficult than he imagined!

*A harder task than what the poets tell
Of yore, the fair Andromeda befell;
She but one monster fear'd, I've four to fear,
And see no Perseus, no deliv'rer near.* [*Exit.*]

Enter SERVANT.

Obad. The woman is mad.

Sir P. So are you all, in my opinion. [*Exit.*]

Serv. [*Whispers to OBADIAH.*] One Simon Pure inquireth for thee. [*Exit.*]

Obad. Friend Tradelove, business requireth my presence.

Trade. Oh, I shan't trouble you—Pox take him for an unmannerly dog—However, I have kept my word with my Dutchman, and I'll introduce him too for all you.

Enter COLONEL, in a Quaker's habit.

Obad. Friend Pure, thou art welcome: how is it with friend Holdfast, and all friends in Bristol? Timothy Littleworth, John Slenderbrain, and Christopher Keepfaith?

Col. F. A goodly company! [*Aside.*] They are all in health, I thank thee for them.

Obad. Friend Holdfast writes me word, that thou camest lately from Pennsylvania: how do all friends there?

Col. F. What the devil shall I say? I know just as much of Pennsylvania as I do of Bristol.

[*Aside*]

Obad. Do they thrive?

Col. F. Yea, friend, the blessing of their good works fall upon them.

Enter MRS. PRIM and MISS LOVELY.

Obad. Sarah, know our friend Pure.

Mrs. P. Thou art welcome. [*He salutes her.*]

Col. F. Here comes the sum of all my wishes—How charming she appears even in that disguise!

[*Aside.*]

Obad. Why dost thou consider the maiden so attentively, friend?

Col. F. I will tell thee: about four days ago I saw a vision—This very maiden, but in vain attire, standing on a precipice, and heard a voice which called me by my name—and bid me put forth my hand and save her from the pit.—I did so, and methought the damsel grew unto my side.

Mrs. P. What can that portend?

Obad. The damsel's conversion—I am persuaded.

Miss L. That's false, I'm sure— [*Aside.*]

Obad. Wilt thou use the means, friend Pure?

Col. F. Means! what means? is she not thy daughter, already one of the faithful?

Mrs. P. No, alas! she's one of the ungodly.

Obad. Pray thee mind what this good man will say unto thee: he will teach thee the way thou shouldst walk, Anne.

Miss L. I know my way without his instruction: I hoped to have been quiet when once I had put on your odious formality here.

Col. F. Then thou wearest it out of compulsion, not choice, friend?

Miss L. Thou art in the right of it, friend—

Mrs. P. Art thou not ashamed to mimic the good man! Ah! thou stubborn girl.

Col. F. Mind her not; she hurteth not me—If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few points with her, that may perchance soften her stubbornness, and melt her into compliance.

Obad. Content: I pray thee put it home to her.—Come, Sarah, let us leave the good man with her.

Miss L. [*Catching hold of PRIM; he breaks loose; exeunt OBAD. and MRS. P.*] What, do you mean to leave me with this old enthusiastical canter? don't think, because I complied with your formality, to impose your ridiculous doctrine upon me.

Col. F. I pray thee, young woman, moderate thy passion.

Miss L. I pray thee, walk after thy leader, you will but lose your labour upon me.—These wretches will certainly make me mad!

Col. F. I am of another opinion! the spirit telleth me I shall convert thee, Anne.

Miss L. 'Tis a lying spirit, don't believe it.

Col. F. Say'st thou so? Why then thou shalt convert me, my angel.

[*Catching her in his arms.*]

Miss L. [*Shrieks.*] Ah! monster, hold off, or I'll tear thy eyes out.

Col. F. Hush! for heaven's sake—dost thou not know me? I am Feignwell.

Miss L. Feignwell!

Re-enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Oh, I'm undone! Prim here—I wish with all my soul I had been dumb.

Obad. What is the matter? why didst thou shriek out, Anne?

Miss L. Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again cry murder, thieves, or any thing, to drown the noise of that eternal babbler, if you leave me with him any longer.

Obad. Was that all? Fie, fie, Anne.

Col. F. No matter, I'll bring down her stomach, I'll warrant thee—Leave us, I pray thee?

Obad. Fare thee well. Verily, I was afraid the flesh had got the better of the spirit. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. My charming lovely woman!

[*Embraces her.*]

Miss L. What meanest thou by this disguise, Feignwell?

Col. F. To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy promise.

Miss L. Make me mistress of my fortune, and make thy own conditions.

Col. F. This night shall answer all my wishes.—See here I have the consent of three of thy guardians already, doubt not but Prim will make the fourth. [*OBADIAH listening.*]

Obad. I would gladly hear what arguments the good man useth to bend her. [*Aside.*]

Miss L. Thy words give me new life, methinks.

Obad. What do I hear?

Miss L. Thou best of men, heaven meant to bless me sure, when I first saw thee.

Obad. He hath mollified her; O wonderful conversion!

Col. F. [*Softly.*] Ha! Prim listening.—No more, my love, we are observed: seem to be edified, and give 'em hopes that thou wilt turn quaker, and leave the rest to me. [*Aloud.*] I am glad to find that thou art touched with what I said unto thee, Anne; another time I will explain the other article unto thee: in the meanwhile, be thou dutiful to our friend Prim.

Miss L. I shall obey thee in every thing.

[*OBADIAH comes forward.*]

Obad. Oh, what a prodigious change is here! thou hast wrought a miracle, friend! Anne, how dost thou like the doctrine he hath preached?

Miss L. So well, that I could talk to him for ever, methinks—I am ashamed of my former folly, and ask your pardon.

Col. F. Enough, enough, that thou art sorry: he is no pope, Anne.

Obad. True, I am no pope, Anne. Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, friend: will it please thee to walk into the next room, and refresh thyself?—Come, take the maiden by the hand.

Col. F. We will follow thee.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. There is another Simon Pure, inquireth for thee, master.

Col. F. The devil there is. [*Aside.*]

Obad. Another Simon Pure! I do not know him, is he any relation of thine?

Col. F. No, friend, I know him not.—Fox take him: I wish he were in Pennsylvania again, with all my soul. [*Aside.*]

Miss L. What shall I do?

Obad. Bring him up.

Col. F. Humph! then one of us must go down, that's certain.—Now, impudence assist me.

[*Aside.*]

Enter SIMON PURE.

Obad. What is thy will with me, friend?

Simon. Didst thou not receive a letter from Aminadab Holdfast, of Bristol, concerning one Simon Pure?

Obad. Yes, and Simon Pure is already here, friend.

Col. F. And Simon Pure will stay here, friend, if it be possible. [Aside.]

Simon. That's an untruth, for I am he.

Col. F. Take thou heed, friend, what thou dost say: I do affirm that I am Simon Pure.

Simon. Thy name may be Pure, friend, but not that Pure.

Col. F. Yea, that Pure which my good friend, Aminadab Holdfast, wrote to my friend Prim about: the same Simon Pure that came from Pennsylvania, and sojourned in Bristol eleven days: thou wouldst not take my name from me, wouldst thou?—till I have done with it. [Aside.]

Simon. Thy name! I am astonished!

Col. F. At what? at thy own assurance?

[Going up to him, SIMON PURE starts back.]

Simon. Avaunt, Satan, approach me not: I defy thee, and all thy works.

Miss L. Oh, he'll out-cant him.—Undone, undone for ever. [Aside.]

Col. F. Hark thee, friend, thy sham will not take—Don't exert thy voice, thou art too well acquainted with Satan to start at him, thou wicked reprobate—What can thy design be here?

Enter a SERVANT, who gives PRIM a letter.

Obad. One of these must be a counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

Col. F. What can that letter be?

Simon. Thou must be the devil, friend, that's certain; for no human power can speak so great a falsehood.

Obad. This letter sayeth that thou art better acquainted with that prince of darkness, than any here.—Read that, I pray thee, Simon.

[Gives it to the COLONEL.]

Col. F. [Reads.] *There is a design formed to rob your house this night, and cut your throat; and for that purpose there is a man disguised like a quaker, who is to pass for one Simon Pure: the gang, whereof I am one, though now resolved to rob no more, has been at Bristol: one of them came in the coach with the quaker, whose name he hath taken; and, from what he hath gathered from him, formed that design, and did not doubt that he should impose so far upon you as to make you turn out the real Simon Pure, and keep him with you. Make the right use of this.*

Excellent well!

Adieu.

Obad. Dost thou hear this?

[To SIMON PURE.]

Simon. Yea, but it moveth me not; that doubtless is the impostor.

[Pointing at the COLONEL.]

Col. F. Ah! thou wicked one—now I consider thy face, I remember thou didst come up in the leathern conveniency with me—thou hadst a black bob-wig on, and a brown camel coat with brass buttons.—Canst thou deny it, ha?

Simon. Yes, I can, and with a safe conscience, too, friend.

Obad. Verily, friend, thou art the most impudent villain I ever saw.

Miss L. Nay, then, I'll have a fling at him.

[Aside.] I remember the face of this fellow at

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Bath—Ay, this is he that picked my lady Raffle's pocket in the grove—Don't you remember that the mob pumped you, friend?—This is the most notorious rogue—

Simon. What does provoke thee to seek my life? Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully?

Obad. She will do thee no hurt, nor thou shalt do me none; therefore get thee about thy business, friend, and leave thy wicked course of life, or thou mayest not come off so favourably every where. Simon, I pray thee, put him forth.

Col. F. Go, friend, I would advise thee, and tempt thy fate no more.

Simon. Yes, I will go; but it shall be to thy confusion; for I shall clear myself; I will return with some proofs that shall convince thee, Obadiah, that thou art highly imposed on. [Exit.]

Col. F. Then there will be no staying for me, that's certain—what the devil shall I do?

[Aside.]

Obad. What monstrous works of iniquity are there in this world, Simon?

Col. F. Yea, the age is full of vice—'Sdeath, I am so confounded I know not what to say.

[Aside.]

Obad. Thou art disordered, friend—art thou not well?

Col. F. My spirit is greatly troubled, and something telleth me, that though I have wrought a good work in converting this maiden, this tender maiden, yet my labour will be in vain; for the evil spirit fighteth against her: and I see, yea, I see with the eye of my inward man, that Satan will re-buffet her again, whenever I withdraw myself from her, and she will, yea, this very damsel will return again to that abomination from whence I have retrieved her, as it were, yea, as if it were out of the jaws of the fiend.

Miss L. I must second him. [Aside.] What meaneth this struggling within me? I feel the spirit resisteth the vanities of this world, but the flesh is rebellious, yea, the flesh—I greatly fear the flesh, and the weakness thereof—hum—

Obad. The maid is inspired. [Aside.] Prodigious! The damsel is filled with the spirit—Sarah.

Enter MRS. PRIM.

Mrs. P. I am greatly rejoiced to see such a change in our beloved Anne. I came to tell thee, that supper stayeth for thee.

Col. F. I am not disposed for thy food; my spirit longeth for more delicious meat!—fain would I redeem this maiden from the tribe of sinners, and break those cords asunder wherewith she is bound—hum—

Miss L. Something whispers in my ears, methinks—that I must be subject to the will of this good man, and from him only must hope for consolation—hum—It also telleth me that I am a chosen vessel to raise up seed to the faithful, and that thou must consent that we two be one flesh according to the word—hum—

Obad. What a revelation is here! This is certainly part of thy vision, friend; this is the maiden's growing unto thy side: ah! with what willingness should I give thee my consent, could I give thee her fortune too—but thou wilt never get the consent of the wicked ones.

Col. F. I wish I was sure of yours. [Aside.]

Obad. Thy soul rejoiceth, yea, rejoiceth, I say, to find the spirit within thee; for lo, it moveth

thee with natural agitation—yea, with natural agitation towards this good man—yea, it stirreth, as one may say—yea, verily I say, it stirreth up thy inclination—yea, as one would stir a pudding.

All. Hum!

Miss L. I see, I see! the spirit guiding of thy hand, good Obadiah Prim, and now behold thou art signing thy consent and now I see myself within thy arms, my friend and brother, yea, I am become bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh. [*Embracing him.*] Hum—

Mrs. P. The spirit hath greatly moved them both—friend Prim, thou must consent; there's no resisting of the spirit!

Obad. Fetch me the pen and ink, Sarah—and my hand shall confess its obedience to the spirit.

[*Exit Mrs. PRIM.*]

Col. F. I wish it were over. [*Aside.*]

Re-enter Mrs. PRIM, with pen and ink.

Miss L. I tremble lest this quaking rogue should return, and spoil all. [*Aside.*]

Obad. Here, friend, do thou write what the spirit prompteth, and I will sign it.

[*Col. F. sits down.*]

Col. F. [*Reads.*] *This is to certify to all whom it may concern, that I do freely give all my right and title in Anne Lovely to Simon Pure, and my full consent that she shall become his wife according to the form of marriage. Witness my hand.*

Obad. That's enough—give me the pen.

[*Signs it.*]

Enter BETTY, running to Miss LOVELY.

Betty. Oh! Madam, Madam, here's the quaking man again: he has brought a coachman, and two or three more.

Miss L. Ruined past redemption!

[*Aside to the COLONEL.*]

Col. F. No, no; one minute sooner had spoiled all; but now—here's company coming, friend, give me the paper.

[*Going to PRIM hastily.*]

Obad. Here it is, Simon; and I wish thee nappy with the maiden.

Miss L. 'Tis done; and now, devil, do thy worst.

Enter SIMON PURE, COACHMAN, and others.

Simon. Look thee, friend, I have brought these people to satisfy thee that I am not the impostor which thou didst take me for: this is the man that did drive the leathern conveyency, and brought me from Bristol—and this is—

Col. F. Look ye, friend, to save the court the trouble of examining witnesses—I plead guilty, ha, ha!

Obad. How's this? Is not thy name Pure then?

Col. F. No, really, Sir: I only made bold with this gentleman's name—but here I give it up safe and sound: it has done the business I had occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own, which shall be at his service upon the same occasion at any time.—Ha, ha, ha!

Simon. Oh! the wickedness of the age!

[*Exit COACHMAN, &c.*]

Obad. I am struck dumb with thy impudence, Anne; thou hast deceived me—and perchance undone thyself.

Mrs. P. Thou art a dissembling baggage, and shame will overtake thee. [*Exit.*]

Simon. I am grieved to see thy wife so much troubled: I will follow and console her. [*Exit*]

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Thy brother guardians inquire for thee here is another man with them.

Miss L. Who can that other man be?

[*To Col. F.*]

Col. F. 'Tis Freeman, a friend of mine, whom I ordered to bring the rest of the guardians here.

Enter Sir PHILIP MODELOVE, TRADELOVE, PERIWINKLE, and FREEMAN.

Free. Is all safe? Did my letter do you service?

Col. F. All, all's safe! ample service.

[*Aside.*]

Sir P. Miss Nancy, how dost do, child?

Miss L. Don't call me Miss, friend Philip; my name is Anne, thou knowest.

Sir P. What, is the girl metamorphosed?

Miss L. I wish thou wert so metamorphosed. Ah! Philip, throw off that gaudy attire, and wear the clothes becoming thy age.

Obad. I am ashamed to see these men.

[*Aside.*]

Sir P. My age! the woman is possessed.

Col. F. No, thou art possessed rather, friend.

Trade. Harkye, Miss Lovely, one word with you. [*Takes hold of her hand.*]

Col. F. This maiden is my wife, thanks to my friend Prim, and thou hast no business with her.

Trade. His wife! harkye, Mr. Freeman.

Per. Why you have made a very fine piece of work of it, Mr. Prim.

Sir P. Married to a quaker! thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan truly—there's a husband for a young lady!

Col. F. When I have put on my beau clothes, Sir Philip, you'll like me better—

Sir P. Thou wilt make a very scurvy beau—friend—

Col. F. I believe I can prove it under your hand, that you thought me a very fine gentleman in the Park t'other day, about thirty-six minutes after eleven; will you take a pinch, Sir Philip?—One of the finest snuff-boxes you ever saw.

[*Offers him snuff.*]

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoyed, 'faith I am, if thou be'st the gentleman—I own I did give my consent to the gentleman I brought here to-day—but whether this is he I can't be positive.

Obad. Canst thou not!—Now I think thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan.—Thou shallow-brained shuttlecock, he may be a pickpocket for aught thou dost know.

Per. You would have been two rare fellows to have been intrusted with the sole management of her fortune; would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Tradelove and myself shall take care of her portion.—

Trade. Ay, ay, so we will.—Didn't you tell me the Dutch merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. Freeman?

Free. I did so, and I am sure he will be here, if you'll have a little patience.

Col. F. What, is Mr. Tradelove impatient? Nay, then, ib ben gereet voor your, he be, Jan Van Tintamtirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell vergeeten!

Trade. Oh! pox of the name! what have you tricked me too, Mr. Freeman?

Col. F. Tricked, Mr. Tradelove! did not I give you two thousand pounds for your consent fairly? And now do you tell a gentleman he has tricked you?

Per. So, so, you are a pretty guardian, 'faith, to sell your charge: what, did you look upon her as part of your stock?

Obad. Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy knavery is found out, however—I confess the maiden over-reached me, and I had no sinister end at all.

Per. Ay, ay, one thing or other over-reached you all—but I'll take care he shall never finger a penny of her money, I warrant you—over-reached, quotha! Why I might have been over-reached too, if I had no more wit: I don't know but this very fellow may be him that was directed to me from Grand Cairo t'other day. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. F. The very same.

Per. Are you so, Sir? but your trick would not pass upon me.

Col. F. No, as you say, at that time it did not, that was not my lucky hour—but, harkye, Sir, I must let you into one secret—you may keep honest John Tradescant's coat on, for your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is not dead—so the charge of mourning will be saved, ha, ha, ha!—Don't you remember, Mr. Pillage, your uncle's steward? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. Not dead! I begin to fear I am tricked too.

Col. F. Don't you remember the signing of a lease, Mr. Periwinkle?

Per. Well, and what signifies that lease, if my uncle is not dead?—Ha! I am sure it was a lease I signed.—

Col. F. Ay, but it was a lease for life, Sir, and of this beautiful tenement, I thank you.

[*Takes hold of Miss L.*

Ommes. Ha, ha, ha! Neighbour's fare.

Free. So then, I find, you are all tricked, ha, ha!

Per. I am certain I read as plain a lease as ever I read in my life.

Col. F. You read a lease, I grant you; but you signed this contract. [*Showing a paper.*

Per. How durst you put this trick upon me, Mr. Freeman? Didn't you tell me my uncle was dying?

Free. And would tell you twice as much to serve my friend, ha, ha!

Sir P. What, the learned and famous Mr. Periwinkle choused too!—Ha, ha, ha!—I shall die with laughing, ha, ha, ha!

Trade. Well, since you have outwitted us all, pray you, what and who are you, Sir?

Sir P. Sir, the gentleman is a fine gentleman.—I am glad you have got a person, Madam, who understands dress and good breeding.—I was resolved she should have one of my choosing.

Trade. A beau! nay, then she is finely helped up.

Miss L. Why beaux are great encouragers of trade, Sir, ha, ha, ha!

Col. F. Look ye, gentlemen—I am the person who can give the best account of myself; and I must beg Sir Philip's pardon, when I tell him, that I have as much aversion to what he calls dress and breeding, as I have to the enemies of my religion. I have had the honour to serve his majesty, and headed a regiment of the bravest fellows that ever pushed bayonet in the throat of a Frenchman; and notwithstanding the fortune this lady brings me, whenever my country wants my aid, this sword and arm are at her service.

*And now, my fair, if thou'lt but deign to smile,
I meet a recompense for all my toil:*

Love and religion ne'er admit restraint,

And force makes many sinners, not one saint;

Still free as air the active mind does rove,

And searches proper objects for its love;

But that once fix'd, 'tis past the power of art

To chase the dear idea from the heart:

'Tis liberty of choice that sweetens life,

Makes the glad husband, and the happy wife

[*Exeunt.*

MIDAS:

AN ENGLISH BURLETTA,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY KANE O'HARA.

REMARKS.

The mythology of the ancients has furnished subjects for ridicule in this English burletta; but the deities of the heathens were almost too absurd for burlesque. The humour of this piece is considerable, though not always apparent on the stage; aided, however, by the powers of the orchestra, and the great vocal talent usually employed at our royal theatres, it never fails to please and attract. This piece was first performed as an opera, but found its appropriate place as an afterpiece.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at COVENT GARDEN, 1764.		DRURY LANE, 1804.	COVENT GARDEN, 1814
JUPITER,	<i>Mr. Legg.</i>	<i>Mr. Sedgwick.</i>	<i>Mr. Tinney.</i>
JUNO,	<i>Mr. Stephens.</i>	<i>Mrs. Harlowe.</i>	<i>Miss Logan.</i>
MOMUS,	<i>Mr. Dibdin.</i>		
APOLLO,	<i>Mr. Mattocks.</i>	<i>Mr. Kelly.</i>	<i>Mr. Sinclair.</i>
PAN,	<i>Mr. Dunstall.</i>	<i>Mr. Caulfield.</i>	<i>Mr. Emery.</i>
MARS,		<i>Mr. Rhodes.</i>	<i>Mr. Higman.</i>
BACCHUS,		<i>Mr. Jones.</i>	<i>Mr. Duruset.</i>
MERCURY,	<i>Mr. Baker.</i>	<i>Mr. Gibbons.</i>	<i>Mr. Heath.</i>
CUPID,		<i>Master West.</i>	<i>Master Wilson.</i>
MINERVA,		<i>Miss Saunders.</i>	<i>Mrs. Davies.</i>
VENUS,		<i>Miss Bristow.</i>	<i>Mrs. Norman</i>
BELLONA,		<i>Miss Williams.</i>	
LUNA,		<i>Miss Arne.</i>	
HEBE,		<i>Miss Watson.</i>	

MORTALS.

MIDAS,	<i>Mr. Shuter</i>	<i>Mr. Suett.</i>	<i>Mr. Liston.</i>
DAMAETAS,	<i>Mr. Fawcett.</i>	<i>Mr. Wathen.</i>	<i>Mr. Taylor.</i>
SILENO,	<i>Mr. Beard.</i>	<i>Mr. Dignum.</i>	<i>Mr. Fawcett.</i>
MYNIS,	<i>Miss Poitier.</i>	<i>Miss Tyrer.</i>	<i>Mrs. Liston.</i>
DAPHNE,	<i>Miss Miller.</i>	<i>Mrs. Mountain.</i>	<i>Mrs. Stirling.</i>
NYSA,	<i>Miss Hallam.</i>	<i>Mrs. Bland.</i>	<i>Miss Bolton.</i>
ORACLE,	<i>Mr. Waylen.</i>		

Graces, Attendants, Chorusses, &c. &c.

SCENE.—First on Mount Olympus, afterwards on the Pastures of Lydia.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The curtain rising discovers the Heathen Deities, seated amidst the clouds, in full council: they address JUPITER in the following Chorus.

Jove, in his chair,
Of the sky lord mavor,

With his nods
Men and gods
Keeps in awe;
When he winks,
Heaven shrinks;
When he speaks,
Hell squeaks;
Earth's globe is but his taw,

Cock of the school,
He bears despotic rule;
His word,
Though absurd,
Must be law.
Even Fate,
Though so great,
Must not prate;
His bald pate
Jove would cuff,
He's so bluff;
For a straw.
Cow'd deities,
Like mice in cheese,
To stir must cease,
Or gnaw.

Jup. [*Rising.*] Immortals, you have heard your
plaintive sov'reign,
And culprit Sol's high crimes. Shall we who
govern,
Brook spies upon us? Shall Apollo trample
On our commands? We'll make him an example.
As for you, Juno, curb your prying temper, or
We'll make you, to your cost know—we're your
emperor.

Junio. I'll take the law. [*To JUPITER.*] My
proctor, with a summons,
Shall cite you, Sir, t'appear at Doctors' Commons.
Jup. Let him—but first I'll chase from heaven
yon varlet.

Junio. What, for detecting you and your vile
harlot!

AIR.

Think not, lewd Jove,
Thus to wrong my chaste love;
For, spite of your rakehell's godhead,
By day and by night,
Juno will have her right,
Nor be, of dues nuptial, defrauded.
I'll ferret the haunts
Of your female gallants;
In vain you in darkness enclose them;
Your favourite jades
I'll plunge to the shades,
Or into cows metamorphose them.

Jup. Peace, termagant—I swear by Styx, our
thunder
Shall hurl him to the earth.—Nay, never wonder,
I've sworn it, gods.

Apol. Hold, hold, have patience,
Papa.—No bowels for your own relations!

AIR.

Be by your friends advised,
Too rash, too hasty dad!
Maugre your bolts and wise head,
The world will think you mad.
What worse can Bacchus teach men,
His roaring bucks, when drunk,
Than break the lamps, beat watchmen,
And stagger to some punk?

Jup. You saucy scoundrel—there, Sir.—Come,
disorder,
Down, Phoebus, down to earth, we'll hear no
further.
Roll, thunders, roll; blue lightnings flash about
him.

The blab shall find our sky can do without him.
[*Thunder and lightning.* JUPITER darts a
bolt at him; he falls;—JUPITER re-assumes

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his throne, and the Gods all ascend together
singing the initial chorus;
Jove in his chair, &c.

SCENE II.—A Champaign country, with a distant Village.

Violent storm of thunder and lightning. A shepherd sleeping in the field is roused by it, and runs away frightened, leaving his cloak, hat, and guitar, behind him.—APOLLO (as cast from Heaven) falls to the earth, with a rude shock, and lies for a while stunned; at length he begins to move, rises, advances, and looking forward, speaks.

Apol. Zooks! what a crush! a pretty, decent tumble!

Kind usage, Mr. Jove—sweet Sir, your humble. Well, down I am;—no bones broke, though sore pepper'd!

Here doom'd to stay.—What can I do?—turn shepherd— [*Puts on the cloak, &c.*

A lucky thought.—In this disguise, Apollo No more, but Pol the swain, some flock I'll follow. Nor doubt I, with my voice, guitar, and person, Among the nymphs to kick up some diversion.

Enter SILENO.

Sil. Whom have we here? a sightly clown!—and sturdy:

Hum—plays, I see, upon the hurdy-gurdy. Seems out of place—a stranger—all in tatters; I'll hire him—he'll divert my wife and daughters.—Whence, and what art thou, boy?

Pol. An orphan lad, Sir.
Pol is my name—a shepherd once my dad, Sir! I th' upper parts here—though not born to serving. I'll now take on, for faith I'm almost starving.

Sil. You've drawn a prize! th' lottery.—So have I too;

Why—I'm the master you could best apply to.

DUET.

Sil. Since you mean to hire for service,
Come with me, you jolly dog;
You can help to bring home harvest,
Tend the sheep, and feed the hog.

Fa, la, la
With three crowns, your standing wages,
You shall daintily be fed;
Bacon, beans, salt beef, cabbages,
Buttermilk, and oaten bread.

Fa, la, la.
Come, strike hands, you'll live in clover,
When we get you once at home;
And when daily labour's over,
We'll dance to your strum-strum.

Fa, la, la.
Pol. I strike hands, I take your offer,
Farther on I may fare worse;
Zooks, I can no longer suffer
Hungry guts and empty purse.

Fa, la, la
Sil. Do strike hands; 'tis kind I offer;
Pol. I strike hands, and take your offer;
Sil. Farther seeking you'll fare worse;
Pol. Farther on I may fare worse.
Sil. Pity such a lad should suffer,
Pol. Zooks, I can no longer suffer,
Sil. Hungry guts and empty purse,
Pol. Hungry guts and empty purse.

Fa, la, la
[*Exeunt, dancing and singing.*

SCENE III.—SILENO'S Farm-House.

*Enter DAPHNE and NYSA.**Daph.* But, Nysa, how goes on Squire Midas' courtship?*Nysa.* Your sweet Dametas, pimp to his great worship,
Brought me from him a purse;—but the conditions—

I've cur'd him I believe of such commissions.

Daph. The moon calf! This must blast him with my father.*Nysa.* Right. So we're rid of the two frights together.*Both.* Ha, ha, ha!—ha, ha, ha!*Enter MYNIS.**Mynis.* Hey-day! what mare's nest's found?—For ever grinning:
Ye rantipoles—is't thus you mind your spinning?

AIR.

Girls are known
To mischief prone,
If ever they be idle.
Who would rear
Two daughters fair
Must hold a steady bridle.
For here they skip,
And there they trip,
And this and that way sidle.
Giddy maids,
Poor silly jades,
All after men are gadding;
They flirt pell-mell,
Their train to swell,
To coxcomb, coxcomb adding:
To every fop
They're cock-a-hoop,
And set their mothers madding.

*Enter SILENO, introducing POL.**Sil.* Now, dame and girls, no more let's hear you grumble
At too hard toil;—I chanc'd just now to stumble
On this stout drudge—and hir'd him—fit for labour.

To 'em, lad—then he can play, and sing, and caper.

Mynis. Fine rubbish to bring home; a strolling thrummer!What art thou good for? speak, thou ragged number!
[To *Pol.*]*Nysa.* Mother, for shame—*Mynis.* Peace, saucebox, or I'll maul you.*Pol.* Goody, my strength and parts you under-value,

For his or your work, I am brisk and handy,

Daph. A sad cheat else—*Mynis.* What you, you jack-a-dandy?

AIR.

Pol. Pray, goody, please to moderate the rantour of your tongue:

Why flash those sparks of fury from your eyes?

Remember, when the judgment's weak,
the prejudice is strong:

A stranger why will you despise?

Ply me,

Try me,

Prove ere you deny me,

If you cast me
Off, you blast me
Never more to rise.

Pray, goody, &c.

Mynis. Sirrah, this insolence deserves a drubbing.*Nysa.* With what sweet temper he bears all her snubbing!*Sil.* Oons, no more words.—Go, boy, and get your dinner. [Exit *Pol.*]

Fie, why so cross-grain'd to a young beginner?

Nysa. So modest!*Daph.* So genteel!*Sil.* [To *Mynis.*] Not pert, nor lumpish.*Mynis.* Would he were hang'd!*Nysa.* *Daph.* La! mother, why so frumpish!

QUARTETTO.

Nysa. Mamma, how can you be so ill-natur'd
To the gentle, handsome swain?*Daph.* To a lad so limb'd, so featur'd,
Sure 'tis cruel to give pain.
Sure 'tis cruel, &c.*Mynis.* Girls, for you, my fears perplex me,
I'm alarm'd on your account:*Sil.* Wife, in vain you tease and vex me,
I will rule, depend upon't.*Nysa.* Ah! ah!*Daph.* Mamma!*Nysa.* Mamma, how can you be so ill-natur'd?*Daph.* Ah, ah, to a lad so limb'd and featur'd?*Nysa.* To the gentle, handsome swain,*Daph.* Sure 'tis cruel to give pain;*Nysa.* Sure 'tis cruel to give pain;*Daph.* To the gentle, handsome swain.*Mynis.* Girls, for you my fears perplex me,
I'm alarm'd on your account.*Sil.* Wife, in vain you tease and vex me,
I will rule, depend upon't.*Nysa.* Mamma!*Mynis.* Pshaw! Pshaw!*Daph.* Papa!*Sil.* Ah! ah!*Daph.* Mamma, how can you be so ill-natur'd,*Sil.* Pshaw, pshaw, you must not be so ill-natur'd;*Nysa.* Ah, ah, to a lad so limb'd, so featur'd?*Daph.* To the gentle, handsome swain.*Sil.* He's a gentle, handsome swain.*Nysa.* Sure 'tis cruel to give pain.*Mynis.* 'Tis my pleasure to give pain.*Daph.* Sure 'tis cruel to give pain.*Sil.* He's a gentle, handsome swain.*Nysa.* To the gentle, handsome swain.*Mynis.* To your odious, fav'rite swain.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.—MIDAS' House.

*Enter MIDAS and DAMETAS.**Mid.* Nysa, you say, refus'd the guineas British,
Dam. Ah! please your worship—she is wondrous skittish.*Mid.* I'll have her, cost what 'twill. Odsbobs,
I'll force her—*Dam.* A halter—*Mid.* As for madam; I'll divorce her.—
Some favour'd lout incog. our bliss opposes.*Dam.* Ay, *Pol.* the hind, puts out of joint our noses.*Mid.* I've heard of that *Pol.*'s tricks, of his sly tampering,

To fling poor Pan, but soon I'll send him scampering.

'Sblood, I'll commit him—drive him to the gallows! Where is old Pan?

Dam. Tippling, Sir, at th' alehouse.

Mid. Run fetch him—we shall hit on some expedient.

To rout this Pol.

Dam. I fly; [*Going: returns.*] Sir, your obedient. [*Exit.*]

Mid. What boots my being squire,

Justice of peace, and quorum;

Churchwarden—knight o' the shire,

And custos rotulorum;

If saucy little Nysa's heart, rebellious,

My squireship slights, and hankers after fellows?

AIR.

Shall a paltry clown, not fit to wipe my shoes,
Dare my amours to cross?

Shall a peasant minx, when Justice Midas woos,
Her nose up at him toss?

No. I'll kidnap—then possess her:

I'll sell her Pol a slave, get mundungus in exchange:

So glut to the height of pleasure,

My love and my revenge.

No: I'll kidnap, &c. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—A Village Alehouse Door.

PAN is discovered sitting at a table, with a tankard, pipes, and tobacco before him; his bagpipes lying by him.

Pan. Jupiter wenches and drinks,

He rules the roast in the sky;

Yet he's a fool if he thinks

That he's as happy as I;

Juno rates him,

And grates him,

And leads his highness a weary life;

I have my lass,

And my glass,

And stroll a bachelor's merry life.

Let him fluster,

And bluster,

Yet cringe to his haridan's furbelow;

To my fair tulips,

I glue lips,

And clink the cannikin here below.

Enter DAMETAS.

Dam. There sits the old soaker, his pate troubling little

How the world wags, so he gets drink and vittle,—

Hoa, Master Pan—Gad you've trod on a thistle!

You may pack up your all, Sir, and go whistle.

The wenches have turn'd tail—to yon buck ranter:

Tickled by his guitar—they scorn your chanter.

AIR.

All round the maypole how they trot.

Hot

Pot,

And good ale have got;

Routing,

Shouting,

At you flouting,

Flouting,

Jeering,

And what not

There is old Sileno frisks like a mad

Lad,

Glad

To see us sad:

Cap'ring,

Vap'ring,

While Pol, scraping,

Coaxes

The lasses

As he did the dad.

Round about, &c.

Enter MYSTIS.

Mystis. O Pan! the devil to pay, both my sluts frantic!

Both in their tantrums, for yon cap'ring antic.

But I'll go seek 'em all—and if I find 'em,

I'll drive 'em—as if old Nick were behind 'em.

[*Going.*]

Pan. Soa, soa,—don't flounce;

Avast—disguise your fury.

Pol we shall trounce;

Midas is judge and jury.

AIR.

Mystis. Sure I shall run with vexation distracted,
To see my purposes thus counteracted!

This way, or that way, or which way soever,

All things run contrary to my endeavour.

Daughters projecting

Their ruin and shame,

Fathers neglecting

The care of their fame;

Nursing in bosom a treacherous viper;

Here's a fine dance—but 'tis he pays the piper.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—A Wood and Lawn near SILENO'S Farm.

A tender slow symphony: DAPHNE crosses, melancholy and silent; NYSA watching her.

Nysa. O ho; is it so—Miss Daphne in the dumps?

Mum—snug's the word—I'll lead her such a dance
Shall make her stir her stumps.

To all her secret haunts,

Like a shadow I'll follow and watch her;

And, faith, mamma shall hear on't if I catch her.

[*Retires.*]

Re-enter DAPHNE.

Daph. La; how my heart goes pit-a-pat; what thumping,
E'er since my father brought us home this burap-kin.

AIR.

He's as tight a lad to see to,

As e'er stept in leather shoe;

And what's better, he'll love me too,

And to him I'll prove true blue.

Though my sister cast a hawk's eye.

I defy what she can do;

He o'erlook'd the little doxy,

I'm the girl he means to woo.

Hither I stole out to meet him,

He'll no doubt my steps pursue;

If the youth prove true, I'll fit him;

If he's false—I'll fit him too.

Enter POL.

Pol. Think o' the devil—'tis said,
He's at your shoulder—
This wench was running in my head,
And pop—behold her.

AIR.

Lovely nymph, assuage my anguish:
At your feet a tender swain,
Prays you will not let him languish,
One kind look would ease his pain.
Did you know the lad who courts you,
He not long needs sue in vain:
Prince of song, of dance, of sports—you
Scarce will meet his like again.

Daph. Sir: you're such an olio
Of perfection in folio,
No damsel can resist you:
Your face so attractive,
Limbs so supple and active,
That, by this light,
At the first sight,
I could have run and kiss'd you.

AIR.

If you can caper, as well as you modulate,
With the addition of that pretty face,
Pan, who was held by our shepherds a god o'late,
Will be kick'd out, and you set in his place.
His beard so frowsy, his gestures so awkward are,
And his bagpipe has so drowsy a drone,
That if they find you, as I did, no backwarder,
You may count on all the girls as your own.
Mysis. [*From within.*] Pol, Pol, make haste,
come hither.

Pol. Death, what a time to call;
Oh! rot your old lungs of leather.

B'ye, Daph.
B'ye, Poll.

[*Exit POL; NYSA comes forward.*]

Nysa. Marry come up, forsooth,
Is't me, you forward vixen,
You choose to play your tricks on;
And could your liquorish tooth
Find none but my sweetheart to fix on?

Daph. Marry come up again,
Indeed, my dirty cousin!
Have you a right to every swain?

Nysa. Ay, though a dozen.

DUET.

Daph. My minikin Miss, do you fancy that Pol
Can ever be caught by an infant's doll?

Nysa. Can you, Miss Maypole, suppose he will
fall

In love with the giantess of Guildhall?

Daph. Pigmy elf,

Nysa. Colossus itself,

Both. You will lie till you're mouldy upon the
shelf.

Daph. You stump o'th' gutter, you hop o' my
thumb,
A husband for you must from Lilliput
come.

Nysa. You stalking steeple, you gawky stag,
Your husband must come from Brobdi-
gnag.

Daph. Sour grapes,

Nysa. Lead apes;

Both. I'll humble your vanity, Mistress Trapes.

Daph. Miss, your assurance,
Nysa. And, Miss, your high airs
Daph. Is past all endurance,
Nysa. Are at their last prayers.
Daph. No more of these freedoms, Miss Nysa,
I beg.

Nysa. Miss Daphne's conceit must be lower'd
a peg.

Daph. Poor spite!

Nysa. Pride hurt!

Daph. Liver white!

Nysa. Rare sport!

Daph. Do show your teeth, spitfire, do, but you
can't bite;

Nysa. This haughtiness soon will be laid in
the dirt.

Poor spite, &c.

Pride hurt, &c.

[*Exeunt; squabbling.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Grove.

Enter NYSA, followed by MIDAS.

Mid. Turn, tygress, turn: nay fly not—
I have thee at a why not.
How comes it, little Nysy,
That heart to me so icy
Should be to Pol like tinder,
Burn'd up to a very cinder?

Nysa. Sir, to my virtue ever steady:

Firm as a rock

I scorn your shock;

But why this attack?

A miss can you lack

Who have a wife already?

Mid. Ay, ay, there's the curse—but she is old
and sickly;

And would my Nysa grant the favour quickly.
Would she yield now—I swear by the lord Harry,
The moment madam's coffin'd—her I'll marry.

AIR.

O what pleasures will abound
When my wife is laid in ground!

Let earth cover her,

We'll dance over her,

When my wife is laid in ground.

Oh how happy should I be,

Would little Nysa pig with me!

How I'd mumble her,

Touze and tumble her,

Would little Nysa pig with me!

Nysa. Young birds alone are caught with chaff,
At your base scheme I laugh.

Mid. Yet take my vows.—

Nysa. I would not take your bond, Sir,—

Mid. Half my estate—

Nysa. No, nor the whole—my fond Sir. [*Exit.*]

Mid. Well, master Pol I'll tickle,

For him, at least, I have a rod in pickle:

When he's in limbo,

Not thus our hoity-toity miss

Will stick her arms a-kimbo.

Enter PAN.

Pan. So, 'squire, well met—I flew to know
your business.

Mid. Why, Pan, this Pol we must bring him
on his knees.

Pan. That were a feat indeed;—a feat to brag on.
Mid. Let's home—we'll there concert it as we wag on;
 I'll make him skip—
Pan. As St. George did the dragon. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Lawn before MIDAS' House.

Enter NYSA.

Nysa. Good lack! what is come o'er me!
 Daphne has stepp'd before me!
 Envy and love devour me,
 Pol dotes upon her phiz hard!
 'Tis that sticks in my gizzard.
 Midas appears now twenty times more hideous:
 Ah, Nysa, what resource?—a cloister.
 Death alive—yet thither must I run,
 And turn a nun,
 Prodigious!

AIR.

In these greasy old tatters
 His charms brighter shine:
 Then his guitar he clatters
 With tinkling divine:
 But my sister,
 Ah! he kiss'd her,
 And me he pass'd by;
 I'm jealous
 Of the fellow's
 Bad taste and blind eye. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—MIDAS' Parlour.

MIDAS, MYNIS, and PAN, discovered in consultation over a large bowl of punch, pipes, and tobacco.

Mid. Come, Pan, your toast—

Pan. Here goes our noble umpire.

Mysis. And Pol's defeat—I'll pledge it in a bumper.

Mid. Hang him, in every scheme that whelp has cross'd us.

Mysis. Sure he's the devil himself;

Pan. Or Doctor Faustus.

Mysis. Ah! 'squire—for Pan would you but stoutly stickle,

This Pol would soon be in a wretched pickle.

Pan. You reason right—

Mid. His toby I shall tickle.

Mysis. Look 'squire, I've sold my butter, here the price is

At your command, do but this job for Mysis.

Count 'em—six guineas and an old Jacobus,

Keep Pan, and shame that scape-grace coram nobis.

Mid. Goody, as 'tis your request,

I pocket this here stuff;

And as for that there peasant,

Trust me I'll work his buff.

At the musical struggle

I'll bully and juggle;

My award's

Your sure card;

'Blood, he shall fly his country—that's enough.

Pan. Well said, my lad of wax.

Mid. Let's end the tankard,

I have no head for business till I've drank hard.

Pan. Nor have my guts brains in them till they're addle,

When I'm most rocky, I best sit my saddle.

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Mid. Well, come, let's take one bouze, and roar a catch,
 Then part to our affairs.

Pan. A match.

Mysis. A match.

TRIO.

Mid. Master Pol

And his toll de roll loll,

I'll buffet away from the plain, Sir

Pan. And I'll assist

Your worship's fist

With all my might and main, Sir.

Mys. And I'll have a thump,

Though he is so plump,

And makes such a wounded racket.

Mid. I'll bluff,

Pan. I'll rough,

Mys. I'll huff,

Mid. I'll cuff,

All. And I'll warrant we pepper his jacket.

Mid. For all his cheats,

And wenching feats,

He shall rue on his knees 'em.

Or skip, by goles,

As high as Paul's,

Like ugly witch on besom,

Arraigned he shall be,

Of treason to me!

Pan. And I with my davy will back it,

I'll swear,

Mid. I'll snare,

Mys. I'll tear,

All. O rare!

And I'll warrant we pepper his jacket.

SCENE IV.—A Landscape.

Enter SILENO and DAMETAS, in warm argument.

Sil. My Daph, a wife for thee; the 'squire's base pander!

To the plantations sooner would I send her.

Dam. Sir, your good wife approv'd my offers.

Sil. Name her not, hag of Endor,

What knew she of thee but thy coffers?

Dam. And shall this ditch-born whelp, this jack-an-apes,

By dint of congees and of scrapes—

Sil. These are thy slanders and that canker'd hag's—

Dam. A thing made up of pilfer'd rags;

Sil. Richer than thou with all thy brags

Of flocks, and herds, and money bags.

DUET.

Sil. If a rival thy character draw,
 In perfection he'll find out a flaw;

With black he will paint,

Make a de'il of a saint,

And change to an owl a macaw.

Dam. Can a father pretend to be wise,
 Who his friend's good advice would despise?

Who, when danger is nigh,

Throws his spectacles by,

And blinks through a green girl's eyes?

Sil. You're an impudent pimp and a grub.

Dam. You are fool'd by a beggarly scrub;

Your betters you snub.

Sil. Who will lend me a club,

This insolent puppy to drub?
 You're an impudent pimp and a grub,
Dam. You're cajol'd by a beggarly scrub,
Sil. Who will rot in a powdering tub,
Dam. Whom the prince of impostors I dub;
Sil. A guinea for a club,
Dam. You're bald pate you'll rub,
Sil. This muckworm to drub.
Dam. When you find that your cub,
Sil. Rub off, sirrah, rub, sirrah, rub.
Dam. Is debauch'd by a whipp'd syllabub.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MYNIS, attended by DAPHNE and NYSA.

Mysis. Soh! you attend the trial—we shall drive hence
 Your vagabond—

Sil. I smoke your foul contrivance.

Daph. Ah, Nys, our fate depends upon this issue—

Nysa. Daph—for your sake my claim I here forego;

And with your Pol much joy I wish you.

Daph. O, gemini, say'st thou me so?

Dear creature, let me kiss you.

Nysa. Let's kneel, and beg his stay, papa will back us.

Daph. Mamma will storm.

Nysa. What then? she can but whack us.

QUINTETTO.

Daph. Mother, sure you never

Will endeavour

To disserve

From my favour

So sweet a swain;

None so clever

E'er trod the plain.

Nysa. Father, hopes you gave her,

Don't deceive her,

Can you leave her

Sunk for ever

In pining care?

Haste and save her

From black despair.

Daph. Think of his modest grace,

His voice, shape, and face;

Nysa. Hearts alarming,

Daph. Bosoms warming,

Nysa. Wrath disarming,

Daph. With his soft lay:

Nysa. He's so charming,

Ay, let him stay,

Both. He's so charming, &c.

Mysis. Sluts, are you lost to shame?

Sil. Wife, wife, be more tame.

Mysis. This is madness!

Sil. Sober sadness!

Mysis. I with gladness

Could see him swing,

For his badness.

Sil. 'Tis no such thing.

Dam. Must Pan resign to this fop his employment?

Mysis. Must I to him yield of Daph the enjoy-

Ne'er while a tongue I brandish,

Fop outlandish

Daph shall blandish.

Dam. Will you reject my income,

Herds and clinkum?

Sil. Rot and sink 'em.

Dam. Midas must judge.

Mysis. And Pol must fly.

Sil. Zounds, Pol shan't budge.

Mysis. You lie.

Dam. You lie.

Mysis. } You lie, you lie.
Sil. }

Enter MIDAS, enraged, attended by a crowd of Nymphs and Swains.

Mid. Peace, ho! Is hell broke loose? what means this jawing?
 Under my very nose this clapper-clawing!

AIR.

What the devil's here to do,
 Ye loggerheads and gipsies?
 Sirrah you, and hussy you,
 And each of you tipsy is:
 But I'll as sure pull down your pride as
 A gun, or as I'm justice Midas!

Chorus. O, tremendous justice Midas!
 Who shall oppose wise justice Midas?

AIR.

Mid. I'm given to understand that you are all in a pother here;
 Disputing whether Pan or Pol shall pipe to you another year.

Do you think your clumsy ears so proper to decide, as

The delicate ears of justice Midas?

Chorus. O, tremendous, &c.

Mid. So you allow it then—ye mobbish rabble!—

Enter POL and PAN, severally.

Oh, here comes Pol and Pan—now stint your gabble.
 Fetch my great chair—I'll quickly end this squabble.

AIR.

Now I'm seated,
 I'll be treated
 Like the sophi on his throne;
 In my presence,
 Scoundrel peasants
 Shall not call their souls their own.
 My behest is,
 He who best is,
 Shall be fix'd musician chief;
 Ne'er the loser
 Shall show nose here.
 But be transported like a thief.

Chorus. O tremendous, &c.

Dam. Masters, will you abide by this condition

Pan. I ask no better.

Pol. I'm all submission.

Pan. Strike up, sweet Sir.

Pol. Sir, I attend your leisure.

Mid. Pan, take the lead,

Pan. Since 'tis your worship's pleasure.

AIR.

A pox on your pother about this or that;
 Your shrieking or squeaking, a sharp or a flat;
 I'm sharp by my bumpers, you're flat, master Pol;
 So here goes a set-to at toll de roll loll.

When beauty her rack of poor lovers would hamper,
 And after Miss Will-o'-the-Wisp the fools scamper;

Ding dong, in sing song, they the lady extol:
Pray what 's all this fuss for, but—toll de roll loll.

Mankind are a medley— a chance-medley race;
All start in full cry, to give dame Fortune chase:
There 's catch as catch can, hit or miss, luck is all;
And luck 's the best tune of life's toll de roll loll.

I've done, please your worship, 'tis rather too long;
[Mid. Not at all.]

I only meant life is but an old song:
The world 's but a tragedy, comedy, droll;
Where all act the scene of toll de roll loll.

Mid. By jingo, well perform'd for one of his age;
Now, hang dog, don't you blush to show your visage?

Pol. Why, master Midas, for that matter,
'Tis enough to dash one,
To hear the arbitrator,
In such unseemly fashion,
One of the candidates bespatter,
With so much partial passion.

[MIDAS falls asleep.]

AIR.

Ah, happy hours, how fleeting,
Ye danc'd on down away;
When, my soft vows repeating,
At Daphne's feet I lay!
But from her charms when sunder'd,
As Midas' frowns presage,
Each hour will seem a hundred;
Each day appear an age.

Mid. Silence—this just decree, all at your peril,
Obedient hear—else I shall use you very ill.

THE DECREE.

Pan shall remain,
Pol quit the plain.

Chorus. O, tremendous, &c.

Mid. All bow with me to mighty Pan—en-
throned him—
No pouting—and with festal chorus crown him—
[The crowd form two ranks beside the chair,
and join in the Chorus, whilst MIDAS crowns
him with bays.]

Chorus. See triumphant sits the bard,
Crown'd with bays, his due reward;
Exil'd Pol shall wander far;
Exil'd, twang his faint guitar;
While with echoing shouts of praise,
We the bagpipe's glory raise.

Mid. 'Tis well.—What keeps you here, you
ragamuffin?

Go trudge—or do you wait for a good cuffing?

Pol. Now all attend—

[Throws off his disguise, and appears as
APOLLO.]

The wrath of Jove for rapine,
Corruption, lust, pride, fraud, there 's no escaping.
Tremble, thou wretch; thou stretch'd the utmost
tether;

Thou and thy tools shall go to pot together.

AIR.

Dunce I did but sham,
For Apollo I am,
God of music, and king of Parnass;
Thy scurvy decree,
For Pan against me,
I reward with the ears of an ass.

Mid. Detected, balk'd, and small,
On our marrow-bones we fall.

Mysis. Be merciful.

Dam. Be pitiful.

Mid. Forgive us, mighty Sol.—Alas! alas!

FINALE.

Apol. Thou, a Billingsgate quean,

[To MYSIS.]

Thou, a pandar obscene, [To DAMETAS.]
With strumpets and bailiffs shall class;

Thou driven from man, [To MIDAS.]
Shalt wander with Pan;

He a stinking old goat, thou an ass, an ass, &c.

Be thou squire—his estate [To SILENO.]
To thee I translate.

To you his strong chests, wicked mass;

[To DAPHNE and NYSA.]

Live happy, while I,

Recall'd to the sky,

Make all the gods laugh at Midas.

Daph. Sil. Nysa, } To the bright god of day,
together with the } Let us dance, sing, and play;
other Nymphs and } Clap hands every lad with
Swains. } his lass.

Daph. Now, critics, lie snug,

Not a hiss, groan, or shrug;

Remember the fate of Midas, Midas;

Remember the fate of Midas.

Chorus. Now, critics, lie snug, &c.

DOUGLAS.

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY JOHN HOME.

REMARKS.

THIS beautiful tragedy, suggested by the old Scots ballad of *Gil (or Childe) Morrice*, was first performed at Edinburgh, in 1756, and in the following year at Covent Garden Theatre. Mr. Home, who was a Scots clergyman, incurred rigorous censure from the elders of the kirk, for adorning the stage with this pathetic and interesting composition. Persecution usually defeats its own purpose: disgracefully expelled the kirk, he resigned his living and preferments, seeking protection from the liberality of England, where the piece was received with well-deserved applause, and its author rewarded with a pension from his late Majesty, then Prince of Wales.

During the representation in Edinburgh, a young North Briton stood up in the pit and exclaimed, with an air of triumph, "Weel, lads what think ye o' Wully Shakspeare now?"

Among other great testimonies to the merit of this play, Mr. David Hume, the historian, gave it a preference to the *Merope* of Maffei, and to that of Voltaire, which it resembles in its subject; and Mr. Gray observes, in a letter, 1757; "There is one scene (between Matilda and the Peasant) so masterly, that it strikes me blind to all the defects in the world."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted in EDINBURGH, 1756.	COVENT GARDEN, 1813.	DRURY LANE, 1814.
NORVAL,..... <i>Mr. Digges</i>	<i>Mr. Conway</i>	<i>Mr. Rae</i>
LORD RANDOLPH,..... <i>Mr. Young</i>	<i>Mr. Egerton</i>	<i>Mr. Holland</i>
GLENALVON,..... <i>Mr. Love</i>	<i>Mr. Barrymore</i>	<i>Mr. Raymond</i>
STRANGER,..... <i>Mr. Hayman</i>	<i>Mr. Young</i>	<i>Mr. Wroughton</i>
DONALD,.....	<i>Mr. Claremont</i>	<i>Mr. Cooke</i>
OFFICER,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Fisher</i>
SERVANT,.....	<i>Mr. Atkins</i>	<i>Mr. Maddocks</i>
PRISONER,.....	<i>Mr. Duruset</i>	<i>Mr. Buxton</i>
LADY RANDOLPH,..... <i>Mrs. Ward</i>	<i>Mrs. Powell</i>	<i>Miss Smith</i>
ANNA,..... <i>Mrs. Hopkins</i>	<i>Miss Cooke</i>	<i>Miss Boyce</i>

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Court of a Castle, surrounded with woods.*

Enter LADY RANDOLPH.

Lady R. Ye woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom
Accords with my soul's sadness, and draws forth
The voice of sorrow from my bursting heart,
Farewell awhile! I will not leave you long;
For in your shades I deem some spirit dwells,

Who, from the chiding stream, or groaning oak,
Still hears and answers to Matilda's moan.
Oh, Douglas! Douglas! if departed ghosts
Are e'er permitted to review this world,
Within the circle of that wood thou art,
And with the passion of immortals hear'st
My lamentation: hear'st thy wretched wife
Weep for her husband slain, her infant lost.
My brother's timeless death I seem to mourn,
Who perish'd with thee on that fatal day.
But Randolph comes, whom fate has made my lord
To chide my anguish, and defraud the dead.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH.

Lord R. Again these weeds of wo! say dost thou well

To feed a passion which consumes thy life?
The living claim some duty; vainly thou
Bestow'st thy cares upon the silent dead.

Lady R. Silent, alas! is he for whom I mourn:
Childless, without memorial of his name,
He only now in my remembrance lives.

Lord R. Time, that wears out the trace of
deepest anguish,

Has pass'd o'er thee in vain.
Sure thou art not the daughter of Sir Malcolm:
Strong was his rage, eternal his resentment:
For when thy brother fell, he smil'd to hear
That Douglas' son in the same field was slain.

Lady R. Oh! rake not up the ashes of my fa-
thers:

Implacable resentment was their crime,
And grievous has the expiation been.

Lord R. Thy grief wresits to its purposes my
words.

I never ask'd of thee that ardent love
Which in the breasts of fancy's children burns.
Decent affection and complacent kindness
Were all I wish'd for; but I wish'd in vain.
Hence with the less regret my eyes behold
The storm of war that gathers o'er this land:
If I should perish by the Danish sword,
Matilda would not shed one tear the more.

Lady R. Thou dost not think so: woful as I am,
I love thy merit, and esteem thy virtues.
But whither goest thou now?

Lord R. Straight to the camp,
Where every warrior on the tiptoe stands
Of expectation, and impatient asks
Each who arrives, if he is come to tell,
The Danes are landed.

Lady R. O, may adverse winds
Far from the coast of Scotland drive their fleet!
And every soldier of both hosts return
In peace and safety to his peaceful home!

Lord R. Thou speak'st a woman's, hear a
warrior's wish;

Right from their native land, the stormy north
May the wind blow, till every keel is fixed
Immoveable in Caledonia's strand!

Then shall our foes repent their bold invasion,
And roving armies shun the fatal shore.

Lady R. farewell: I leave thee not alone;
Yonder comes one whose love makes duty light.

[*Exit.*]

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Forgive the rashness of your Anna's
love:

Urg'd by affection, I have thus presum'd
To interrupt thy solitary thoughts;
And warn you of the hours that you neglect,
And lose in sadness.

Lady R. So to lose my hours
Is all the use I wish to make of time.

Anna. To blame thee, lady, suits not with my
state:

But sure I am, since death first preyed on man,
Never did sister thus a brother mourn.
What had your sorrows been if you had lost,
In early youth, the husband of your heart?

Lady R. Oh!

Anna. Have I distressed you with officious love,
And ill-tim'd mention of your brother's fate!

Forgive me, lady: humble though I am,
The mind I bear partakes not of my fortune:
So fervently I love you, that to dry
These piteous tears, I'd throw my life away.

Lady R. What power directed thy unconscious
tongue

To speak as thou hast done? to name—

Anna. I know not:

But since my words have made my mistress trem-
ble,

I will speak so no more; but silent mix
My tears with hers.

Lady R. No, thou shalt not be silent:
I'll trust thy faithful love, and thou shalt be
Henceforth the instructed partner of my woes.
But what avails it? Can thy feeble pity
Roll back the flood of never-ebbing time?
Compel the earth and ocean to give up
Their dead, alive?

Anna. What means my noble mistress?

Lady R. Didst thou not ask, what had my sor-
rows been,

If I in early youth had lost a husband?
In the cold bosom of the earth is lodg'd,
Mangled with wounds, the husband of my youth;
And in some cavern of the ocean lies
My child and his—

Anna. Oh! lady most rever'd!
The tale wrapt up in your amazing words
Deign to unfold.

Lady R. Alas! an ancient feud,
Hereditary evil, was the source
Of my misfortunes. Ruling fate decreed
That my brave brother should in battle save
The life of Douglas' son, our house's foe;
The youthful warriors vow'd eternal friendship.
To see the vaunted sister of his friend,
Impatient, Douglas to Balaro came,
Under a borrow'd name. My heart he gain'd.
Nor did I long refuse the hand he begg'd:
My brother's presence authoriz'd our marriage.
Three weeks, three little weeks, with wings of
down,

Had o'er us flown, when my lov'd lord was call'd
To fight his father's battles; and with him,
In spite of all my tears, did Malcolm go.
Scarce were they gone, when my stern sire was
told,

That the false stranger was lord Douglas' son.
Frantic with rage, the baron drew his sword,
And question'd me. Alone, forsaken, faint,
Kneeling beneath his sword, falt'ring, I took
An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
Wed one of Douglas' name. Sincerity!
Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
Thy onward path, (although the earth should gape,
And from the gulf of hell destruction cry.)
To take dissimulation's winding way!

Anna. Alas! how few of women's fearful kind
Durst own a truth so hardy!

Lady R. The first truth
Is easiest to avow. This moral learn,
This precious moral, from my magic tale.—

In a few days the dreadful tidings came
That Douglas and my brother both were slain.
My lord! my life! my husband!—mighty God!
What had I done to merit such affliction?

Anna. My dearest lady, many a tale of tears
I've listened to; but never did I hear
A tale so sad as this.

Lady R. In the first days
Of my distracting grief, I found myself

As women wish to be who love their lords.
But who durst tell my father? the good priest
Who join'd our hands, my brother's ancient tutor,
With his lov'd Malcolm, in the battle fell:
They two alone were privy to the marriage.
On silence and concealment I resolv'd,
Till time should make my father's fortune mine.
That very night on which my son was born,
My nurse, the only confidante I had,
Set out with him to reach her sister's house:
But nurse nor infant have I ever seen,
Or heard of, Anna, since that fatal hour.

Anna. Not seen nor heard of! then perhaps he lives.

Lady R. No. It was dark December; wind and rain

Had beat all night. Across the Carron lay
The destin'd road, and in its swelling flood
My faithful servant perish'd with my child.
Oh! had I died when my lov'd husband fell!
Had some good angel op'd to me the book
Of Providence, and let me read my life,
My heart had broke, when I beheld the sum
Of ills, which one by one I have endur'd.

Anna. That God, whose ministers good angels are,

Hath shut the book, in mercy to mankind.
But we must leave this theme: Glenalvon comes:
I saw him bend on you his thoughtful eyes,
And hitherwards he slowly stalks his way.

Lady R. I will avoid him. An ungracious person

Is doubly irksome in an hour like this.

Anna. Why speaks my lady thus of Randolph's heir?

Lady R. Because he's not the heir of Randolph's virtues.

Subtle and shrewd, he offers to mankind

An artificial image of himself:

Yet is he brave and politic in war,

And stands aloft in these unruly times.

Why I describe him thus I'll tell hereafter.

Stay and detain him till I reach the castle.

[Exit.

Anna. Oh happiness! where art thou to be found?

I see thou dwellest not with birth and beauty,
Though grac'd with grandeur, and in wealth array'd;

Nor dost thou, it would seem, with virtue dwell;
Else had this gentle lady miss'd thee not.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. What dost thou muse on, meditating maid?

Like some entranc'd and visionary seer,
On earth thou stand'st, thy thoughts ascend to heaven.

Anna. Would that I were, e'en as thou say'st, a seer,

To have my doubts by heavenly vision clear'd.

Glen. What dost thou doubt of? What hast thou to do

With subjects intricate? Thy youth, thy beauty,
Cannot be question'd; think of these good gifts;
And then thy contemplations will be pleasing.

Anna. Let women view yon monument of woe,
Then boast of beauty; who so fair as she?

But I must follow; this revolving day

Awakes the memory of her ancient woes. [Exit.

Glen. So!—Lady Randolph shuns me by and by

I'll woo her as the lion woos his brides.
The deed's a doing now, that makes me lord
Of these rich valleys, and a chief of power.
The season is most apt; my sounding steps
Will not be heard amidst the din of arms.
Randolph has liv'd too long; his better fate
Had the ascendant once, and kept me down.
When I had seized the dame, by chance he came,
Rescu'd, and had the lady for his labour:
I scap'd unknown; a slender consolation!
Heaven is my witness, that I do not love
To sow in peril, and let others reap
The jocund harvest. Yet I am not safe;
By love, or something like it, stung, inflam'd,
Madly I blabb'd my passion to his wife,
And she has threaten'd to acquaint him of it.
The way of woman's will I do not know:
But well I know the baron's wrath is deadly.
I will not live in fear; the man I dread
Is as a Dane to me; ay, and the man
Who stands betwixt me and my chief desire—
No bar but he; she has no kinsman near;
No brother, in his sister's quarrel bold;
And for the righteous cause, a stranger's cause,
I knew no chief that will defy Glenalvon. [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Court, &c.

Enter SERVANTS and a STRANGER at one door,
and LADY RANDOLPH and ANNA at another.

Lady R. What means this clamour? Stranger,
speak secure;

Hast thou been wrong'd? have these rude men
presum'd

To vex the weary traveller on his way?

1 Serv. By us no stranger ever suffer'd wrong:
This man with outcry wild has call'd us forth;
So sore afraid he cannot speak his fears.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH and NORVAL, with their
Swords drawn and bloody.

Lady R. Not vain the stranger's fears! how
fares my lord?

Lord R. That it fares well, thanks to this gal-
lant youth,

Whose valour sav'd me from a wretched death.

As down the winding dale I walk'd alone,

At the cross way four armed men attack'd me;

Rovers, I judge, from the licentious camp,

Who would have quickly laid Lord Randolph low

Had not this brave and generous stranger come,

Like my good angel, in the hour of fate,

And, mocking danger, made my foes his own.

They turn'd upon him, but his active arm

Struck to the ground, from whence they rose no
more,

The fiercest two; the others fled amain,

And left him master of the bloody field.

Speak, Lady Randolph, upon beauty's tongue

Dwell accents pleasing to the brave and bold;

Speak, noble dame, and thank him for thy lord.

Lady R. My lord, I cannot speak what now I
feel;

My heart o'erflows with gratitude to heaven,

And to this noble youth, who, all unknown

To you and yours, deliberated not,

Nor paus'd at peril, but, humanely brave,

Fought on your side against such fearful odds.

Have you not learn'd of him whom we should
thank?

Whom call the saviour of Lord Randolph's life?

Lord R. I ask'd that question, and he answer'd not;

But I must know who my deliverer is.

[*To NORVAL.*]

Nor. A low-born man, of parentage obscure,
Who nought can boast, but his desire to be
A soldier, and to gain a name in arms.

Lord R. Whoe'er thou art, thy spirit is ennobled

By the great King of kings; thou art ordain'd
And stamp'd a hero, by the sovereign hand
Of nature! Blush not, flower of modesty
As well as valour, to declare thy birth.

Nor. My name is Norval: on the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flocks; a frugal swain,
Whose constant cares were to increase his store,
And keep his only son, myself, at home.
For I had heard of battles, and I long'd
To follow to the field some warlike lord:
And heaven soon granted what my sire denied.
This moon which rose last night, round as my
shield,

Had not yet filled her horns, when, by her light,
A band of fierce barbarians from the hills,
Rush'd like a torrent down upon the vale,
Sweeping our flocks and herds. The shepherds
fled

For safety and for succour. I alone,
With bended bow, and quiver full of arrows,
Hover'd about the enemy, and mark'd
The road he took; then hastened to my friends,
Whom, with a troop of fifty chosen men,
I met advancing. The pursuit I led,
Till we o'ertook the spoil-encumber'd foe.
We fought and conquer'd. Ere a sword was
drawn,

An arrow from my bow had pierc'd their chief,
Who wore that day the arms which now I wear.
Returning home in triumph, I disdain'd
The shepherd's slothful life; and having heard
That our good king had summon'd his bold peers
To lead their warriors to the Carron side,
I left my father's house, and took with me
A chosen servant to conduct my steps;
Yon trembling coward, who forsook his master.
Journeying with this intent, I pass'd these towers,
And, heaven directed, came this day to do
The happy deed that gilds my humble name.

Lord R. He is as wise as brave. Was ever tale
With such a gallant modesty rehears'd?
My brave deliverer! thou shalt enter now
A nobler list, and in a monarch's sight
Contend with princes for the prize of fame.
I will present thee to our Scottish king,
Whose valiant spirit ever valour lov'd.

Ah! my Matilda, wherefore starts that tear?

Lady R. I cannot say; for various affections,
And strangely mingled, in my bosom swell;
Yet each of them may well command a tear.
I joy that thou art safe; and I admire
Him and his fortunes who hath wrought thy
safety:

Yea, as my mind predicts, with thine his own.
Obscure and friendless he the army sought,
Bent upon peril, in the range of death
Resolv'd to hunt for fame, and with his sword
To gain distinction which his birth denied.
In this attempt, unknown he might have perish'd,
And gain'd, with all his valour, but oblivion.
Now, grac'd by thee, his virtues serve no more
Beneath despair. The soldier now of hope,

He stands conspicuous; fame and great renown
Are brought within the compass of his sword.
On this my mind reflected, whilst you spoke,
And bless'd the wonder-working Lord of heaven.

Lord R. Pious and grateful ever are thy
thoughts!

My deeds shall follow where thou point'st the way.
Next to myself, and equal to Glenalvon,
In honour and command, shall Norval be.

Nor. I know not how to thank you. Rude I am
In speech and manners: never till this hour
Stood I in such a presence; yet, my lord,
There's something in my breast, which makes me
bold

To say, that Norval ne'er will shame thy favour.

Lady R. I will be sworn thou wilt not. Thou
shalt be

My knight, and ever, as thou didst to-day,
With happy valour guard the life of Randolph

Lord R. Well hast thou spoke. Let me forbid
reply;

We are thy debtors still. Thy high desert

[*To NORVAL.*]

O'ertops our gratitude. I must proceed,
As was at first intended, to the camp.
Some of my train I see are speeding hither,
Impatient doubtless of their lord's delay.

Go with me, Norval, and thine eyes shall see
The chosen warriors of thy native land,
Who languish for the fight, and beat the air
With brandish'd swords.

Nor. Let us be gone, my lord.

Lord R. [*To LADY R.*] About the time the
declining sun

Shall his broad orbit o'er yon hill suspend,
Expect us to return. This night once more
Within these walls I rest; my tent I pitch
To-morrow in the field. Prepare the feast.
Free is his heart who for his country fights:
He in the eve of battle may resign
Himself to social pleasure: sweetest then,
When danger to a soldier's soul endears
The human joy that never may return.

[*Exeunt LORD R. and NOR.*]

Lady R. His parting words have struck a fatal
truth.

Oh, Douglas! Douglas! tender was the time
When we two parted ne'er to meet again!
How many years of anguish and despair
Has heaven annex'd to those swift passing hours
Of love and fondness.

Wretch that I am! Alas! why am I so?

At every happy parent I repine.

How bless'd the mother of yon happy Norval!

She for a living husband bore her pains,
And heard him bless her when a man was born:

She nurs'd her smiling infant on her breast;

Tended the child, and rear'd the pleasing boy;

She, with affection's triumph, saw the youth

In grace and comeliness surpass his peers:

Whilst I to a dead husband bore a son,

And to the roaring waters gave my child.

Anna. Alas! alas! why will you thus resume

Your grief afresh? I thought that gallant youth

Would for a while have won you from your wo.

On him intent you gazed, with a look

Much more delighted, than your pensive eye

Has deign'd on other objects to bestow.

Lady R. Delighted, say'st thou? Oh! even
there mine eye

Found fuel for my life-consuming sorrow;

I thought, that had the son of Douglas liv'd,

He might have been like this young gallant stranger;
And pair'd with him in features and in shape,
In all endowments, as in years, I deem,
My boy with blooming Norval might have number'd.

Whilst thus I mus'd, a spark from fancy fell
On my sad heart, and kindled up a fondness
For this young stranger, wand'ring from his home,
And like an orphan cast upon my care.
I will protect thee, said I to myself,
With all my power, and grace with all my favour.

Anna. Sure, heaven will bless so gen'rous a resolve.

You must, my noble dame, exert your power:
You must awake: devices will be fram'd,
And arrows pointed at the breast of Norval.

Lady R. Glenalvon's false and crafty head will work

Against a rival in his kinsman's love,
If I deter him not; I only can.
Bold as he is, Glenalvon will beware
How he pulls down the fabric that I raise.
I'll be the artist of young Norval's fortune.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. Where is my dearest kinsman, noble Randolph?

Lady R. Have you not heard, Glenalvon, of the base—

Glen. I have; and that the villains may not scape,
With a strong band I have begirt the wood.
If they lurk there, alive they shall be taken,
And torture force from them the important secret,
Whether some foe of Randolph's hired their swords,
Or if—

Lady R. That care becomes a kinsman's love.
I have a counsel for Glenalvon's ear.

[Exit ANNA.]

Glen. To him your counsels always are commands.

Lady R. I have not found so; thou art known to me.

Glen. Known!

Lady R. And most certain is my cause of knowledge.

Glen. What do you know? By the most blessed cross,

You much amaze me. No created being,
Yourself except, durst thus accost Glenalvon.

Lady R. Is guilt so bold? and dost thou make a merit

Of thy pretended meekness? this to me,
Who, with a gentleness which duty blames,
Have hitherto conceal'd, what, if indulg'd,
Would make thee nothing! or, what's worse than that,

An outcast beggar, and unpitied too!
For mortals shudder at a crime like thine.

Glen. Thy virtue awes me. First of woman-kind!

Permit me yet to say, that the fond man
Whom love transports beyond strict virtue's bounds,

If he is brought by love to misery,
In fortune ruin'd as in mind forlorn,
Unpitied cannot be. Pity's the alms
Which on such beggars freely is bestow'd;
For mortals know that love is still their lord,
And o'er their vain resolves advances still:

As fire, when kindled by our shepherds, moves
Through the dry heath before the fanning wind.

Lady R. Reserve these accents for some other ear;

To love's apology I listen not.

Mark thou my words: for it is meet thou shouldst.

His brave deliverer, Randolph here retains.

Perhaps his presence may not please thee well:

But, at thy peril, practise ought against him:

Let not thy jealousy attempt to shake

And loosen the good root he has in Randolph,

Whose favourites I know thou hast supplanted.

Thou lookest at me, as if thou wouldst pry

Into my heart. 'Tis open as my speech.

I give this early caution, and put on

The curb, before thy temper breaks away.

The friendless stranger my protection claims;

His friend I am, and be not thou his foe. *[Exit.]*

Glen. Child that I was to start at my own shadow,

And be the shallow fool of coward conscience!

I am not what I have been; what I should be.

The darts of destiny have almost pierc'd

My marble heart. Had I one grain of faith

In holy legends and religious tales,

I should conclude there was an arm above

That fought against me, and malignant turn'd,

To catch myself, the subtle snare I set.

Why, rape and murder are not simple means!

The imperfect rape to Randolph gave a spouse;

And the intended murder introduc'd

A favourite to hide the sun from me;

And, worst of all, a rival. Burning hell!

This were thy centre, if I thought she lov'd him!

'Tis certain she contemns me; nay, commands me,

And waves the flag of her displeasure o'er me,

In his behalf. And shall I thus be brav'd?

Curb'd, as she calls it, by dame Chastity?

Infernal fiends, if any fiends there are

More fierce than hate, ambition, and revenge,

Rise up, and fill my bosom with your fires.

Darkly a project peers upon my mind,

Like the red moon when rising in the east,

Cross'd and divided by strange colour'd clouds.

I'll seek the slave who came with Norval hither,

And for his cowardice was spurn'd from him.

I've known a follower's rankled bosom breed

Venom most fatal to his heedless lord. *[Exit.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Thy vassals, Grief, great nature's order break,

And change the noontide to the midnight hour.

Whilst Lady Randolph sleeps, I will walk forth,

And taste the air that breathes on yonder bank.

Sweet may her slumbers be! Ye ministers

Of gracious heaven, who love the human race,

Angels and seraphs, who delight in goodness,

Forsake your skies, and to her couch descend!

There from her fancy chase those dismal forms

That haunt her waking; her sad spirit charm

With images celestial, such as please

The bless'd above upon their golden beds.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. One of the vile assassins is secur'd.

We found the villain lurking in the wood:

With dreadful imprecations he denies

All knowledge of the crime. But this is not

His first essay: these jewels were conceal'd
In the most secret places of his garment;
Belike the spoils of some that he has murder'd.
Anna. Let me look on them. Ha! here is a

heart,
The chosen crest of Douglas' valiant name!
These are no vulgar jewels. Guard the wretch.
[*Exit.*]

Enter SERVANTS, with a PRISONER.

Pris. I know no more than does the child unborn

Of what you charge me with.

I Serv. You say so, Sir!

But torture soon shall make you speak the truth.
Behold, the lady of Lord Randolph comes:
Prepare yourself to meet her just revenge.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Anna. Summon your utmost fortitude, before
You speak with him. Your dignity, your fame,
Are now at stake. Think of the fatal secret,
Which in a moment from your lips may fly.

Lady R. Thou shalt behold me, with a desperate heart,

Hear how my infant perish'd. See, he kneels.

Pris. Heaven bless that countenance so sweet and mild!

A judge like thee makes innocence more bold.
Oh, save me, lady, from these cruel men,
Who have attack'd and seiz'd me; who accuse
Me of intended murder. As I hope
For mercy at the judgment-seat of heaven,
The tender lamb, that never nipt the grass,
Is not more innocent than I of murder.

Lady R. Of this man's guilt what proof can ye produce?

I Serv. We found him lurking in the hollow glen.

When view'd and call'd upon, amaz'd he fled.
We overtook him, and enquir'd from whence
And what he was: he said he came from far,
And was upon his journey to the camp.
Not satisfied with this, we search'd his clothes,
And found these jewels, whose rich value plead
Most powerfully against him. Hard he seems,
And old in villany. Permit us try
His stubbornness against the torture's force.

Pris. Oh, gentle lady! by your lord's dear life,
Which these weak hands, I swear did ne'er assail,
And by your children's welfare, spare my age!
Let not the iron tear my ancient joints,
And my gray hairs bring to the grave with pain.

Lady R. Account for these; thine own they cannot be:

For these, I say: be steadfast to the truth;
Detected falsehood is most certain death.

[*ANNA removes the SERVANTS, and returns.*]

Pris. Alas! I'm sore beset! let never man,
For sake of lucre, sin against his soul!
Eternal justice is in this most just!

I, guiltless now, must former guilt reveal.

Lady R. Oh! Anna, hear!—once more I charge thee speak

The truth direct; for these to me foretell
And certify a part of thy narration,
With which, if the remainder tallies not,
An instant and a dreadful death abides thee.

Pris. Then, thus adjur'd, I'll speak to you as just

As if you were the minister of heaven,
Sent down to search the secret sins of men.

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Some eighteen years ago I rented land
Of brave Sir Malcolm, then Balarmo's lord;
But, falling to decay, his servants seiz'd
All that I had, and then turn'd me and mine
(Four helpless infants and their weeping mother)
Out to the mercy of the winter winds.

A little hovel by the river's side
Receiv'd us; there hard labour, and the skill
In fishing, which was formerly my sport,
Supported life. Whilst thus we poorly liv'd,
One stormy night, as I remember well,
The wind and rain beat hard upon our roof;
Red came the river down, and loud and oft
The angry spirit of the water shriek'd.
At the dead hour of night was heard the cry
Of one in jeopardy. I rose, and ran
To where the circling eddy of a pool,
Beneath the ford, us'd oft to bring within
My reach whatever floating thing the stream
Had caught. The voice was ceas'd; the person lost,
But, looking sad and earnest on the waters,
By the moon's light I saw, whirled round and round,

A basket: soon I drew it to the bank,
And, nestled curious, there an infant lay.

Lady R. Was he alive?

Pris. He was.

Lady R. Inhuman that thou art!

How couldst thou kill what waves and tempests
spar'd?

Pris. I am not so inhuman.

The needy man who has known better days,
One whom distress has spited at the world,
Is he whom tempting fiends would pitch upon
To do such deeds as make the prosperous men
Lift up their heads, and wonder who could do them.
And such a man was I: a man declin'd,
Who saw no end of black adversity:

Yet, for the wealth of kingdoms, I would not
Have touch'd that infant with a hand of harm.

Lady R. Ha! dost thou say so? then perhaps
he lives!

Pris. Not many days ago he was alive.

Lady R. Oh, God of heaven! did he then die
so lately?

Pris. I did not say he died; I hope he lives.

Not many days ago these eyes beheld
Him flourishing in youth, and health, and beauty.

Lady R. Where is he now?

Pris. Alas! I know not where.

Lady R. Oh, fate! I fear thee still. Thou
riddler, speak

Direct and clear; else I will search thy soul.

Pris. Fear not my faith, though I must speak
my shame:

Within the cradle where the infant lay,
Was stow'd a mighty store of gold and jewels;
Tempted by which, we did resolve to hide
From all the world this wonderful event,
And like a peasant breed the noble child.
That none might mark the change of our estate,
We left the country, travell'd to the north,
Bought flocks and herds, and gradually brought
forth

Our secret wealth. But God's all seeing eye
Beheld our avarice, and smote us sore:
For, one by one, all our own children died,
And he, the stranger, sole remain'd the heir
Of what indeed was his. Fain then would I
Who with a father's fondness lov'd the boy,
Have trusted him, now in the dawn of youth,
With his own secret: but my anxious wife,

Foreboding evil, never would consent.
 Meanwhile the stripling grew in years and beauty;
 And, as we oft observ'd, he bore himself,
 Not as the offspring of our cottage blood;
 For nature will break out mild with the mild,
 But with the froward he was fierce as fire;
 And night and day he talk'd of war and arms;
 I set myself against his warlike bent;
 But all in vain; for when a desperate band
 Of robbers from the savage mountains came——

Lady R. Eternal Providence! What is thy name?

Pris. My name is Norval; and my name he bears.

Lad R. 'Tis he! 'tis he himself! It is my son!
 Oh, sovereign mercy! 'twas my child I saw!

Pris. If I, amidst astonishment and fear,
 Have of your words and gestures rightly judg'd,
 Thou art the daughter of my ancient master;
 The child I rescu'd from the flood is thine.

Lady R. With thee, dissimulation now were vain.

I am indeed the daughter of Sir Malcolm;
 The child thou rescu'dst from the flood is mine.

Pris. Bless'd be the hour that made me a poor man;

My poverty hath sav'd my master's house!

Lady R. Thy words surprise me: sure thou dost not feign!

The tear stands in thine eye; such love from thee
 Sir Malcolm's house deserv'd not; if aright
 Thou told'st the story of thy own distress.

Pris. Sir Malcolm of our barons was the flower;
 The safest friend, the best, the kindest master.

But ah! he knew not of my sad estate.
 After that battle, where his gallant son,
 Your own brave brother, fell, the good old lord
 Grew desperate and reckless of the world;
 And never, as he erst was wont, went forth
 To overlook the conduct of his servants.
 By them I was thrust out, and them I blame:
 May heaven so judge me as I judge my master!
 And God so love me as I love his race!

Lady R. His race shall yet reward thee. On thy faith

Depends the fate of thy lov'd master's house.
 Rememb'rest thou a little, lonely hut,
 That like a holy hermitage appears
 Among the cliffs of Carron?

Pris. I remember the cottage of the cliffs.

Lady R. 'Tis that I mean:

There dwells a man of venerable age,
 Who in my father's service spent his youth:
 Tell him I sent thee, and with him remain,
 Till I shall call upon thee to declare,
 Before the king and nobles, what thou now
 To me hast told. No more but this, and thou
 Shalt live in honour all thy future days;
 Thy son so long shall call thee father still,
 And all the land shall bless the man who sav'd
 The son of Douglas, and Sir Malcolm's heir.
 Remember well my words; if thou shouldst meet
 Him, whom thou call'st thy son, still call him so;
 And mention nothing of his nobler father.

Pris. Fear not that I shall mar so fair a harvest,
 By putting in my sickle ere 'tis ripe,
 Why did I leave my home and ancient dame
 To find the youth, to tell him all I knew,
 And make him wear these jewels on his arm;
 Which might, I thought, be challeng'd and so bring

To light the secret of his noble birth.

[*LADY RANDOLPH goes towards the SERVANTS*
Lady R. This man is not the assassin you suspected,

Though chance combin'd some likelihood against him,

He is the faithful bearer of the jewels
 To their right owner, whom in haste he seeks.
 'Tis meet that you should put him on his way,
 Since your mistaken zeal hath dragged him hither.

[*Exeunt PRISONER and SERVANTS.*

My faithful Anna! dost thou share my joy?

I know thou dost. Unparallel'd event!

Reaching from heaven to earth, Jehovah's arm

Snatch'd from the waves, and brings me to my son!

Judge of the widow, and the orphan's father,

Accept a widow's and a mother's thanks

For such a gift! What does my Anna think

Of the young eaglet of a valiant nest?

How soon he gaz'd on bright and burning arms,

Spurn'd the low dunghill where his fate had

thrown him,

And tower'd up to the regions of his sire!

Anna. How fondly did your eyes devour the boy!

Mysterious nature, with the unseen cord

Of powerful instinct, drew you to your own.

Lady R. The ready story of his birth believ'd,

Suppress'd my fancy quite; nor did he owe

To any likeness my so sudden favour:

But now I long to see his face again,

Examine every feature, and find out

The lineaments of Douglas, or my own.

But, most of all, I long to let him know

Who his true parents are, to clasp his neck,

And tell him all the story of his father.

Anna. With wary caution you must bear your

self

In public, lest your tenderness break forth,

And in observers stir conjectures strange.

To-day the baron started at your tears.

Lady R. He did so, Anna: well thy mistress

knows

If the least circumstance, mote of offence,

Should touch the baron's eye, his sight would be

With jealousy disorder'd. But the more

It does behove me instant to declare

The birth of Douglas, and assert his rights.

Anna. Behold, Glenalvon comes.

Lady R. Now I shun him not.

This day I brav'd him in behalf of Norval;

Perhaps too far; at least my nicer fears

For Douglas thus interpret.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. Noble dame,

The hovering Dane at last his men hath landed:

No band of pirates; but a mighty host,

That come to settle where their valour conquers:

To win a country, or to lose themselves.

A nimble courier, sent from yonder camp,

To hasten up the chieftains of the north,

Inform'd me as he pass'd, that the fierce Dane

Had on the eastern coasts of Lothian landed.

Lady R. How many mothers shall bewail their

sons!

How many widows weep their husbands slain!

Ye dames of Denmark, even for you I feel,

Who sadly sitting on the sea-beat shore,

Long look for lords that never shall return.

Glen. Oft has th' unconquer'd Caledonian sword

Widow'd the north. The children of the slain

Come, as I hope, to meet their fathers' fate.

The monster War, with her infernal brood,

Loud-yelling fury and life-ending pain,
Are objects suited to Glenalvon's soul.
Scorn is more grievous than the pains of death;
Reproach more piercing than the pointed sword.

Lady R. I scorn thee not, but when I ought to scorn;

Nor e'er reproach, but when insulted virtue
Against audacious vice asserts herself.
I own thy worth, Glenalvon; none more apt
Than I to praise thine eminence in arms,
And be the echo of thy martial fame.
No longer vainly feed a guilty passion:
Go and pursue a lawful mistress, Glory.
Upon the Danish crest redeem thy fault,
And let thy valour be the shield of Randolph.

Glen. One instant stay, and hear an alter'd man.
When beauty pleads for virtue, vice abash'd
Flies its own colours, and goes o'er to virtue.
I am your convert; time will show how truly:
Yet one immediate proof I mean to give.
That youth, for whom your ardent zeal to-day
Somewhat too haughtily defied your slave,
Amidst the shock of armies I'll defend,
And turn death from him, with a guardian arm.

Lady R. Act thus, Glenalvon, and I am thy friend;

But that's thy least reward. Believe me, Sir,
The truly generous is the truly wise;
And he, who loves not others, lives unblest'd.

[*Exit* LADY RANDOLPH.]

Glen. Amen! and virtue is its own reward:
I think that I have hit the very tone
In which she loves to speak. Honey'd assent,
How pleasant art thou to the taste of man,
And woman also! flattery direct
Rarely disgusts. They little know mankind
Who doubt its operation: 'tis my key,
And opens the wicket of the human heart.
How far I have succeeded now, I know not;
Yet I incline to think her stormy virtue
Is lull'd awhile: 'tis her alone I fear!
While she and Randolph live, and live in faith
And amity, uncertain is my tenure.
The slave of Norval's I have found most apt;
I show'd him gold, and he has pawn'd his soul
To say and swear whatever I suggest.
Norval, I'm told, has that alluring look,
'T'wixt man and woman, which I have observ'd
To charm the nicer and fantastic dames,
Who are, like Lady Randolph, full of virtue.
In raising Randolph's jealousy, I may
But point him to the truth. He seldom errs,
Who thinks the worst he can of womankind.

[*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter LORD RANDOLPH, attended.

Lord R. Summon a hundred horse, by break
of day,
To wait our pleasure at the castle gate.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH.

Lady R. Alas, my lord I've heard unwelcome
news;
The Danes are landed.

Lord R. Ay, no inroad this
Of the Northumbrian, bent to take a spoil:
No sportive war, no tournament essay,
Of some young knight resolv'd to break a spear,
And stain with hostile blood his maiden arms.

The Danes are landed: we must beat them back,
Or live the slaves of Denmark.

Lady R. Dreadful time!

Lord R. The fenceless villages are all forsaken;
The trembling mothers and their children lodg'd
In wall-girt towers and castles! whilst the men
Retire indignant: yet, like broken waves,
They but retire, more awful to return.

Lady R. Immense, as fame reports, the Danish
host!

Lord R. Were it as numerous as loud fame
reports,

An army knit like ours would pierce it through:
Brothers that shrink not from each other's side,
And fond companions, fill our warlike files:
For his dear offspring, and the wife he loves,
The husband and the fearless father arm;
In vulgar breasts heroic ardour burns,
And the poor peasant mates his daring lord.

Lady R. Men's minds are temper'd, like their
swords, for war;

Lovers of danger, on destruction's brink
They joy to rear erect their daring forms.
Hence, early graves; hence, the lone widow's life;
And the sad mother's grief-embitter'd age.
Where is our gallant guest?

Lord R. Down in the vale
I left him managing a fiery steed,
Whose stubbornness had foil'd the strength and
skill

Of every rider. But now he comes,
In earnest conversation with Glenalvon.

Enter NORVAL and GLENALVON.

Glenalvon, with the lark arise; go forth
And lead my troops that lie in yonder vale:
Private I travel to the royal camp:
Norval thou goest with me. But say, young man,
Where didst thou learn so to discourse of war,
And in such terms, as I o'erheard to-day?

War is no village science, nor its phrase
A language taught amongst the shepherd swains.
Nor. Small is the skill my lord delights to praise
In him he favours. Hear from whence it came.
Beneath a mountain's brow, the most remote
And inaccessible by shepherds' trod,
In a deep cave, dug by no mortal hand,
A hermit liv'd; a melancholy man!

Who was the wonder of our wand'ring swains.
Austere and lonely, cruel to himself
Did they report him; the cold earth his bed,
Water his drink, his food the shepherds' alms.
I went to see him, and my heart was touch'd
With rev'rence and with pity. Mild he spake,
And, entering on discourse, such stories told,
As made me oft revisit his sad cell.
For he had been a soldier in his youth;
And fought in famous battles, when the peers
Of Europe, by the bold Godfredo led,
Against the usurping infidel display'd
The blessed cross and won the Holy Land.
Pleas'd with my admiration, and the fire
His speech struck from me, the old man would
shake

His years away, and act his young encounters
Then, having show'd his wounds, he'd sit him
down,

And all the live-long day discourse of war.
To help my fancy, in the smooth green turf.
He cut the figures of the marshall'd hosts;
Describ'd the motions, and explain'd the use
Of the deep column, and the lengthen'd line

The square, the crescent, and the phalanx firm:
For all that Saracen or Christian knew
Of war's vast art, was to this hermit known.

Lord R. Why did this soldier in a desert hide
Those qualities that should have grac'd a camp?

Nor. That too at last I learn'd. Unhappy man!
Returning homewards by Messina's port,
Loaded with wealth and honours bravely won,
A rude and boist'rous captain of the sea
Fasten'd a quarrel on him. Fierce they fought:
The stranger fell, and with his dying breath
Declar'd his name and lineage. Mighty power!
The soldier cried, my brother! Oh, my brother!

Lady R. His brother!

Nor. Yes; of the same parents born;
His only brother. They exchanged forgiveness;
And happy in my mind was he that died;
For many deaths has the survivor suffered.
In the wild desert on a rock he sits,
Or on some nameless stream's untrodden banks,
And ruminates all day his dreadful fate.
At times, alas! not in his perfect mind,
Holds dialogues with his lov'd brother's ghost;
And oft each night forsakes his sullen couch,
To make sad orisons for him he slew.

Lady R. In this dire tragedy were there no more
Unhappy persons? did the parents live?

Nor. No, they were dead; kind heaven had
clos'd their eyes,
Before their son had shed his brother's blood.

Lord R. Hard is his fate; for he was not to
blame!

There is a destiny in this strange world,
Which oft decrees an undeserved doom:
Let schoolmen tell us why—

[*Trumpets at a distance.*]

From whence these sounds?

Enter an OFFICER.

Off. My lord, the trumpets of the troops of
Lorn!

The valiant leader hails the noble Randolph.

Lord R. Mine ancient guest! does he the war-
riors lead?

Has Denmark rous'd the brave old knight in arms?

Off. No; worn with warfare, he resigns the
sword.

His eldest hope, the valiant John of Lorn,
Now leads his kindred bands.

Lord R. Glenalvon, go;

With hospitality's most strong request
Entreat the chief. [*Exit GLENALVON.*]

Off. My lord, requests are vain.

He urges on, impatient of delay,
Stung with the tidings of the foe's approach.

Lord R. May victory sit upon the warrior's
plume!

Bravest of men! his flocks and herds are safe;
Remote from war's alarms his pastures lie,
By mountains inaccessible secur'd:
Yet foremost he into the plain descends,
Eager to bleed in battles not his own.
I'll go and press the hero to my breast.

[*Exit with OFFICER.*]

Lady R. The soldier's loftiness, the pride and
pomph

Investing awful war, Norval, I see,
Transport thy youthful mind.

Nor. Ah! should they not?

Bless'd be the hour I left my father's house!
I might have been a shepherd all my days,
And stole obscurely to a peasant's grave.

Now, if I live, with mighty chiefs I stand:
And, if I fall, with noble dust I lie.

Lady R. There is a generous spirit in thy
breast,

That could have well sustain'd a prouder fortune.
This way with me; under yon spreading beech
Unseen, unheard, by human eye or ear,
I will amaze thee with a wondrous tale.

Nor. Let there be danger, lady, with the secret.
That I may hug it to my grateful heart,
And prove my faith. Command my sword, my life
These are the sole possessions of poor Norval.

Lady R. Know'st thou these gems?

Nor. Durst I believe mine eyes,
I'd say I knew them, and they were my father's.

Lady R. Thy father's, say'st thou? ah, they
were thy father's!

Nor. I saw them once, and curiously inquir'd
Of both my parents, whence such splendour came
But I was check'd, and more could never learn.

Lady R. Then learn of me—thou art not Nor-
val's son.

Nor. Not Norval's son?

Lady R. Nor of a shepherd sprung.

Nor. Who am I then?

Lady R. Noble thou art,
For noble was thy sire.

Nor. I will believe—

Oh, tell me further! say, Who was my father?

Lady R. Douglas!

Nor. Lord Douglas, whom to-day I saw?

Lady R. His younger brother.

Nor. And in yonder camp?

Lady R. Alas!

Nor. You make me tremble—Sighs and tears!
Lives my brave father?

Lady R. Ah! too brave, indeed!

He fell in battle ere thyself was born.

Nor. Ah me, unhappy! ere I saw the light!

But does my mother live? I may conclude,
From my own fate, her portion has been sorrow.

Lady R. She lives; but wastes her life in con-
stant wo,

Weeping her husband slain, her infant lost.

Nor. You that are skill'd so well in the sad story

Of my unhappy parents, and with tears

Bewail their destiny, now have compassion

Upon the offspring of the friends you lov'd;

Oh, tell me who and where my mother is!

Oppress'd by a base world, perhaps she bends

Beneath the weight of other ills than grief;

And, desolate, implores of heaven the aid

Her son should give. It is, it must be, so—

Your countenance confesses that she's wretched.

Oh, tell me her condition! Can the sword—

Who shall resist me in a parent's cause?

Lady R. Thy virtue ends her wo—My son!
my son!

I am thy mother, and the wife of Douglas!

[*Falls upon his neck.*]

Nor. Oh, heaven and earth! how wondrous is
my fate!

Art thou my mother? Ever let me kneel!

Lady R. Image of Douglas! fruit of fatal love!
All that I owe thy sire I pay to thee.

Nor. Respect and admiration still possess me,

Checking the love and fondness of a son:

Yet I was filial to my humble parents.

But did my sire surpass the rest of men,

As thou excellest all of womankind?

Lady R. Arise, my son. In me thou dost behold
The poor remains of beauty once admir'd.

Yet in my prime I equall'd not thy father;
His eyes were like the eagle's, yet sometimes
Liker the dove's; and, as he pleas'd, he won
All hearts with softness, or with spirit aw'd.

Nor. How did he fall? Sure 'twas a bloody
field

When Douglas died! Oh, I have much to ask!

Lady R. Hereafter thou shalt hear the length-
en'd tale

Of all thy father's and thy mother's woes.
At present this—Thou art the rightful heir
Of yonder castle, and the wide domains,
Which now Lord Randolph, as my husband, holds.
But thou shalt not be wrong'd; I have the power
To right thee still. Before the king I'll kneel,
And call Lord Douglas to protect his blood.

Nor. The blood of Douglas will protect itself.

Lady R. But we shall need both friends, and
favour, boy,

To wrest thy lands and lordship from the gripe
Of Randolph and his kinsman. Yet I think
My tale will move each gentle heart to pity,
My life incline the virtuous to believe.

Nor. To be the son of Douglas is to me
Inheritance enough! Declare my birth,
And in the field I'll seek for fame and fortune.

Lady P. Thou dost not know what perils and
injustice

Await the poor man's valour. Oh, my son!
The noblest blood of all the land's abash'd,
Having no lackey but pale poverty.
Too long hast thou been thus attended, Douglas!
Too long hast thou been deem'd a peasant's
child:

The wanton heir of some inglorious chief
Perhaps has scorn'd thee in thy youthful sports,
Whilst thy indignant spirit swell'd in vain.
Such contumely thou no more shalt bear:
But how I purpose to redress thy wrongs
Must be hereafter told. Prudence directs
That we should part before yon chief's return.
Retire, and from thy rustic follower's hand
Receive a billet, which thy mother's care,
Anxious to see thee, dictated before
This casual opportunity arose
Of private conference. Its purport mark:
For, as I there appoint, we meet again.
Leave me, my son, and frame thy manners still
To Norval's, not to noble Douglas' state.

Nor. I will remember. Where is Norval now,
'That good old man?

Lady R. At hand conceal'd he lies,
A useful witness. But beware, my son,
Of yon Glenalvon; in his guilty breast
Resides a villain's shrewdness, ever prone
To false conjecture. He hath griev'd my heart.

Nor. Has he, indeed? Then let yon false
Glenalvon

Beware of me.

[*Exit.*

Lady R. There burst the smother'd flame,
O, thou all-righteous and eternal King!
Who father of the fatherless art call'd,
Protect my son! thy inspiration, Lord!
Hath fill'd his bosom with that sacred fire,
Which in the breasts of his forefathers burn'd:
Set him on high, like them, that he may shine
The star and glory of his native land!—
Yonder they come. How do bad women find
Unchanging aspects to conceal their guilt,
When I, by reason and by justice urg'd
Full hardly can dissemble with these men
In nature's pious cause?

Enter LORD RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.

Lord R. Yon gallant chief,
Of arms enamour'd, all repose disclaims.

Lady R. Be not, my lord, by his example
sway'd.

Arrange the business of to-morrow now,
And when you enter, speak of war no more.

[*Exit.*

Lord R. 'Tis so, by heaven! her mien, her
voice, her eye,

And her impatience to be gone, confirm it.

Glen. He parted from her now. Behind the
mount,

Amongst the trees, I saw him glide along.

Lord R. For sad sequester'd virtue she's re-
nown'd.

Glen. Most true, my lord.

Lord R. Yet this distinguish'd dame
Invites a youth, the acquaintance of a day,
Alone to meet her at the midnight hour.
This assignation, [*Shows a letter.*] the assassin
freed,

Her manifest affection for the youth,
Might breed suspicion in a husband's brain,
Whose gentle consort all for love had wedded:
Much more in mine. Matilda never lov'd me.
Let no man, after me, a woman wed,
Whose heart he knows he has not, though she
bring

A mine of gold, a kingdom, for her dowry;
For let her seem, like the night's shadowy queen,
Cold and contemplative—he cannot trust her;
She may, she will, bring shame and sorrow on him;
The worst of sorrows, and the worst of shames!

Glen. Yield not, my lord, to such afflicting
thoughts,

But let the spirit of a husband sleep,
Till your own senses make a sure conclusion.
This billet must to blooming Norval go:
At the next turn awaits my trusty spy;
I'll give it him refitted for his master.
In the close thicket take your secret stand;
The moon shines bright, and your own eyes may
judge

Of their behaviour.

Lord R. Thou dost counsel well.

Glen. Permit me now to make one slight essay:
Of all the trophies, which vain mortals boast,
By wit, by valour, or by wisdom, won,
The first and fairest in a young man's eye
Is woman's captive heart. Successful love
With glorious fumes intoxicates the mind,
And the proud conqueror in triumph moves,
Air-borne, exalted above vulgar men.

Lord R. And what avails this maxim?

Glen. Much, my lord.

Withdraw a little; I'll accost young Norval,
And with ironical, derisive counsel
Explore his spirit. If he is no more
Than humble Norval, by thy favour rais'd,
Brave as he is, he'll shrink astonish'd from me;
But, if he be the favourite of the fair,
Lov'd by the first of Caledonia's dames,
He'll turn upon me, as the lion turns
Upon the hunter's spear.

Lord R. 'Tis shrewdly thought.

Glen. When we grow loud, draw near. But
let my lord

His rising wrath, restrain!— [*Exit RANDOLPH*
'Tis strange, by heaven!

That she should run full tilt her fond career

To one so little known. She, too, that seem'd
Pure as the winter stream, when ice, emboss'd,
Whitens its course. Even I did think her chaste,
Whose charity exceeds not. Precious sex!
Whose deeds lascivious pass Glenalvon's thoughts!

Enter NORVAL.

His port I love: he's in a proper mood
To chide the thunder, if at him it roar'd.—

[*Aside.*

Has Norval seen the troops?

Nor. The setting sun
With yellow radiance lighten'd all the vale;
And as the warriors mov'd, each polish'd helm,
Corslet, or spear, glanc'd back his gilded beams.
The hill they climb'd, and, halting at its top,
Of more than mortal size, towering, they seem'd
A host angelic, clad in burning arms.

Glen. Thou talk'st it well; no leader of our host
In sounds more lofty speaks of glorious war.

Nor. If I shall e'er acquire a leader's name,
My speech will be less ardent. Novelty
Now prompts my tongue, and youthful admiration
Vents itself freely; since no part is mine
Of praise pertaining to the great in arms.

Glen. You wrong yourself, brave Sir; your
martial deeds

Have rank'd you with the great. But mark me,
Norval:

Lord Randolph's favour now exalts your youth
Above his veterans of famous service.

Let me, who know these soldiers, counsel you.
Give them all honour: seem not to command;
Else they will scarcely brook your late sprung
power,

Which nor alliance props, nor birth adorns.

Nor. Sir, I have been accustomed all my days
To hear and speak the plain and simple truth:
And though I have been told that there are men
Who borrow friendship's tongue to speak their
scorn,

Yet in such language I am little skill'd.
Therefore I thank Glenalvon for his counsel,
Although it sounded harshly. Why remind
Me of my birth obscure? Why slur my power
With such contemptuous terms?

Glen. I did not mean
To gall your pride, which now I see is great.

Nor. My pride!

Glen. Suppress it, as you wish to prosper.
Your pride's excessive. Yet for Randolph's sake,
I will not leave you to its rash direction.
If thus you swell, and frown at high-born men,
Will high-born men endure a shepherd's scorn?

Nor. A shepherd's scorn!

Glen. Yes; if you presume
To bend on soldiers these disdainful eyes,
What will become of you?

Nor. If this were told!— [Aside.

Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?
Glen. Ha! dost thou threaten me?

Nor. Didst thou not hear?

Glen. Unwillingly I did; a nobler foe

Had not been question'd thus. But such as thee—

Nor. Whom dost thou think me?

Glen. Norval.

Nor. So I am—

And who is Norval, in Glenalvon's eyes?

Glen. A peasant's son, a wandering beggar boy;

At best no more, even if he speaks the truth.

Nor. False as thou art, dost thou suspect my
truth?

Glen. Thy truth! thou'rt all a lie: and false as
hell

Is the vainglorious tale thou told'st to Randolph.

Nor. If I were chain'd, unarm'd, and bed-rid old,
Perhaps I should revile: but, as I am,
I have no tongue to rail. The humble Norval
Is of a race who strive not but with deeds.
Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valour,
And make thee sink too soon beneath my sword,
I'd tell thee—what thou art. I know thee well.

Glen. Dost thou not know Glenalvon born to
command

Ten thousand slaves like thee—

Nor. Villain, no more! [Draws.

Draw, and defend thy life. I did design

To have defied thee in another cause;

But heaven accelerates its vengeance on thee.

Now for my own and Lady Randolph's wrongs.

[*They fight.*

Enter LORD RANDOLPH.

Lord R. Hold, I command you both. The man
that stirs
Makes me his foe.

Nor. Another voice than thine

That threat had vainly sounded, noble Randolph.

Glen. Hear him, my lord; he's wondrous con-
descending!

Mark the humility of shepherd Norval!

Nor. Now you may scoff in safety.

[*Sheathes his sword.*

Lord R. Speak not thus,
Taunting each other; but unfold to me

The cause of quarrel, then I judge betwixt you.

Nor. Nay, my good lord, though I revere you
much,

My cause I plead not, nor demand your judgment.
I blush to speak; I will not, cannot, speak
The opprobrious words that I from him have
borne:

To the liege lord of my dear native land

I owe a subject's homage; but even him

And his high arbitration I'd reject.

Within my bosom reigns another lord;

Honour, sole judge and umpire of itself.

If my free speech offend you, noble Randolph,

Revoke your favours, and let Norval go

Hence as he came, alone, but not dishonour'd.

Lord R. Thus far I'll mediate with impartial
voice:

The ancient foe of Caledonia's land

Now waves her banners o'er her frighted fields.

Suspend your purpose, till your country's arms

Repel the bold invader; then decide

The private quarrel.

Glen. I agree to this.

Nor. And I.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. The banquet waits.

Lord R. We come. [Exit, with SERV.

Glen. Norval,

Let not our variance mar the social hour,

Nor wrong the hospitality of Randolph.

Nor frowning anger, nor yet wrinkled hate,

Shall stain my countenance. Smooth thou thy
brow;

Nor let our strife disturb the gentle dame.

Nor. Think not so lightly, Sir, of my resent-
ment.

When we contend again, our strife is mortal.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Wood.

Enter DOUGLAS.

Doug. This is the place, the centre of the grove;
Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood.
How sweet and solemn is this midnight scene!
The silver moon, unclouded, holds her way
Through skies, where I could count each little star;
The fanning west wind scarcely stirs the leaves;
The river, rushing o'er its pebbled bed,
Imposes silence with a stilly sound.
In such a place as this, at such an hour,
If ancestry can be in aught believ'd,
Descending spirits have convers'd with men,
And told the secrets of the world unknown.

Enter OLD NORVAL.

Old N. 'Tis he. But what if he should chide
me hence?
His just reproach I fear. [*DOUGLAS sees him.*
Forgive! forgive!

Canst thou forgive the man, the selfish man,
Who bred Sir Malcolm's heir a shepherd's son?

Doug. Kneel not to me; thou art my father still.
Thy wish'd-for presence now completes my joy.
Welcome to me; my fortunes thou shalt share,
And ever honour'd with thy Douglas live.

Old N. And dost thou call me father? Oh, my son!

I think that I could die to make amends
For the great wrong I did thee. 'Twas my crime,
Which in the wilderness so long conceal'd
The blossom of thy youth.

Doug. Not worse the fruit,
That in the wilderness the blossom blow'd.
Amongst the shepherds, in the humble cot,
I learn'd some lessons, which I'll not forget
When I inhabit yonder lofty towers.
I, who was once a swain, will ever prove
The poor man's friend; and, when my vassals bow,
Norval shall smooth the crested pride of Douglas.

Old N. Let me but live to see thine exaltation!
Yet grievous are my fears. Oh, leave this place,
And those unfriendly towers!

Doug. Why should I leave them?

Old N. Lord Randolph and his kinsman seek
your life.

Doug. How know'st thou that?

Old N. I will inform you how.

When evening came, I left the secret place
Appointed for me by your mother's care,
And fondly trod in each accustom'd path
That to the castle leads. Whilst thus I rang'd,
I was alarm'd with unexpected sounds
Of earnest voices. On the persons came,
Unseen I lurk'd, and overheard them name
Each other as they talk'd, lord Randolph this,
And that Glenalvon. Still of you they spoke,
And of the lady: threat'ning was their speech,
Though but imperfectly my ear could hear it.
'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discovery;
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge.

Doug. Revenge! for what?

Old N. For being what you are,
Sir Malcolm's heir: how else have you offended?
When they were gone, I hid me to my cottage,
And there sat musing how I best might find
Means to inform you of their wicked purpose;
But I could think of none. At last, perplex'd,
I issued forth, encompassing the tower,

With many a wearied step and wishful look.
Now Providence hath brought you to my sight,
Let not your too courageous spirit scorn
The caution which I give.

Doug. I scorn it not.

My mother warn'd me of Glenalvon's baseness:
But I will not suspect the noble Randolph.
In our encounter with the vile assassins,
I mark'd his brave demeanour; him I'll trust.

Old N. I fear you will, too far.

Doug. Here in this place
I wait my mother's coming; she shall know
What thou hast told: her counsel I will follow:
And cautious ever are a mother's counsels.
You must depart: your presence may prevent
Our interview.

Old N. My blessing rest upon thee!
Oh, may heaven's hand, which sav'd thee from
the wave,
And from the sword of foes, be near thee still;
Turning mischance, if aught hangs o'er thy head,
All upon mine! [*Exit.*

Doug. He loves me like a parent;
And must not, shall not, lose the son he loves,
Although his son has found a nobler father.
Eventful day! how hast thou chang'd my state!
Once, on the cold and winter-shaded side
Of a bleak hill, mischance had rooted me,
Never to thrive, child of another soil;
Transplanted now to the gay sunny vale,
Like the green thorn of May my fortune flowers.
Ye glorious stars! high heaven's resplendent host!
To whom I oft have of my lot complain'd,
Hear, and record my soul's unalter'd wish!
Dead or alive, let me but be renown'd!
May heaven inspire some fierce gigantic Dane,
To give a bold defiance to our host!
Before he speaks it out, I will accept:
Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH.

Lady R. My son! I heard a voice—

Doug. The voice was mine.

Lady R. Didst thou complain aloud to nature's
ear,

That thus in dusky shades, at midnight hours,
By stealth the mother and the son should meet.
[*They embrace.*

Doug. No; on this happy day, this better birth-
day,

My thoughts and words are all of hope and joy.

Lady R. Sad fear and melancholy still divide
The empire of my breast with hope and joy.
Now hear what I advise—

Doug. First, let me tell

What may the tenour of your counsel change.

Lady R. My heart forebodes some evil.

Doug. 'Tis not good—

At eve, unseen by Randolph and Glenalvon,
The good old Norval in the grove o'erheard
Their conversation; oft they mentioned me
With dreadful threat'nings; you they sometimes
nam'd.

'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discovery;
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge.

Lady R. Defend us, gracious God! we are be-
tray'd.

They have found out the secret of thy birth!
It must be so. That is the great discovery.
Sir Malcolm's heir is come to claim his own;
And they will be reveng'd. Perhaps even now,
Arm'd and prepar'd for murder, they but wait

A darker and more silent hour, to break
 Into the chamber where they think thou sleep'st.
 This moment, this, heaven hath ordain'd to save
 thee!

Fly to the camp, my son!

Doug. And leave you here?

No: to the castle let us go together,
 Call up the ancient servants of your house,
 Who in their youth did eat your father's bread;
 Then tell them loudly, that I am your son.
 If in the breasts of men one spark remains
 Of sacred love, fidelity, or pity,
 Some in your cause will arm. I ask but few
 To drive these spoilers from my father's house.

Lady R. Oh, nature, nature! what can check
 thy force?

Thou genuine offspring of the daring Douglas!
 But rush not on destruction: save thyself,
 And I am safe. To me they mean no harm.
 Thy stay but risks thy precious life in vain.
 That winding path conducts thee to the river.
 Cross where thou seest a broad and beaten way,
 Which, running eastward, leads thee to the camp.
 Instant demand admittance to lord Douglas:
 Show him these jewels which his brother wore.
 Thy look, thy voice, will make him feel the
 truth,

Which I by certain proof will soon confirm.

Doug. I yield me, and obey: but yet my heart
 Bleeds at this parting. Something bids me stay,
 And guard a mother's life. Oft have I read
 Of wondrous deeds by one bold arm achiev'd.
 Our foes are two; no more: let me go forth,
 And see if any shield can guard Glenalvon.

Lady R. If thou regard'st thy mother, or re-
 ver'st

Thy father's memory, think of this no more.
 One thing I have to say before we part:
 Long wert thou lost; and thou art found, my child,
 In a most fearful season. War and battle
 I have great cause to dread. Too well I see
 Which way the current of thy temper sets:
 To-day I have found thee. Oh! my long-lost
 hope!

If thou to giddy valour giv'st the rein,
 To-morrow I may lose my son for ever.
 The love of thee, before thou saw'st the light,
 Sustain'd my life when thy brave father fell.
 If thou shalt fall, I have nor love nor hope
 In this waste world! My son, remember me!

Doug. What shall I say? How can I give you
 comfort?

The God of battles of my life dispose
 As may be best for you! for whose dear sake
 I will not bear myself as I resolv'd.
 But yet consider, as no vulgar name,
 That which I boast, sounds among martial men,
 How will inglorious caution suit my claim?
 The post of fate unshrinking I maintain.
 My country's foes must witness who I am.
 On the invaders' heads I'll prove my birth,
 'Till friends and foes confess the genuine strain.
 If in this strife I fall, blame not your son,
 Who, if he live not honour'd, must not live.

Lady R. I will not utter what my bosom feels.
 Too well I love that valour which I warn.
 Farewell, my son, my counsels are but vain,

[*They embrace.*
 And as high heaven hath will'd it, all must be.

[*They separate.*
 Gaze not on me, thou wilt mistake the path;
 'I'll point it out again.

[*Exeunt.*

Just as they are separating, enter, from the Wood
 LORD RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.

Lord R. Not in her presence.

Now—

Glen. I'm prepared.

Lord R. No; I command thee, stay.

I go alone: it never shall be said
 That I took odds to combat mortal man.
 The noblest vengeance is the most complete.

[*Exit.*
 [GLENALVON makes some steps to the same
 side of the stage, listens, and speaks.

Glen. Demons of death, come settle on my sword.
 And to a double slaughter guide it home!
 The lover and the husband both must die.

Lord R. [Without.] Draw, villain! draw!

Doug. [Without.] Assail me not, Lord Ran-
 dolph;

Not as thou lov'st thyself. [*Clashing of swords.*
Glen. [*Running out.*] Now is the time.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH, at the opposite side of
 the stage, faint and breathless.

Lady R. Lord Randolph, hear me: all shall be
 thine own!

But spare! Oh, spare my son!

Enter DOUGLAS, with a sword in each hand.

Doug. My mother's voice!

I can protect thee still.

Lady R. He lives! he lives!

For this, for this, to heaven, eternal praise!
 But sure I saw thee fall.

Doug. It was Glenalvon.

Just as my arm had master'd Randolph's sword,
 The villain came behind me; but I slew him.

Lady R. Behind thee! ah! thou art wounded!

Oh, my child,

How pale thou look'st! and shall I lose thee now?

Doug. Do not despair: I feel a little faintness,
 I hope it will not last. [*Leans upon his sword.*

Lady R. There is no hope!

And we must part! the hand of death is on thee!
 Oh! my beloved child! O Douglas, Douglas!

[DOUGLAS growing more and more faint.

Doug. Oh! had I fallen as my brave fathers fell,
 Turning with fatal arm the tide of battle,
 Like them I should have smil'd and welcom'd
 death;

But thus to perish by a villain's hand!
 Cut off from nature's and from glory's course,
 Which never mortal was so fond to run.

Lady R. Hear, justice, hear! stretch thy aveng-
 ing arm! [*DOUGLAS falls.*

Doug. Unknown I die; no tongue shall speak
 of me.

Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,
 May yet conjecture what I might have prov'd,
 And think life only wanting to my fame:
 But who shall comfort thee?

Lady R. Despair, despair!

Doug. Oh, had it pleas'd high Heaven to let
 me live

A little while!—my eyes that gaze on thee
 Grow dim apace! my mother—O! my mother!
 [*Dies.* LADY RANDOLPH faints upon the body.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Lord R. Thy words, thy words of truth, have
 pierc'd my heart:

I am the stain of knighthood and of arms.

Oh! if my brave deliverer survives
The traitor's sword—

Anna. Alas! look there, my lord.

Lord R. The mother and her son! How
curs'd am I!

Was I the cause? No: I was not the cause.
Yon matchless villain did seduce my soul
To frantic jealousy.

Anna. My lady lives:
The agony of grief hath but suppress'd
Awhile her powers.

Lord R. But my deliverer's dead!

Lady R. [*Recovering.*] Where am I now?

Still in this wretched world?

Grief cannot break a heart so hard as mine.

Lord R. Oh, misery!

Amidst thy raging grief I must proclaim
My innocence.

Lady R. Thy innocence!

Lord R. My guilt

Is innocence compar'd with what thou think'st it.

Lady R. Of thee I think not; what have I to do
With thee, or any thing? My son! my son!
My beautiful! my brave! how proud was I
Of thee and of thy valour! my fond heart
O'erflow'd this day with transport, when I thought
Of growing old amidst a race of thine.
Now all my hopes are dead! A little while
Was I a wife! a mother not so long!
What am I now?—I know—but I shall be
That only whilst I please; for such a son
And such a husband drive me to my fate.

[*Exit, running.*]

Lord R. Follow her, *Anna*: I myself would
follow,

But in this rage she must abhor my presence.

[*Exit ANNA.*]

Curs'd, curs'd Glenalvon, he escap'd too well,

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Though slain and baffled by the hand he hated.
Foaming with rage and fury to the last.
Cursing his conqueror, the felon died.

Re-enter ANNA.

Anna. My lord! my lord!

Lord R. Speak: I can hear of horror.

Anna. Horror, indeed!

Lord R. Matilda!

Anna. Is no more:

She ran, she flew like lightning up the hill:
Nor halted till the precipice she gain'd,
Beneath whose lowering top the river falls
Ingulf'd in rifted rocks: thither she came,
As fearless as the eagle lights upon it,
And headlong down—

Lord R. 'Twas I, alas! 'twas I
That fill'd her breast with fury; drove her down
The precipice of death! Wretch that I am!

Anna. Oh, had you seen her last despairing look!
Upon the brink she stood, and cast her eyes
Down on the deep: then, lifting up her head
And her white hands to heaven, seeming to say,
Why am I forc'd to this? she plung'd herself
Into the empty air.

Lord R. I will not vent,
In vain complaints, the passion of my soul.
Peace in this world I never can enjoy.
These wounds the gratitude of Randolph gave;
They speak aloud, and with the voice of fate
Denounce my doom. I am resolv'd. I'll go
Straight to the battle, where the man that makes
Me turn aside, must threaten worse than death.
Thou, faithful to thy mistress, take this ring,
Full warrant of my power. Let every rite
With cost and pomp upon their funerals wait:
For Randolph hopes he never shall return.

[*The curtain descends slowly to music.*]

THE INCONSTANT:

OR,

THE WAY TO WIN HIM:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GEORGE FARQUHAR, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS lively and entertaining comedy was first acted at Drury Lane in 1702. In his preface, the author observes, that he took the *hint* from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Wild Goose Chase*, though, in fact, the main plot and several entire scenes were borrowed from that eccentric piece.

The catastrophe of the last act, where Young Mirabel is delivered from the bravoes by the care of Oriana, disguised as his page, was supposed to owe its origin to a similar affair, in which Farquhar himself had some concern when on military duty in France, where the scene is laid.

There are still some over-wrought passages in this play, and some improbabilities, almost beyond the pale of that license so liberally allowed to works of imagination: it is still, however, a great favourite.

The inimitable performance of Bisarre, by Mrs. Jordon, and of Duretete, by Mr. John Bannister, will long be remembered with delight.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN, 1772.	DRURY LANE, 1814.
OLD MIRABEL,	Mr. Shuter	Mr. Downton.
YOUNG MIRABEL,	Mr. Smith	Mr. Elliston.
DURETETE,	Mr. Woodward	Mr. Bannister.
DUGARD,	Mr. Gardner	Mr. Holland.
PETIT,	Mr. Cushing	Mr. Fisher.
ORIANA,	Mrs. Lessingham	Miss Boyce.
BISARRE,	Miss Macklin	Mrs. Edwin.
LAMORCE,	Mrs. Dyer	Mrs. Scott.

Ladies, Gentlemen Bravoes, Soldiers, Servants and Attendants.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter DUGARD and his man PETIT, in riding-habits.

Dug. Sirrah, what's a clock?

Pet. Turned of eleven, Sir.

Dug. No more! We have rid a swinging pace from Nemours since two this morning! Petit, run to Rousseau's, and bespeak a dinner at a louis-d'or a head, to be ready by one.

Pet. How many will there be of you, Sir?

Dug. Let me see; Mirabel one, Duretete two, myself three—

Pet. And I four.

Dug. How now, Sir! at your old travelling familiarity! When abroad, you had some freedom for want of better company; but, among my friends at Paris, pray remember your distance—Be gone, Sir—[*Exit PETIT.*] This fellow's wit was necessary abroad, but he's too cunning for a domestic; I must dispose of him some way else.

Who's here? Old Mirabel and my sister! my dearest sister!

Enter OLD MIRABEL and ORIANA.

Ori. My brother! Welcome.

Dug. Monsieur Mirabel! I'm heartily glad to see you.

Old Mir. Honest Mr. Dugard, by the blood of the Mirabels, I'm your most humble servant.

Dug. Why, Sir, you've cast your skin sure, you're brisk and gay, lusty health about you, no sign of age but your silver hairs.

Old Mir. Silver hairs! Then they are quick-silver hairs, Sir. Whilst I have golden pockets, let my hairs be silver an they will. Adsbud, Sir, I can dance, and sing, and drink, and—no, I can't wench. But, Mr. Dugard, no news of my son Bob in all your travels?

Dug. Your son's come home, Sir.

Old Mir. Come home! Bob come home! By the blood of the Mirabels, Mr. Dugard, what say ye?

Ori. Mr. Mirabel returned, Sir?

Dug. He's certainly come, and you may see him within this hour or two.

Old Mir. Swear it, Mr. Dugard, presently swear it.

Dug. Sir, he came to town with me this morning; I left him at the Bagnieres, being a little disordered after riding, and I shall see him again presently.

Old Mir. What! and he was ashamed to ask a blessing with his boots on. A nice dog! Well, and how fares the young rogue? ha?

Dug. A fine gentleman, Sir. He'll be his own messenger.

Old Mir. A fine gentleman! But is the rogue like me still?

Dug. Why yes, Sir; he's very like his mother, and as like you as most modern sons are to their fathers.

Old Mir. Why, Sir, don't you think that I begat him?

Dug. Why yes, Sir; you married his mother, and he inherits your estate. He's very like you, upon my word.

Ori. And pray, brother, what's become of his honest companion, Duretete?

Dug. Who, the captain? The very same he went abroad; he's the only Frenchman I ever knew that could not change. Your son, Mr. Mirabel, is more obliged to nature for that fellow's composition than for his own; for he's more happy in Duretete's folly than his own wit. In short, they are as inseparable as finger and thumb; but the first instance in the world, I believe, of opposition in friendship.

Old Mir. Very well: will he be home to dinner, think ye?

Dug. Sir, he has ordered me to bespeak a dinner for us at Rousseau's, at a louis-d'or a head.

Old Mir. A louis-d'or a head! Well said, Bob; by the blood of the Mirabels, Bob's improved. But Mr. Dugard, was it so civil of Bob to visit Monsieur Rousseau before his own natural father, eh? Harkye, Oriana, what think you now of a fellow that can eat and drink ye a whole louis-d'or at a sitting? He must be as strong as Hercules, life and spirit in abundance. Before Gad, I don't wonder at these men of quality, that their own wives can't serve 'em. A

louis-d'or a head! 'tis enough to stock the whole nation with bastards; 'tis, faith. Mr. Dugard, I leave you with your sister. [*Exit.*]

Dug. Well, sister, I need not ask you how you do, your looks resolve me; fair, tall, well-shaped; you're almost grown out of my remembrance.

Ori. Why truly, brother, I look pretty well, thank nature and my toilet; I eat three meals a day, am very merry when up, and sleep soundly when I'm down.

Dug. But, sister, you remember that upon my going abroad you would choose this old gentleman for your guardian; he's no more related to our family than Prester John, and I have no reason to think you mistrusted my management of your fortune: therefore, pray be so kind as to tell me, without reservation, the true cause of making such a choice.

Ori. Lookye, brother, you were going a rambling, and 'twas proper, lest I should go a rambling too, that somebody should take care of me. Old Monsieur Mirabel is an honest gentleman, was our father's friend, and has a young lady in this house whose company I like, and who has chosen him for her guardian as well as I.

Dug. Who, Mademoiselle Bizarre?

Ori. The same; we live merrily together, without scandal or reproach; we make much of the old gentleman between us; and he takes care of us; we eat what we like, go to bed when we please, rise when we will, all the week we dance and sing, and upon Sundays go first to church, and then to the play.—Now, brother, besides these motives for choosing this gentleman for my guardian, perhaps I had some private reasons.

Dug. Not so private as you imagine, sister; your love to young Mirabel is no secret, I can assure you; but so public that all your friends are ashamed on't.

Ori. O my word, then my friends are very bashful; though I'm afraid, Sir, that those people are not ashamed enough at their own crimes, who have so many blushes to spare for the faults of their neighbours.

Dug. Ay but, sister, the people say—

Ori. Pshaw, hang the people; their court of inquiry is a tavern, and their informer claret; they think as they drink, and swallow reputations like loaches: a lady's health goes briskly round with the glass, but her honour is lost in the toast.

Dug. Ay; but, sister, there is still something—

Ori. If there be something, brother, 'tis none of the people's something; marriage is my thing, and I'll stick to't.

Dug. Marriage! Young Mirabel marry! He'll build churches sooner. Take heed, sister, though your honour stood proof to his home-bred assaults, you must keep a stricter guard for the future: he has now got the foreign air, and the Italian softness; his wit's improved by converse, his behaviour finished by observation, and his assurances confirmed by success. Sister, I can assure you he has made his conquests; and 'tis a plague upon your sex, to be the soonest deceived by those very men that you know have been false to others.

Ori. For heaven's sake, brother, tell me no more of his faults; for if you do, I shall run mad for him: say no more, Sir; let me but get him into the bands of matrimony, I'll spoil his wandering, I warrant him; I'll lo his business that way, never fear.

Dug. Well, sister, I won't pretend to understand the engagements between you and your lover; I expect when you have need of my council or assistance, you will let me know more of your affairs. Mirabel is a gentleman, and, as far as my honour and interest can reach, you may command me to the furtherance of your happiness: in the meantime, sister, I have a great mind to make you a present of another humble servant; a fellow that I took up at Lyons, who has served me honestly ever since.

Ori. Then why will you part with him?

Dug. He has gained so insufferably on my good humour, that he's grown too familiar; but the fellow's cunning, and may be serviceable to you in your affair with Mirabel. Here he comes.

Enter PETIT.

Well, Sir, have you been at Rousseau's?

Pet. Yes, Sir, and who should I find there but Mr. Mirabel and the captain, hatching as warmly over a tub of ice, as two hen pheasants over a brood.—They would not let me bespeak any thing, for they had dined before I came.

Dug. Come, Sir, you shall serve my sister; I shall still continue kind to you.—Wait on your lady home, Petit. *[Exit.]*

Pet. A chair, a chair, a chair!

Ori. No, no, I'll walk home, 'tis but next door. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—A Tavern.

MIRABEL and DURETETE rise from the table.

Mir. Welcome to Paris once more, my dear captain; we have eat heartily, drank roundly, paid plentifully, and let it go for once. I liked every thing but our women, they looked so lean and tawdry, poor creatures! 'tis a sure sign the army is not paid.—Give me the plump Venetian, brisk and sanguine, that smiles upon me like the glowing sun, and meets my lips like sparkling wine, her person shining as the glass, and spirit like the foaming liquor.

Dur. Ah, Mirabel, Italy, I grant you; but for our women here in France, they are such thin brawn-fallen jades.

Mir. There's nothing on this side the Alps worth my humble service 'tye—Ha, *Roma la santa!* Italy for my money; their customs, gardens, buildings, paintings, music, polices, wine, and women! the paradise of the world;—not pestered with a parcel of precise old gouty fellows, that would debar their children every pleasure that they themselves are past the sense of; commend me to the Italian familiarity: Here, son, there's fifty crowns; go pay your girl her week's allowance.

Dur. Ay, these are your fathers for you, that understand the necessities of young men; not like our musty dads, who, because they cannot fish themselves, would muddy the water, and spoil the sport of them that can. But now you talk of the plump, what d'ye think of a Dutch woman?

Mir. A Dutch woman's too compact; nay, every thing among them is so; a Dutch man is thick, a Dutch woman is squab, a Dutch horse is round, a Dutch dog is short, a Dutch ship is broad-bottomed; and, in short, one would swear the whole product of the country were cast in the same mould with their cheeses.

Dur. Ay, but, Mirabel, you have forgot the English ladies.

Mir. The women of England were excellent, did they not take such insufferable pains to ruin what nature has made so incomparably well. But come, Duretete, let us mind the business in hand; mistresses we must have, and must take up with the manufacture of the place, and upon a competent diligence we shall find those in Paris shall match the Italians from top to toe.

Dur. Ay, Mirabel, you will do well enough, but what will become of your friend? you know I am so plaguy bashful, so naturally an ass upon these occasions, that—

Mir. Pshaw, you must be bolder, man: travel three years, and bring home such a baby as bashfulness! A great lusty fellow! and a soldier! fie upon it.

Dur. Lookye, Sir, I can visit, and I can oggle a little—as thus, or thus now—but if they chance to give me a forbidding look, as some women, you know, have a devilish cast with their eyes—or if they cry—what d'ye mean? what d'ye take me for? Fie, Sir, remember who I am Sir—A person of quality to be used at this rate! 'egad, I'm struck as flat as a frying pan.

Mir. Words o'course! never mind 'em: turn you about upon your heel with a jantee air; hum out the end of an old song; cut a cross caper, and at her again.

Dur. *[Imitates him.]* No, hang it, 'twill never do.—Oons, what did my father mean by sticking me up in a university, or to think that I should gain any thing by my head, in a nation whose genius lies all in their heels?—Well, if ever I come to have children of my own, they shall have the education of the country; they shall learn to dance before they can walk, and be taught to sing before they can speak.

Mir. Come, come, throw off that childish humour; put on assurance, there's no avoiding it; stand all hazards, thou'rt a stout lusty fellow, and hast a good estate; look bluff, Hector, you have a good side-box face, a pretty impudent face; so, that's pretty well.—This fellow went abroad like an ox, and is returned like an ass. *[Aside]*

Dur. Let me see now how I look. *[Pulls out a pocket-glass, and looks on it.]* A side-box face, say you?—Fie, fie, I don't like it, Mirabel.—Fie, Sir, don't abuse your friends. I could not wear such a face for the best countess in Christendom.

Mir. Why can't you, blockhead, as well as I?

Dur. Why, thou hast impudence to set a good face upon a very thing; I would change half my gold for half thy brass, with all my heart. Who comes here? Odso, Mirabel, your father?

Enter OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Where's Bob? dear Bob?

Mir. Your blessing, Sir.

Old Mir. My blessing! Damn ye, ye young rogue; why did not you come to see your father first, Sirrah? My dear boy, I am heartily glad to see thee, my dear child, faith—Captain Duretete, by the blood of the Mirabels, I'm yours—my lads, ye look bravely, faith.—Bob, hast got any money left?

Mir. Not a farthing, Sir.

Old Mir. Why, then, I won't gi' thee a sous. *Mir.* I did but jest, here's ten pistoles.

Old Mir. Why, then here's ten more; I love to be charitable to those that don't want it:—Well, and how d'ye like Italy, my boys?

Mir. O the garden of the world, Sir; Rome, Naples, Venice, Milan, and a thousand others—all fine.

Old Mir. Ay, say you so? and they say, that Chiari is very fine too.

Dur. Indifferent, Sir, very indifferent; a very scurvy air; the most unwholesome to a French constitution in the world.

Mir. Pshaw, nothing on't; these rascally gazetteers have misinformed you.

Old Mir. Misinformed me! Oons, Sir, were not we beaten there?

Mir. Beaten, Sir, the French beaten!

Old Mir. Why, how was it, pray, sweet Sir?

Mir. Sir, the captain will tell you.

Dur. No, Sir, your son will tell you.

Mir. The captain was in the action, Sir.

Dur. Your son saw more than I, Sir, for he was a looker on.

Old Mir. Confound you both for a brace of cowards: here are no Germans to overhear you; why don't ye tell me how it was?

Mir. Why, then you must know, that we marched up a body of the finest, bravest, well-dressed fellows in the universe; our commanders at the head of us, all lace and feather, like so many beaux at a ball—I don't believe there was a man of 'em but could dance a charmer, morbleau.

Old Mir. Dance! very well, pretty fellows, faith!

Mir. We capered up to their very trenches, and there saw peeping over a parcel of scarecrow, olive-coloured, gunpowder fellows, as ugly as the devil.

Dur. 'Egad, I shall never forget the looks of them while I have breath to fetch.

Mir. They were so civil indeed as to welcome us with their cannon; but for the rest, we found them such unmannerly, rude, unsociable dogs, that we grew tired of their company, and so we even danced back again.

Old Mir. And did ye all come back!

Mir. No, two or three thousand of us stayed behind.

Old Mir. Why Bob, why?

Mir. Pshaw—because they could not come that night.—But come, Sir, we were talking of something else: pray how does your lovely charge, the fair Oriana?

Old Mir. Ripe, Sir, just ripe; you'll find it better engaging with her than with the Germans, let me tell you. And what would you say, my young Mars, if I had a Venus for thee too? come, Bob, your apartment is ready, and pray let your friend be my guest too; you shall command the house between ye, and I'll be as merry as the best of you. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—OLD MIRABEL'S House.

Enter ORIANA and BISARRE.

Bis. And you love this young rake, d'ye?

Ori. Yes.

Bis. In spite of all his ill usage?

Ori. I can't help it.

Bis. What's the matter wi' ye?

Ori. Pshaw!

Bis. O, hang all your Cassandras and Cleopatras for me.—Pr'ythee mind your airs, modes, and fashions; your stays, gowns, and feathers.

Ori. Pr'ythee be quiet Bizarre; you know can be as mad as you when this Mirabel is out of my head.

Bis. I warrant now, you'll play the fool when he comes, and say you love him; eh?

Ori. Most certainly;—I can't dissemble, Bizarre:—besides, 'tis past that, we're contracted.

Bis. Contracted! lack-a-day, poor thing. What you have changed rings, or broken an old broad-piece between you! Well, I must confess, I do love a little coquetting with all my heart! my business should be to break gold with my lover one hour, and crack my promise the next; he should find me one day with a prayer-book in my hand, and with a play-book another; he should have my consent to buy the wedding-ring, and the next moment would laugh in his face.

Ori. O my dear, were there no greater tie upon my heart than there is upon my conscience, I would soon throw the contract out of doors; but the mischief on't is, I am so fond of being tied that I'm forced to be just, and the strength of my passion keeps down the inclination of my sex. But here's the old gentleman.

Enter OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Where's my wenches? where's my two little girls, eh? have a care, look to yourselves, faith, they're a coming, the travellers are a coming. Well! which of you two will be my daughter-in-law now? Bizarre, Bizarre, what say you, mad-cap? Mirabel is a pure wild fellow.

Bis. I like him the worse.

Old Mir. You lie, hussy, you like him the better, indeed you do: what say you, my t'other little Filbert, eh?

Ori. I suppose the gentleman will choose for himself, Sir.

Old Mir. Why, that's discreetly said, and so he shall.

Enter MIRABEL and DURETETE, who salute the Ladies.

Bob, harkye, you shall marry one of these girls, Sirrah.

Mir. Sir, I'll marry 'em both, if you please.

Bis. He'll find that one may serve his turn.

[Aside.

Old Mir. Both! Why, you young dog, d'ye banter me?—Come, Sir, take your choice.—Duretete, you shall have your choice too; but Robin shall choose first. Come, Sir, begin.

Mir. Let me see.

Old Mir. Well! which d'ye like?

Mir. Both.

Old Mir. But which will you marry?

Mir. Neither.

Old Mir. Neither.—Don't make me angry, now, Bob; pray don't make me angry.—Lookye, Sirrah, if I don't dance at your wedding to-morrow, I shall be very glad to cry at your grave.

Mir. That's a bull, father.

Old Mir. A bull! Why, how now, ungrateful Sir, did I make thee a man, that thou shouldst make me a beast?

Mir. Your pardon, Sir. I only meant your expression.

Old Mir. Harkye, Bob, learn better manners to your father before strangers: I won't be angry this time.—But, oons, if ever you do it again, you rascal, remember what I say. [Exit.

Mir. Pshaw, what does the old fellow mean

by mewing me up here with a couple of green girls? Come, Duretete, will you go?

Ori. I hope, Mr. Mirabel, you han't forgot—

Mir. No, no, Madam, I han't forgot; I have brought you a thousand little Italian curiosities; I'll assure you, Madam, as far as a hundred pistoles would reach, I ha'n't forgot the least circumstance.

Ori. Sir, you misunderstand me.

Mir. Odso, the relics, Madam, from Rome. I do remember now you made a vow of chastity before my departure; a vow of chastity or something like it; was it not, Madam?

Ori. O, Sir, I'm answered at present. [*Exit.*]

Mir. She was coming full mouth upon me with her contract—Would I might despatch t'other. [*To Dur.*]

Dur. Mirabel—that lady there, observe her, she's wondrous pretty, faith, and seems to have but few words; I like her mainly; speak to her, man, pr'ythee speak to her. [*Apart to MIRABEL.*]

Mir. Madam, here's a gentleman, who declares—

Dur. Madam, don't believe him, I declare nothing—What the devil do you mean, man?

Mir. He says, Madam, that you are as beautiful as an angel.

Dur. He tells a damned lie, Madam; I say no such thing: are you mad, Mirabel? Why, I shall drop down with shame.

Mir. And so, Madam, not doubting but your ladyship may like him as well as he does you, I think it proper to leave you together.

[*Going; Dur. holds him.*]

Dur. Hold, hold—Why, Mirabel, friend, sure you wont be so barbarous as to leave me alone? Pr'ythee speak to her for yourself, as it were. Lord, Lord, that a Frechman should want impudence!

Mir. You look mighty demure, Madam—She's deaf, captain. [*Apart to Dur.*]

Dur. I had much rather have her dumb.

[*Apart.*]

Mir. The gravity of your air, Madam, promises some extraordinary fruits from your study, which moves us with curiosity to inquire the subject of your ladyship's contemplation. Not a word!

Dur. I hope in the Lord she's speechless; if she be, she's mine this moment.—Mirabel, d'ye think a woman's silence can be natural?—

[*Apart.*]

Bis. But the forms that logicians introduce, and which proceed from simple enumeration, are dubitable, and proceed only upon admittance—

Mir. Hoity-toity! what a plague have we here? Plato in petticoats.

Dur. Ay, ay, let her go on, man; she talks in my own mother tongue.

Bis. 'Tis exposed to invalidity from a contradictory instance, looks only upon common operations, and is infinite in its termination.

Mir. Rare pedantry.

Dur. Axioms! Axioms! Self evident principles.

Bis. Then the ideas wherewith the mind is preoccupied.—O gentlemen, I hope you'll pardon my cogitation; I was involved in a profound point of philosophy; but I shall discuss it somewhere else, being satisfied that the subject is not agreeable to your sparks that profess the vanity of the times. [*Exit.*]

Mir. Go thy way, good wife Bias: do you hear

Duretete? Dost hear this starched piece of austerity?

Dur. She's mine, man; she's mine: my own talent to a T. I'll match her in dialects, faith, I was seven years at the university, man, nursed up with Barbara, Celarunt, Darii, Ferio, Baralip-ton! Did you ever know, man, that 'twas metaphysics made me an ass? It was, faith. Had she talked a word of singing, dancing, plays, fashions, or the like, I had foundered at the first step; but as she is—Mirabel, wish me joy.

Mir. You don't mean marriage, I hope?

Dur. No, no, I am a man of more honour.

Mir. Bravely resolved, captain; now for thy credit, warm me this frozen snow-ball, 'twill be a conquest above the Alps.

Dur. But will you promise to be always near me?

Mir. Upon all occasions, never fear.

Dur. Why then you shall see me in two moments make an induction from my love to her hand, from her hand to her mouth, from her mouth to her heart, and so conclude in her bed, categorematic. [*Exit.*]

Mir. Now the game begins, and my fool is entered.—But here comes one to spoil my sport; now shall I be teased to death with this old-fashioned contract. I should love her too, if I might do it my own way; but she'll do nothing without witnesses, forsooth. I wonder women can be so immodest.

Enter ORIANA.

Well, Madam, why d'ye ye follow me?

Ori. Well, Sir, why do ye shun me?

Mir. 'Tis my humour, Madam, and I'm naturally swayed by inclination.

Ori. Have you forgot our contract, Sir?

Mir. All I remember of that contract is, that it was made some three years ago, and that's enough in conscience to forget the rest on't.

Ori. 'Tis sufficient, Sir, to recollect the passing of it; for in that circumstance I presume lies the force of the obligation.

Mir. Obligations, Madam, that are forced upon the will are no tie upon the conscience; I was a slave to my passion when I passed the instrument; but the recovery of my freedom makes the contract void.

Ori. Come, Mr. Mirabel, these expressions I expected from the rallery of your humour, but I hope for very different sentiments from your honour and generosity.

Mir. Lookye, Madam, as for my generosity, 'tis at your service, with all my heart: I'll keep you a coach and six horses, if you please, only permit me to keep my honour to myself; for I can assure you, Madam, that the thing called honour is a circumstance absolutely unnecessary in a natural correspondence between male and female; and he's a madman that lays it out, considering its scarcity, upon any such trivial occasions. There's honour required of us by our friends, and honour due to our enemies, and they return it to us again; but I never heard of a man that left but an inch of his honour in a woman's keeping, that could ever get the least account on't.—Consider, Madam, you have no such thing among ye, and 'tis a main point of policy to keep no faith with reprobates—thou art a pretty little reprobate, and so get thee about thy business.

Ori. Well, Sir, even all this I will allow to the

gaiety of your temper; your travels have improved your talent of talking, but they are not of force, I hope, to impair your morals.

Mir. Morals! Why there 'tis again now—I tell thee, child, there is not the least occasion for morals in any business between you and I—Don't you know, that of all commerce in the world there is no such cozenage and deceit as in the traffic between man and woman? We study all our lives long how to put tricks upon one another—No fowler lays abroad more nets for his game, nor a hunter for his prey, than you do to catch poor innocent men—Why do you sit three or four hours at your toilette in a morning? only with a villainous design to make some poor fellow a fool before night. What d'ye sigh for? What d'ye weep for? What d'ye pray for? Why, for a husband. That is, you implore Providence to assist you in the just and pious design of making the wisest of his creatures a fool, and the head of the creation a slave.

Ori. Sir, I am proud of my power, and am resolved to use it.

Mir. Hold, hold, Madam, not so fast—As you have variety of vanities to make coxcombs of us, so we have vows, oaths, and protestations, of all sorts and sizes, to make fools of you. And this, in short, my dear creature, is our present condition: I have sworn and lied briskly to gain my ends of you; your ladyship has patched and painted violently to gain your ends of me.—But since we are both disappointed, let us make a drawn battle, and part clear on both sides.

Ori. With all my heart, Sir; give me up my contract, and I'll never see your face again.

Mir. Indeed I won't, child.

Ori. What, Sir, neither do one nor t'other?

Mir. No; you shall die a maid, unless you please to be otherwise upon my terms.

Ori. Sir, you're a—

Mir. What am I, mistress?

Ori. A villain, Sir!

Mir. I'm glad on't—I never knew an honest fellow in my life, but was a villain upon these occasions.—Ha'n't you drawn yourself now into a very pretty dilemma? Ha, ha, ha! the poor lady has made a vow of virginity, when she thought of making a vow for the contrary. Was ever poor woman so cheated into chastity?

Ori. Sir, my fortune is equal to yours, my friends as powerful, and both shall be put to the test, to do me justice.

Mir. What! you'll force me to marry you, will ye?

Ori. Sir, the law shall.

Mir. But the law can't force me to do any thing else, can it?

Ori. Pshaw, I despise thee—monster.

Mir. Kiss and be friends then—Don't cry, child, and you shall have your sugar-plum—Come, Madam, d'ye think I could be so unreasonable as to make you fast all your life long? No, I did but jest, you shall have your liberty; here, take your contract, and give me mine.

Ori. No, I won't.

Mir. Eh! What, is the girl a fool?

Ori. No, Sir, you shall find me cunning enough to do myself justice; and since I must not depend upon your love, I'll be revenged, and force you to marry me out of spite.

Mir. Then I'll beat thee out of spite; and make a most confounded husband.

Ori. O Sir, I shall match ye: a good husband makes a good wife at any time.

Mir. I'll rattle down your china about your ears.

Ori. And I'll rattle about the city to run you in debt for more.

Mir. I'll tear the lace off your clothes, and when you swoon for vexation, you shan't have a penny to buy a bottle of hartshorn.

Ori. And you, Sir, shall have hartshorn in abundance.

Mir. I'll keep as many mistresses as I have coach-horses.

Ori. And I'll keep as many gallants as you have grooms.

Mir. But, sweet Madam, there is such a thing as a divorce.

Ori. But, sweet Sir, there is such a thing as alimony; so, divorce on, and spare not. [*Exit.*]

Mir. Ay, that separate maintenance is the devil—that's their refuge—o'my conscience, one would take cuckoldom for a meritorious action, because the women are so handsomely rewarded for't. [*Exit.*]

Enter DURETETE and PETIT.

Dur. And she's mighty peevish, you say?

Pet. O Sir, she has a tongue as long as my leg, and talks so crabbedly, you would think she always spoke Welsh.

Dur. That's an odd language methinks for her philosophy.

Pet. But sometimes she will sit you half a day without speaking a word, and talk oracles all the while by the wrinkles of her forehead, and the motions of her eyebrows.

Dur. Nay, I shall match her in philosophical ogles, faith; that's my talent: I can talk best, you must know, when I say nothing.

Pet. But d'ye ever laugh, Sir?

Dur. Laugh? Won't she endure laughing?

Pet. Why she's a critic, Sir; she hates a jest, for fear it should please her; and nothing keeps her in humour but what gives her the spleen. And then for logic, and all that, you know—

Dur. Ay, ay, I'm prepared: I have been practising hard words, and no sense, this hour, to entertain her.

Pet. Then place yourself behind this screen, that you may have a view of her behaviour before you begin.

Dur. I long to engage her, lest I should forget my lesson.

Pet. Here she comes, Sir, I must fly.

[*Exit PETIT; DURETETE stands peeping behind the curtain.*]

Enter BISARRE, with a book, and MAID.

Bis. Pshaw, hang books, they sour our temper, spoil our eyes, and ruin our complexions.

[*Throws away the book.*]

Dur. Eh! the devil such a word there is in all Aristotle.

Bis. Come, wench, let's be free, call in the fiddler, there's nobody near us.

Dur. Would to the Lord there was not.

Bis. Here, friend, a minuet!—quicker time; ha—would we had a man or two.

Dur. [*Stealing away.*] You shall have the devil sooner, my dear dancing philosopher!

Bis. Od's my life!—Here's one.

[*Pulls him back.*]

Dur. Is all my learned preparation come to this?

Bis. Come, Sir, don't be ashamed, that's my good boy—you're very welcome, we wanted such a one—Come, strike up. I know you dance well, Sir, you're finely shaped for't—Come, come, Sir; quick, quick, you miss the time else.

Dur. But, Madam, I came to talk with you.

Bis. Ay, ay, talk as you dance, talk as you dance, come.

Dur. But we were talking of dialectics.

Bis. Hang dialectics—Mind the time—quick, sirrah. [*To the fiddler.*] Come—and how d'ye find yourself now, Sir?

Dur. In a fine breathing sweat, doctor.

Bis. All the better, patient, all the better—Come, Sir, sing now, sing; I know you sing well; I see you have a singing face, a heavy, dull, sonata face.

Dur. Who, I sing?

Bis. O, you're modest, Sir—but come, sit down; closer, closer.—Here, a bottle of wine—Come, Sir, fa, la, la; sing, Sir.

Dur. But, Madam, I came to talk with you.

Bis. O Sir, you shall drink first. Come, fill me a bumper—here, Sir, bless the king.

Dur. Would I were out of his dominions! By this light, she'll make me drunk too. [*Aside.*]

Bis. O pardon me, Sir, you shall do me right; fill it higher.—Now, Sir, can you drink a health under your leg?

Dur. Rare philosophy that, faith.

Bis. Come, off with it to the bottom.—Now, how d'ye like me, Sir?

Dur. O, mighty well, Madam!

Bis. You see how a woman's fancy varies; sometimes splenetic and heavy, then gay and frolicsome.—And how d'ye like the humour?

Dur. Good Madam, let me sit down to answer you, for I am heartily tired.

Bis. Fie upon't; a young man, and tired! up, for shame, and walk about; action becomes us—a little faster, Sir—What d'ye think now of my lady La Pale, and lady Coquet, the duke's fair daughter? Ha! Are they not brisk lasses? Then there is black Mrs. Bellair, and brown Mrs. Bellface.

Dur. They are all strangers to me, Madam.

Bis. But let me tell you, Sir, that brown is not always despicable.

Dur. Upon my soul, I don't—

Bis. And then you must have heard of the English beau, Spleenamore, how unlike a gentleman—

Dur. Hey—not a syllable on't, as I hope to be saved, Madam.

Bis. No! why then play me a jig. Come, Sir.

Dur. By this light, I cannot; faith, Madam, I have sprained my leg.

Bis. Then sit you down, Sir: and now tell me what's your business with me? What's your errand? Quick, quick, despatch—Odso, may be you are some gentleman's servant, that has brought me a letter, or a haunch of venison.

Dur. 'Sdeath! Madam, do I look like a carrier?

Bis. O, cry you mercy; I saw you just now, I mistook you, upon my word: you are one of the travelling gentlemen—and pray, Sir, how do all our impudent friends in Italy?

Dur. Madam, I came to wait on you with a more serious intention, than your entertainment has answered.

Bis. Sir, your intention of waiting on me was the greatest affront imaginable, howe'er your expressions may turn it to a compliment; your visit, Sir, was intended as a prologue to a very scurvy play, of which Mr. Mirabel and you so handsomely laid the plot.—“Marry! No, no, I'm a man of more honour.” Where's your honour? Where's your courage now? Ads my life, Sir, I have a great mind to kick you.—Go, go to your fellow-rake now, rail at my sex, and get drunk for vexation, and write a lampoon—But I must have you to know, Sir, that my reputation is above the scandal of a libel, my virtue is sufficiently approved to those whose opinion is my interest: and, for the rest, let them talk what they will; for when I please, I'll be what I please, in spite of you and all mankind; and so, my dear man of honour if you be tired, con over this lesson, and sit there till I come to you. [*Runs off.*]

Dur. Tum ti dum. [*Sings.*] Ha, ha, ha! —“Ads my life, I have a great mind to kick you!” —Oons and confusion! [*Starts up.*] Was ever man so abused?—Ay, Mirabel set me on.

Re-enter PETIT.

Pet. Well, Sir, how d'ye find yourself?

Dur. You son of a nine-eyed whore, d'ye come to abuse me? I'll kick you with a vengeance, you dog.

[*PETIT runs off, and DUR. after him.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter OLD MIRABEL and MIRAEEL.

Old Mir. Bob, come hither, Bob.

Mir. Your pleasure, Sir?

Old Mir. Are not you a great rogue, sirrah?

Mir. That's a little out of my comprehension, Sir; for I've heard say that I resemble my father.

Old Mir. Your father is your very humble slave—I tell thee what, child, thou art a very pretty fellow, and I love thee heartily; and a very great villain, and I hate thee mortally.

Mir. Villain, Sir! Then I must be a very impudent one, for I can't recollect any passage of my life that I'm ashamed of.

Old Mir. Come hither, my dear friend; dost see this picture? [*Shows him a little picture.*]

Mir. Oriana's! Pshaw!

Old Mir. What Sir, won't you look upon't? —Bob, dear Bob, pr'ythee come hither now—Dost want any money, child?

Mir. No, Sir.

Old Mir. Why then here's some for thee; come here now—How canst thou be so hard-hearted, an unnatural, unmannerly rascal (don't mistake me, child, I an't angry,) as to abuse this tender, lovely, good-natured, dear rogue?—Why, she sighs for thee, and cries for thee, pouts for thee, and snubs for thee; the poor little heart of it is like to burst—Come, my dear boy, be good-natured like your own father, be now—and then see here, read this—the effigies of the lovely Oriana, with ten thousand pounds to her portion—ten thousand pounds, you dog; ten thousand pounds, you rogue. How dare you refuse a lady with ten thousand pounds, you impudent rascal?

Mir. Will you hear me speak, Sir?

Old Mir. Hear you speak, Sir! If you had ten

thousand tongues, you could not out-talk ten thousand pounds, Sir.

Mir. Nay, Sir, if you won't hear me, I'll be gone, Sir! I'll take post for Italy this moment.

Old Mir. Ah! the fellow knows I went part with him. [*Aside.*] Well, Sir, what have you to say?

Mir. The universal reception, Sir, that marriage has had in the world, is enough to fix it for a public good, and to draw every body into the common cause; but there are some constitutions like some instruments, so peculiarly singular, that they make terrible music by themselves, but never do well in a concert.

Old Mir. Why this is reason, I must confess; but yet it is nonsense too: for though you should reason like an angel, if you argue yourself out of a good estate, you talk like a fool.

Mir. But, Sir, if you bribe into bondage with the riches of Cressus, you leave me but a beggar for want of my liberty.

Old Mir. Was ever such a perverse fool heard? 'Sdeath, Sir, why did I give you education? was it to dispute me out of my senses? Of what colour now is the head of this cane? You'll say 'tis white, and ten to one make me believe it too—I thought that young fellows studied to get money.

Mir. No, Sir, I have studied to despise it; my reading was not to make me rich, but happy, Sir.

Old Mir. There he has me again now. [*Aside.*] But, Sir, did not I marry to oblige you?

Mir. To oblige me, Sir! In what respect, pray?

Old Mir. Why, to bring you into the world, Sir; wa'n't that an obligation?

Mir. And because I would have it still an obligation, I avoid marriage.

Old Mir. How is that, Sir?

Mir. Because I would not curse the hour I was born.

Old Mir. Lookye, friend, you may persuade me out of my designs, but I'll command you out of yours; and though you may convince my reason that you are in the right, yet there is an old attendant of sixty-three, called positiveness, which you, nor all the wits in Italy, shall ever be able to shake: so, Sir, you're a wit, and I'm a father: you may talk, but I'll be obeyed.

Mir. This it is to have the son a finer gentleman than the father; they first give us breeding that they don't understand, then they turn us out of doors 'cause we are wiser than ourselves. But I'm a little beforehand with the old gentleman. [*Aside.*] Sir, you have been pleased to settle a thousand pounds sterling a year upon me; in return of which, I have a very great honour for you and your family, and shall take care that your only and beloved son shall do nothing to make him hate his father, or to hang himself. So, dear Sir, I'm your very humble servant.

[*Runs off.*]

Old Mir. Here, sirrah, rogue, Bob, villain!

Enter DUGARD.

Dug. Ah, Sir, 'tis but what he deserves.

Old Mir. 'Tis false, Sir, he don't deserve it; what have you to say against my boy, Sir?

Dug. I shall only repeat your own words.

Old Mir. What have you to do with my words? I have swallowed my words already, I have eaten them up, and how can you come at 'em, Sir?—I say that Bob's an honest fellow, and who dares deny it?

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Enter BISARRE.

Bis. That dare I, Sir—I say that your son is a wild, foppish, whimsical, impertinent coxcomb; and were I abused as this gentleman's sister is, I would make it an Italian quarrel, and poison the whole family.

Dug. Come, Sir, 'tis no time for trifling; my sister is abused, you are made sensible of the affront, and your honour is concerned to see her redressed.

Old Mir. Lookye, Mr. Dugard, good words go farthest. I will do your sister justice, but it must be after my own rate; nobody must abuse my son but myself. For although Robin be a sad dog, yet he's nobody's puppy but my own.

Bis. Ay, that's my sweet-natured, kind old gentleman—[*Wheeling him.*] We will be good then, if you'll join with us in the plot.

Old Mir. Ah, you coaxing young baggage, what plot can you have to wheedle a fellow of sixty-three?

Bis. A plot that sixty-three is only good for, to bring other people together, Sir: a Spanish Plot, less dangerous than that of eighty-eight; and you must act the Spaniard, 'cause your son will least suspect you; and if he should, your authority protects you from a quarrel, to which Oriana is unwilling to expose her brother.

Old Mir. And what part will you act in the business, Madam?

Bis. Myself, Sir. My friend is grown a perfect changeling: these foolish hearts of ours spoil our heads presently; the fellows no sooner turn knaves, but we turn fools. But I am still myself; and he may expect the most severe usage from me, 'cause I neither love him nor hate him. [*Exit.*]

Old Mir. Well said, Mrs. Paradox; but, Sir, who must open the matter to him?

Dug. Petit, Sir, who is our engineer-general. And here he comes.

Enter PETIT.

Pet. O, Sir, more discoveries! are all friends about us?

Dug. Ay, ay, speak freely.

Pet. You must know, Sir—Od's my life, I'm out of breath; you must know, Sir—you must know—

Old Mir. What the devil must we know, Sir?

Pet. That I have [*Pants and blows.*] bribed, Sir, bribed—your son's secretary of state.

Old Mir. Secretary of state!—who's that, for heaven's sake?

Pet. His valet-de-chambre, Sir! you must know, Sir, that the intrigue lay folded up with his master's clothes; and when he went to dust the embroidered suit, the secret flew out of the right pocket of his coat, in a whole swarm of your crambo songs, short-footed odes, and long-legged Pindarics.

Old Mir. Impossible!

Pet. Ah, Sir, he has loved her all along; there was Oriana in every line, but he hates marriage. Now, Sir, this plot will stir up his jealousy, and we shall know by the strength of that how to proceed farther.—Come, Sir, let's about it with speed. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter MIRABEL and BISARRE, passing carelessly by one another.

Bis. I wonder what she can see in this fellow to like him! [*Aside.*]

Mir. I wonder what my friend can see in this girl to admire her! [*Aside.*]

Bis. A wild, foppish, extravagant rake.

Mir. A light, whimsical, impertinent madcap. [*Aside.*]

Bis. Whom do you mean, Sir?

Mir. Whom do you mean, Madam?

Bis. A fellow that has nothing left to re-establish him for a human creature, but a prudent resolution to hang himself.

Mir. There is a way, Madam, to force me to that resolution.

Bis. I'll do it with all my heart.

Mir. Then you must marry me.

Bis. Lookye, Sir, don't think your ill manners or me shall excuse your ill usage of my friend, nor my fixing a quarrel here, to divert my zeal for the absent: for I'm resolved, nay, I come prepared, to make you a panegyric that shall mortify your pride like any modern dedication.

Mir. And I, Madam, like a true modern patron, shall hardly give you thanks for your trouble.

Bis. Come, Sir, to let you see what little foundation you have for your dear sufficiency, I'll take you to pieces.

Mir. And what piece will you choose?

Bis. Your heart, to be sure; 'cause I should get presently rid on't; your courage I would give to a Hector, your wit to a play-maker, your honour to an attorney, your body to the physicians, and your soul to its Master.

Mir. I had the oddest dream last night of the duchess of Burgundy; methought the furbelows of her gown were pinned up so high behind, that I could not see her head for her tail.

Bis. The creature don't mind me! [*Aside.*] Do you think, Sir, that your humourous impertinence can divert me? No, Sir, I'm above any pleasure that you can give, but that of seeing you miserable. And mark me, Sir, my friend, my injured friend, shall yet be doubly happy, and you shall be a husband as much as the rites of marriage, and the breach of them, can make you.

[*MIRABEL pulls out a Virgil, and reads to himself.*]

Mir. "At regina dolos, (quis fallere possit amantem?)

Dissimulare etiam sperasti, perfide tantum,"

Very true,
"Posse nefas."

By your favour, friend Virgil, 'twas but a rascally trick of your hero to forsake poor Pug so inhumanly.

Bis. I don't know what to say to him. [*Aside.*] The devil—what's Virgil to us, Sir?

Mir. Very much, Madam; the most a-propos in the world—for what should I chop upon but the very place where the perjured rogue of a lover and the forsaken lady are battling it tooth and nail. Come, Madam, spend your spirits no longer; we'll take an easier method; I'll be Æneas now, and you shall be Dido, and we'll rail by book. Now for you, Madam Dido.

"Nec te noster amor, nec te data dextera quondam,

Nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido."—
Ah, poor Dido! [*Looks at her.*]

Bis. Rudeness, affronts, impatience! I could almost start out even to manhood, and want but a weapon as long as his to fight him upon the spot. What shall I say? [*Aside.*]

Mir. Now she rants—

"Quæ quibus anteferam? Jam jam nec maxima Juno."

Bis. A man! No, the woman's birth was spirited away.

Mir. Right, right, Madam: the very words.

Bis. And some pernicious elf left in the cradle, with human shape, to palliate growing mischief.

[*Speak together, and raise their voices by degrees.*]

Mir. "Perfide, sed duris genuit te cautibus horrens

Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admorunt Ubera Tygres."

Bis. Go, Sir, fly to your midnight revels—

Mir. Excellent!

"I sequare Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas,

Spero egidem mediis, si quid pia Numina possunt." [*Together again.*]

Bis. Now the devil take his impudence! he vexes me so, I don't know whether to cry or laugh at him. [*Aside.*]

Mir. Bravely performed, my dear Libyan. I'll write the tragedy of Dido, and you shall act the part: but you do nothing at all, unless you fret yourself into a fit, for here the poor lady is stifled with vapours, drops into the arms of her maids; and the cruel, barbarous, deceitful wanderer is in the very next line called pious Æneas.—There's authority for ye.

Sorry indeed Æneas stood

To see her in a pout;

But Jove himself, who ne'er thought good

To stay a second bout,

Commands him off with all his crew,
And leaves poor Dy, as I leave you.

[*Runs off.*]

Bis. Go thy ways, for a dear, mad, deceitful, agreeable fellow. O my conscience, I must excuse Oriana.

That lover soon his angry fair disarms.

Whose slighting pleases, and whose faults are charms.

Re-enter PETIT, who runs about to every door, and knocks.

Pet. Mr. Mirabel! Sir, where are you? nowhere to be found?

Re-enter MIRABEL.

Mir. What's the matter, Petit?

Pet. Most critically met—Ah, Sir, that one who has followed the game so long, and brought the poor hare just under his paws, should let a mongrel cur chop in, and run away with the puss.

Mir. If your worship can get out of your allegories, be pleased to tell me in three words what you mean!

Pet. Plain, plain, Sir. Your mistress and mine is going to be married.

Mir. I believe you lie, Sir.

Pet. Your humble servant, Sir. [*Going.*]

Mir. Come hither, Petit. Married, say you?

Pet. No, Sir, 'tis no matter; I only thought to do you a service, but I shall take care how I confer my favours for the future.

Mir. Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons.

[*Bows low.*]

Pet. 'Tis enough, Sir—I come to tell you, Sir, that Oriana is this moment to be sacrificed; married past redemption.

Mir. I understand her; she'll take a husband out of spite to me, and then out of love to me she will make him a cuckold. But who is the happy man?

Pet. A lord, Sir.

Mir. I'm her ladyship's most humble servant; a train and a title; hey! Room for my lady's coach! a front row in the box for her ladyship! Lights, lights, for her honour!—Now must I be a constant attender at my lord's levee, to work my way to my lady's couchee—a countess, I presume, Sir.

Pet. A Spanish count, Sir, that Mr. Dugard knew abroad, is come to Paris, saw your mistress yesterday, marries her to-day, and whips her into Spain to-morrow.

Mir. Ay, is it so? and must I follow my cuckold over the Pyrennees? Had she married within the precincts of a billet-doux, I would be the man to lead her to church; but, as it happens, I'll forbid the banns. Where is this mighty don?

Pet. Have a care, Sir; he's a rough, cross-grained piece, and there's no tampering with him. Would you apply to Mr. Dugard, or the lady herself, something might be done; for it is in despite to you that the business is carried so hastily. Odso, Sir, here he comes. I must be gone. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter OLD MIRABEL, dressed in a Spanish habit, leading ORIANA.

Ori. Good, my lord, a nobler choice had better suited your lordship's merit. My person, rank, and circumstance expose me as the public theme of railery, and subject me so to injurious usage, my lord, that I can lay no claim to any part of your regard, except your pity.

Old Mir. Breathes he vital air, that dares presume

With rude behaviour to profane such excellence? Show me the man—

And you shall see how my sudden revenge

Shall fall upon the head of such presumption.

Is this thing one? *[Strutting up to MIRABEL.]*

Mir. Sir!

Ori. Good, my lord.

Old Mir. If he, or any he—

Ori. Pray, my lord, the gentleman's a stranger.

Old Mir. O, your pardon, Sir—but if you had—remember, Sir—the lady now is mine, her injuries are mine; therefore, Sir, you understand me—Come, Madam.

[Leads ORIANA to the door; she goes off. MIRABEL runs to his father, and pulls him by the sleeve.]

Mir. Ecoutez, Monsieur le Count.

Old Mir. Your business, Sir?

Mir. Boh!

Old Mir. Boh! What language is that, Sir?

Mir. Spanish, my lord.

Old Mir. What d'ye mean?

Mir. This, Sir. *[Trips up his heels.]*

Old Mir. A very concise quarrel, truly—I'll bully him. *[Aside.]* Trinidade Seigneur, give me fair play. *[Offers to rise.]*

Mir. By all means, Sir. *[Takes away his sword.]* Now, Seigneur, where's that bombast look and fustian face your countship wore just now? *[Strikes him.]*

Old Mir. But hold, sirrah, no more jesting; I'm your father, Sir, your father!

Mir. My father! Then by this light I could

find in my heart to pay thee. *[Aside.]* Is the fellow mad? Why sure, Sir, I ha'n't frightened you out of your senses?

Old Mir. But you have, Sir.

Mir. Then I'll beat them into you again.

[Offers to strike him.]

Old Mir. Why, rogue—Bob, dear Bob, don't you know me, child?

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! the fellow's downright distracted! Thou miracle of impudence! wouldst thou make me believe that such a grave gentleman as my father would go a masquerading thus? That a person of threescore and three would run about in a fool's coat to disgrace himself and family? Why, you impudent villain, do you think I will suffer such an affront to pass upon my honoured father, my worthy father, my dear father? 'Sdeath, Sir, mention my father but once again, and I'll send your soul to thy grandfather this minute! *[Offers to stab him.]*

Old Mir. Well, well, I am not your father.

Mir. Why then, Sir, you are the saucy, hectoring Spaniard, and I'll use you accordingly.

Old Mir. The devil take the Spaniards, Sir: we have all got nothing but blows since we began to take their part.

Re-enter DUGARD, ORIANA, and PETIT; with MAID. DUGARD runs to MIRABEL, the rest to OLD MIRABEL.

Dag. Fie, fie, Mirabel, murder your father!

Mir. My father! What, is the whole family mad? Give me way, Sir: I won't be held.

Old Mir. No, nor I either; let me be gone, pray.

Mir. My father!

[Offers to go.]

Old Mir. Ay, you dog's face! I am your father; for I have bore as much for thee as your mother ever did.

Mir. O ho! then this was a trick it seems, a design, a contrivance, a stratagem—Oh! how my bones ache!

Old Mir. Your bones, sirrah; why yours?

Mir. Why, Sir, ha'n't I been beating my own flesh and blood all this while? O, Madam. *[To ORIANA.]* I wish your ladyship joy of your new dignity. Here was a contrivance indeed.

Pet. The contrivance was well enough, Sir; for they imposed upon us all.

Mir. Well, my dear Dulcinea, did your Don Quixote battle for you bravely? My father will answer for the force of my love.

Ori. Pray, Sir, don't insult the misfortunes of your own creating.

Dug. My prudence will be counted cowardice, if I stand tamely now. *[Aside: Comes up between MIRABEL and his sister.]* Well, Sir!

Mir. Well, Sir! Do you take me for one of your tenants, Sir, that you put on your landlord face at me!

Dug. On what presumption, Sir, dare you assume thus?

Old Mir. What's that to you, Sir? *[Drauss.]*

Pet. Help! help! the lady faints.

Mir. Vapours! vapours! she'll come to herself. If it be an angry fit, a dram of assafetida—If jealousy, hartshorn in water—If the mother, burnt feathers—If grief, ratifia—If it be strait stays or corns, there's nothing like a dram of plain brandy. *[Exit.]*

Ori. Hold off; give me air—O, my brother, would you preserve my life, endange' not your

own; would you defend my reputation, leave it to itself. 'Tis a dear vindication that's purchased by the sword; for though our champion proves victorious, yet our honour is wounded.

Old Mir. Ay, and your lover may be wounded, that's another thing. But I think you are pretty brisk again, my child.

Ori. Ay, Sir, my indisposition was only a pretence to divert the quarrel; the capricious taste of your sex excuses this artifice in ours:

*For often, when our chief perfections fail,
Our chief defects with foolish men prevail.*

[Exit.

Pet. Come, Mr. Dugard, take courage; there is a way still left to fetch him again.

Old Mir. Sir, I'll have no plot that has any relation to Spain.

Dug. I scorn all artifice whatsoever; my sword shall do her justice.

Pet. Pretty justice, truly! Suppose you run him through the body; you run her through the heart at the same time.

Old Mir. And me through the head—rot your sword, Sir; we'll have plots; come, Petit, let's hear.

Pet. What if she pretended to go into a nunnery, and so bring him about to declare himself?

Dug. That I must confess has a face.

Old Mir. A face! A face like an angel, Sir. Ads my life, Sir, 'Tis the most beautiful plot in Christendom. We'll about it immediately.

[Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—OLD MIRABEL'S House.

Enter OLD MIRABEL and DUGARD.

Dug. The lady abbess is my relation, and privy to the plot.

Old Mir. Ay, ay, this nunnery will bring him about, I warrant ye.

Enter DURETETE.

Dur. Here, where are ye all?—O! Mr. Mirabel, you have done fine things for your posterity—And you, Mr. Dugard, may come to answer this—I come to demand my friend at your hands: restore him, Sir, or—

[To OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Restore him! What, d'ye think I have got him in my trunk, or my pocket?

Dur. Sir, he's mad, and you're the cause on't.

Old Mir. That may be; for I was as mad as he when I begot him.

Dug. Mad, Sir! what d'ye mean?

Dur. What do you mean, Sir, by shutting up your sister yonder to talk like a parrot through a cage? or a decoy duck, to draw others into the snare? Your son, Sir, because she has deserted him, has forsaken the world; and in three words, has—

[To OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Hanged himself!

Dur. The very same—turned friar.

Old Mir. You lie, Sir; 'tis ten times worse. Bob turned friar!—Why should the fellow shave his foolish crown, when the same razor may cut his throat?

Dur. If you have any command, or you any interest over him, lose not a minute; he has thrown himself into the next monastery, and has ordered me to pay off his servants, and discharge his equipage.

Old Mir. Let me alone to ferret him out; I'll sacrifice the abbot, if he receives him; I'll try whether the spiritual or the natural father has the most right to the child.—But, dear captain, what has he done with his estate?

Dur. Settled it upon the church, Sir.

Old Mir. The church! Nay, then the devil won't get him out of their clutches—Ten thousand livres a year upon the church! 'Tis downright sacrilege—Come, gentleman, all hands to work; for half that sum, one of these monasteries shall protect you a traitor from the law, a rebellious wife from her husband, and a disobedient son from his own father.

[Exit.

Dug. But will you persuade me that he's gone to a monastery?

Dur. Is your sister gone to the Filles Repenties? I tell you, Sir, she's not fit for the society of repenting maids.

Dug. Why so, Sir?

Dur. Because she's neither one nor t'other; she's too old to be a maid, and too young to repent.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—The Inside of a Monastery.

ORIANA discovered in a Nun's habit, with BISARRE.

Ori. I hope, Bisarre, there is no harm in jesting with this religious habit?

Bis. To me, the greatest jest in the habit is taking it in earnest; I don't understand this imprisoning people with the keys of paradise, nor the merit of that virtue which comes by constraint. But I must be gone upon my affairs; I have brought my captain about again.

Ori. But why will you trouble yourself with that coxcomb?

Bis. Because he is a coxcomb; had I not better have a lover like him, that I can make an ass of, than a lover like yours, to make a fool of me. [Knocking below.] A message from Mirabel, I'll lay my life. [She runs to the door.] Come hither, run; thou charming nun, come hither.

Ori. What's the news?

Bis. Don't you see who's below?

Ori. I see nobody but a friar.

Bis. Ah! thou poor blind Cupid! O'my conscience, these hearts of ours spoil our heads instantly! the fellows no sooner turn knaves than we turn fools. A friar! don't you see a villanous genteel mien under that cloak of hypocrisy?

Ori. As I live, Mirabel turned friar! I hope in heaven, he's not in earnest.

Bis. In earnest: ha, ha, ha! are you in earnest? Now's your time; this disguise he has certainly taken for a passport, to get in and try your resolutions; stick to your habit, to be sure; treat him with disdain, rather than anger: for pride becomes us more than passion; remember what I say, if you would yield to advantage, and hold out the attack; to draw him on, keep him off, to be sure.

The cunning gamesters never gain too fast,

But lose at first, to win the more at last. [Exit.

Enter MIRABEL in a Friar's habit.

Mir. Save you, sister—Your brother, young lady, having a regard for your soul's health, hath sent me to prepare you for the sacred habit by confession.

Ori. That's false; the cloven foot already.

[*Aside.*] My brother's care I own; and to you, sacred Sir, I confess, that the great crying sin which I have long indulged, and now prepare to expiate, was love.

Mir. She's downright stark mad in earnest; death and confusion, I have lost her! [*Aside.*] You confess your fault, Madam, in such moving terms, that I could almost be in love with the sin.

Ori. Take care, Sir; crimes, like virtues, are their own rewards; my chief delight became my only grief; he in whose breast I thought my heart secure, turned robber, and despoiled the treasure that he kept.

Mir. Perhaps that treasure he esteems so much, that, like the miser, though afraid to use it, he reserves it safe.

Ori. No, holy father: who can be miser in another's wealth, that's prodigal of his own? His heart was open, shared to all he knew; and what, alas! must then become of mine? but the same eyes that drew this passion in, shall send it out in tears, to which now hear my vow—

Mir. [*Discovering himself.*] No, my fair angel, but let me repent: here on my knees, behold the criminal that vows repentance his.—Ha! no concern upon her?

Enter OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Where, where's this counterfeit nun?

Ori. Madness! confusion! I'm ruined!

Mir. What do I hear? [*Puts on his hood.*] What did you say, Sir?

Old Mir. I say she's a counterfeit, and you may be another, for aught I know, Sir; I have lost my child by these tricks, Sir.

Mir. What tricks, Sir?

Old Mir. By a pretended trick, Sir. A contrivance to bring my son to reason, and it has made him stark mad; I have lost him and a thousand pounds a year.

Mir. [*Discovering himself.*] My dear father, I'm your most humble servant.

Old Mir. My dear boy, welcome ex inferis, my dear boy; 'tis all a trick, she's no more a nun than I am.

Mir. No!

Old Mir. The devil a bit.

Mir. Then thank ye, my dear dad, for the most happy news—And now, most venerable holy sister

[*Kneels.*]

*Your mercy and your pardon I implore,
For the offence of asking it before.*

Lookye, my dear counterfeiting nun, take my advice, be a nun in good earnest; women make the best nuns always when they can't do otherwise.

Ori. O! Sir, how, unhappily have you destroyed what was so near perfection! He is the counterfeit that has deceived you.

Old Mir. Ha! Lookye, Sir, I recant, she is a nun.

Mir. Sir, your humble servant, then I'm a friar this moment.

Old Mir. Was ever an old fool so bantered by a brace o' young ones; hang you both, you're both counterfeits, and my plot's spoiled, that's all.

Ori. Shame and confusion, love, anger, and disappointment, will work my brain to madness.

[*Exit.*]

Mir. Ay, ay, throw by the rags, they have

served a turn for us both, and they shall e'en go off together.

[*Exit, throwing away the habit.*]

SCENE III—OLD MIRABEL'S House.

Enter DURETETE, with a letter.

Dur. [*Reads.*] My rudeness was only a proof of your humour, which I have found so agreeable, that I own myself penitent, and willing to make any reparation upon your first appearance to

BISARRE.

Mirabel swears she loves me, and this confirms it; then farewell gallantry, and welcome revenge; 'tis my turn now to be upon the sublime; I'll take her off, I warrant her.

Enter BISARRE.

Well, mistress, do you love me?

Bis. I hope, Sir, you will pardon the modesty of—

Dur. Of what? of a dancing devil?—Do you love me, I say?

Bis. Perhaps I—

Dur. What?

Bis. Perhaps, I do not.

Dur. Ha! abused again! Death, woman, I'll—

Bis. Hold, hold, Sir; I do, I do!

Dur. Confirm it then by your obedience; stand there, and ogle me now, as if your heart, blood, and soul, were like to fly out at your eyes—First, the direct surprise. [*She looks full upon him.*] Right; next the *deux yeux par oblique*. [*She gives him the side glance.*] Right; now depart and languish. [*She turns from him and looks over her shoulder.*] Very well; now sigh. [*She sighs.*] Now drop your fan on purpose. [*She drops her fan.*] Now take it up again: Come now, confess your faults; are you not a proud—say after me.

Bis. Proud.

Dur. Impertinent.

Bis. Impertinent.

Dur. Ridiculous.

Bis. Ridiculous.

Dur. Flirt.

Bis. Puppy.

Dur. Zoons! woman, don't provoke me; we are alone, and you don't know but the devil may tempt me to do you a mischief; ask my pardon immediately.

Bis. I do, Sir; I only mistook the word.

Dur. Cry then: have you got e'er a handkerchief?

Bis. Yes, Sir.

Dur. Cry, then, handsomely; cry like a queen in a tragedy.

[*She pretends to cry, bursts out a laughing.*]

Enter six LADIES, laughing.

Bis. Ha, ha, ha!

Ladies. Ha, ha, ha!

Dur. Hell broke loose upon me, and all the furies fluttered about my ears! Betrayed again!

Bis. That you are, upon my word, my dear captain; ha, ha, ha!

Dur. The Lord deliver me!

1 Lady. What! is this the mighty man with the bullface, that comes to frighten ladies?

Bis. A man! It's some great dairy-maid in man's clothes.

Dur. Lookye, dear Christian women, pray hear me.

Bis. Will you ever attempt a lady's honour again?

Dur. If you please to let me get away with my honour, I'll do any thing in the world.

Bis. Will you persuade your friend to marry mine?

Dur. O yes, to be sure.

Bis. And will you do the same by me?

Dur. Burn me if I do, if the coast be clear.

[*Exit.*]

Bis. Ha, ha, ha! Come, ladies, we'll go make an end of our tea.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MIRABEL and OLD MIRABEL.

Mir. Your patience, Sir. I tell you I won't marry; and though you send all the bishops in France to persuade me, I shall never believe their doctrine against their practice. You would compel me to that state, which I have heard you curse yourself, when my mother and you have battled it for a whole week together.

Old Mir. Never but once, you rogue, and that was when she longed for six Flanders mares: ay, Sir, then she was breeding of you, which showed what an expensive dog I should have of you.

Enter PETIT.

Well, Petit, how does she now?

Pet. Mad, Sir, *con pompos*—Ay, Mr. Mirabel, you'll believe that I speak truth now, when I confess that I have told you hitherto nothing but lies; our jesting is come to a sad earnest, she's downright distracted.

Re-enter BISARRE.

Bis. Where is this mighty victor?—The great exploit is done; go triumph in the glory of your conquest, inhuman, barbarous man! O Sir, [*To OLD MIRABEL.*] your wretched ward has found a tender guardian of you; where her young innocence expected protection, here has she found her ruin.

Old Mir. Ay, the fault is mine; for I believe that rogue wont marry, for fear of begetting such another disobedient son as his father did. I have done all I can, Madam, and now can do no more than run mad for company.

[*Cries.*]

Enter DUGARD, with his sword drawn.

Dug. Away! Revenge, revenge.

Old Mir. Patience, patience, Sir. [*OLD MIRABEL holds him.*] Bob, draw.

[*Aside.*]

Dug. Patience! The coward's virtue, and the brave man's failing, when thus provoked—Villain!

Mir. Your sister's frenzy shall excuse your madness; and to show my concern for what she suffers, I'll bear the villain from her brother.—Put up your anger with your sword; I have a heart like yours, that swells at an affront received, but melts at an injury given; and if the lovely Oriana's grief be such a moving scene, 'twill find a part within this breast, perhaps as tender as a brother's.

Dug. To prove that soft compassion for her grief, endeavour to remove it.—There, there, behold an object that's infective; I cannot view her, but I am as mad as she.

Enter ORIANA; they place her in a chair.

A sister that my dying parents left with their last words and blessing to my care. Sister, dearest sister.

Old Mir. Ay, poor child, poor child, d'ye know me?

Ori. You! you are Amadis de Gaul, Sir;—Oh! oh my heart! Were you never in love, fair lady? And do you never dream of flowers and gardens?—I dream of walking fires, and tall gigantic sights. Take heed, it comes now—What's that? Pray stand away: I have seen that face sure—How light my head is!

Mir. What piercing charms has beauty even in madness—Come, Madam, try to repose a little.

Ori. I cannot; for I must be up to go to church, and I must dress me, put on my new gown, and be so fine, to meet my love. Hey, ho!—Will not you tell me where my heart lies buried?

Mir. My very soul is touched—Your hand, my fair.

Ori. How soft and gentle you feel! I'll tell you your fortune, friend.

Mir. How she stares upon me!

Ori. You have a flattering face; but 'tis a fine one—I warrant you have five hundred mistresses—Ay, to be sure, a mistress for every guinea in his pocket—Will you pray for me? I shall die tomorrow—And will you ring my passing-bell?

Mir. Do you know me, injured creature?

Ori. No,—but you shall be my intimate acquaintance—in the grave.

[*Weeps.*]

Mir. O tears, I must believe you; sure there's a kind of sympathy in madness; for even I, obdurate as I am, do feel my soul so tossed with storms of passion, that I could cry for help as well as she.

[*Wipes his eyes.*]

Ori. What, have you lost your lover? No, you mock me; I'll go home and pray.

Mir. Stay, my fair innocence, and hear me own my love so loud that I may call your senses to their place, restore 'em to their charming, happy functions, and reinstate myself into your favour.

Bis. Let her alone, Sir, 'tis all too late; she trembles, hold her; her fits grow stronger by her talking; don't trouble her, she don't know you, Sir.

Old Mir. Not know him! what then? she loves to see him for all that.

Re-enter DURETETE.

Dur. Where are you all? What the devil! melancholy, and I here! Are ye sad, and such a ridiculous subject, such a very good jest, among you, as I am?

Mir. Away with this impertinence; this is no place for bagatelle; I have murdered my honour, destroyed a lady, and my desire of reputation is come at length too late; see there.

Dur. What ails her?

Mir. Alas! she's mad.

Dur. Mad! dost wonder at that? By this light, they're all so; they're cozening mad; they're brawling mad; they're proud mad; I just now came from a whole world of mad women, that had almost—What, is she dead?

Mir. Dead! heavens forbid.

Dur. Heavens further it; for 'till they be as cold as a key, there's no trusting them; you're never sure that a woman's in earnest, till she is nailed in her coffin. Shall I talk to her? Are you mad, mistress?

Bis. What's that to you, Sir?

Dur. Oons, Madam, are you there?

[*Exit, running*]

Mir. Away, thou wild buffoon; how poor and mean this humour now appears? His follies and my own I here disclaim; this lady's frenzy has restored my senses, and was she perfect now, as once she was, (before you all I speak it,) she should be mine; and as she is, my tears and prayers shall wed her.

Dug. How happy had this declaration been some hours ago.

Bis. Sir, she beckons to you, and waves us to go off; come, come, let's leave 'em.

[*Exeunt all but MIR. and ORI.*]

Ori. Oh, Sir.

Mir. Speak, my charming angel, if your dear senses have regained their order; speak, fair, and bless me with the news.

Ori. First, let me bless the cunning of my sex, and that happy counterfeited frenzy that has restored to my poor labouring breast the dearest, best beloved, of men.

Mir. Tune, all ye spheres, your instruments of joy, and carry round your spacious orbs the happy sound of Oriana's health; her soul, whose harmony was next to yours, is now in tune again; the counterfeiting fair has played the fool.

She was so mad to counterfeit for me;

I was so mad to pawn my liberty:

But now we both are well, and both are free.

Ori. How, Sir, free?

Mir. As air, my dear bedlamite; what, marry a lunatic? Lookye, my dear, you have counterfeited madness so very well this bout, that you'll be apt to play the fool all your life long.—Here, gentlemen.

Ori. Monster! you won't disgrace me?

Mir. O my faith, but I will; here, come in, gentlemen.—A miracle! a miracle! the woman's dispossessed, the devil's vanished.

Re-enter OLD MIRABEL and DUGARD.

Old Mir. Bless us, was she possessed?

Mir. With the worst of demons, Sir, a marriage-devil, a horrid devil. Mr. Dugard, don't be surprised. I promised my endeavours to cure your sister; no mad doctor in Christendom could have done it more effectually. Take her into your charge; and have a care she don't relapse; if she should, employ me not again, for I am no more infallible than others of the faculty; I do cure sometimes.

Ori. Your remedy, most barbarous man, will prove the greatest poison of my health: for though my former frenzy was but counterfeit, I now shall run into a real madness.

[*Exit: OLD MIRABEL follows.*]

Dug. This was a turn beyond my knowledge. I'm so confused, I know not how to resent it.

[*Exit.*]

Mir. What a dangerous precipice have I 'scaped! Was not I just now on the brink of destruction?

Enter DURETETE.

Oh, my friend, let me run into thy bosom; no lark, escaped from the devouring pounces of a hawk, quakes with more dismal apprehension.

Dur. The matter, man!

Mir. Marriage, hanging; I was just at the gallows' foot, the running noose about my neck, and the cart wheeling from me.—Oh—I shan't be myself this month again.

Dur. Did not I tell you so? They are all alike saints or devils.

Mir. Ay, ay; there's no living here with security: this house is so full of stratagem and design, that I must abroad again.

Dur. With all my heart, I'll bear thee company, my lad; I'll meet you at the play; and we'll set out for Italy to-morrow morning.

Mir. A match; I'll go pay my compliment o leave to my father presently.

Dur. I'm afraid he'll stop you.

Mir. What, pretend a command over me after his settlement of a thousand pounds a year upon me? No, no, he has passed away his authority with the conveyance; the will of a living father is chiefly obeyed for the sake of the dying one.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Street before the Play-house.

Enter MIRABEL and DURETETE, as coming from the play.

Dur. How d'ye like this play?

Mir. I liked the company; the lady, the rich beauty in the front box, had my attention. These impudent poets bring the ladies together to support them, and to kill every body else.

For deaths upon the stage the ladies cry,

But ne'er mind us that in the audience die.

Dur. Hoity-toity; did Phillis inspire you with all this?

Mir. Ten times more; the play-house is the element of poetry, because the region of beauty; the ladies, methinks, have a more inspiring triumphant air in the boxes than any where else; they sit commanding on their thrones with all their subject slaves about them: their best clothes, best looks, shining jewels, sparkling eyes, the treasure of the world in a ring. I could wish that my whole life long were the first night of a new play.

Dur. The fellow has quite forgot his journey. [*Aside.*] Have you bespoke post horses?

Mir. Grant me but three days, dear Captain, one to discover the lady, one to unfold myself, and one to make me happy; and then I'm yours to the world's end.

Dur. Hast thou the impudence to promise thyself a lady of her figure and quality in so short a time?

Mir. Yes, Sir—I have a confident address, no disagreeable person, and five hundred louis-d'ors in my pocket.

Dur. Five hundred louis-d'ors! You an't mad?

Mir. I tell you she's worth five thousand; one of her black brilliant eyes is worth a diamond as big as her head. I compared her necklace with her looks, and the living jewels out-sparkled the dead one by a million.

Dur. But you have owned to me, that abating Oriana's pretensions to marriage, you loved her passionately; then how can you wander at this rate?

Mir. I longed for a partridge t'other day off the king's plate; but d'ye think, because I could not have it, I must eat nothing?

Enter ORIANA in Boy's clothes, with a letter

Ori. Is your name Mirabel, Sir?

Mir. Yes, Sir.

Ori. A letter from your uncle in Picardy.

[*Gives the letter.*]

Mir. [Reads.] *The bearer is the son of a Protestant gentleman, who, flying for his religion, left me the charge of this youth—A pretty boy—He's fond of some handsome service, that may afford him opportunity of improvement: your care of him will oblige, Yours.*

Hast a mind to travel, child?

Ori. 'Tis my desire, Sir; I should be pleased to serve a traveller in any capacity.

Mir. A hopeful inclination; you shall along with me into Italy as my page.

Dur. I don't think it safe; the rogue's [Noise without.] too handsome—The play's done, and some of the ladies come this way.

Enter LAMORCE, with her train borne up by a PAGE.

Mir. Duretete, the very dear identical, she.

Dur. And what then?

Mir. Why 'tis she.

Dur. And what then, Sir?

Mir. Then! Why!—Lookye, sirrah, the first piece of service I put upon you, is to follow that lady's coach, and bring me word where she lives.

[*To ORIANA.*]

Ori. I don't know the town, Sir, and am afraid of losing myself.

Mir. Pshaw!

Lam. Page, what's become of all my people?

Page. I can't tell, Madam; I can see no sign of your ladyship's coach.

Lam. That fellow is got into his old pranks, and fallen drunk somewhere; none of the footmen there?

Page. Not one, Madam.

Lam. These servants are the plague of our lives; what shall I do?

Mir. By all my hopes, fortune pimps for me; now, Duretete, for a piece of gallantry.

Dur. Why, you won't sure?

Mir. Won't, brute! Let not your servants' neglect, Madam, put your ladyship to any inconvenience, for you can't be disappointed of an equipage whilst mine waits below; and would you honour the master so far, he would be proud to pay his attendance.

Dur. Ay, to be sure.

[*Aside.*]

Lam. Sir, I won't presume to be troublesome, for my habitation is a great way off.

Dur. Very true, Madam, and he's a little engaged; besides, Madam, a hackney-coach will do as well, Madam.

Mir. Rude beast, be quiet! [*To DURETETE.*] The further from home, Madam, the more occasion you have for a guard—pray, Madam—

Lam. Lard, Sir—[*She declines his entreaties.*]

Dur. Ah! the devil's in his impudence; now he wheedles, she smiles; he flatters, she simpers; he swears, she believes; he's a rogue, and she's a w— in a moment.

[*Aside.*]

Mir. Without there! my coach; Duretete, wish me joy.

[*Hands the lady out.*]

Dur. Wish you safe home! Here, you little Picard, go follow your master, and he'll lead you—

Ori. Whither, Sir?

Dur. To the academy, child: 'tis the fashion, with men of quality, to teach their pages their exercise—go.

Ori. Won't you go with him too, Sir? that woman may do him some harm I don't like her.

Dur. Why, how now, Mr. Page, do you start up to give laws of a sudden? do you pretend to rise at court, and disapprove the pleasure of your betters? Lookye, sirrah, if ever you would rise by a great man, be sure to be with him in his little actions: and, as a step to your advancement, follow your master immediately, and make it your hope that he goes to a bagnio.

Ori. Heavens forbid!

[*Exit*]

Dur. Now would I sooner take a cart in company of the hangman, than a coach with that woman: what a strange antipathy have I taken against these creatures; a woman to me is aversion upon aversion, a cheese, a cat, a breast of mutton, the squalling of children, the grinding of knives, and the snuff of a candle.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Handsome Apartment

Enter MIRABEL and LAMORCE.

Lam. To convince me, that your service was something more than good breeding, please to lay out an hour of your company upon my desire, as you have already upon my necessity.

Mir. Your desire, Madam, has only prevented my request: my hours! make 'em yours, Madam, eleven, twelve, one, two, three, and all that belong to those happy minutes.

Lam. But I must trouble you, Sir, to dismiss your retinue, because an equipage at my door, at this time of night, will not be consistent with my reputation.

Mir. By all means, Madam, all but one little boy—Here, page, order my coach and servants home, and do you stay; 'tis a foolish country boy, that knows nothing but innocence.

Lam. Innocence, Sir? I should be sorry if you made any sinister constructions of my freedom.

Mir. O Madam, I must not pretend to remark upon any body's freedom, having so entirely forfeited my own.

Lam. Well, Sir, 'twere convenient towards our easy correspondence, that we entered into a free confidence of each other, by mutual declaration of what we are, and what we think of one another.—Now, Sir, what are you?

Mir. In three words, Madam—I am a gentleman, I have five hundred pounds in my pocket, and a clean shirt on.

Lam. And your name is—

Mir. Mustapha.—Now, Madam, the inventory of your fortunes.

Lam. My name is Lamorce; my birth noble; I was married young, to a proud, rude, sullen, impetuous fellow; the husband spoiled the gentleman; crying ruined my face, till at last I took heart, leaped out of a window, got away to my friends, sued my tyrant, and recovered my fortune—I lived from fifteen to twenty to please a husband; from twenty to forty I'm resolved to please myself, and from thence upwards I'll humour the world.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! I rejoice in your good fortune with all my heart.

Lam. O, now I think on't, Mr. Mustapha, you have got the finest ring there, I could scarcely believe it right; pray let me see it.

Mir. Hum! Yes, Madam, 'tis, 'tis right—but, but, but, but, but it was given me by my mother, an old family ring, Madam, an old-fashioned family ring.

Lam. Ay, Sir—If you can entertain yourself for a moment, I'll wait on you immediately.

[*Exit.*]

Mir. Certainly the stars were in a strange intriguing humour when I was born—Ay, this night should I have had a bride in my arms, and that I should like well enough: but what should I have to-morrow night? The same. And what next night? The same. And what next night? The very same. Soup for breakfast, soup for dinner, soup for supper, and soup for breakfast again—But here's variety. [*Runs towards the door.*]

Enter four BRAVOES with LAMORCE, MIRABEL starts back.

She comes, she comes—Hum, hum—Bitch—Murdered, murdered, to be sure! The cursed strumpet! To make me send away my servants—Nobody near me! These cut-throats always make sure work. What shall I do? I have but one way. [*Aside.*] Are these gentlemen your relations, Madam?

Lam. Yes, Sir.

Mir. Gentlemen, your most humble servant; Sir, your most faithful; yours, Sir, with all my heart; your most obedient—come, gentlemen. [*Salutes all round.*] Please to sit—no ceremony, next the lady, pray, Sir. [*All sit.*]

Lam. Well, Sir, and how d'ye like my friends?

Mir. O Madam, the most finished gentlemen! I was never more happy in good company in my life; I suppose, Sir, you have travelled?

1 Bra. Yes, Sir.

Mir. Which way, may I presume?

1 Bra. In a western barge, Sir.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! very pretty; facetious, pretty, gentleman!

Lam. Ha, ha, ha! Sir, you have got the prettiest ring upon your finger there—

Mir. Ah! Madam, 'tis at your service, with all my heart. [*Offering the ring.*]

Lam. By no means, Sir, a family ring!

Mir. No matter, Madam. Seven hundred pounds, by this light. [*Takes it. Aside.*]

2 Bra. Pray, Sir, what's o'clock?

Mir. Hum! Sir, I have left my watch at home. *2 Bra.* I thought I saw the string of it just now—

Mir. Od's my life, Sir, I beg your pardon; here it is—but it don't go. [*Puts it up.*]

Lam. O dear, Sir, an English watch; Tompion's, I presume.

Mir. D'ye like it, Madam?—no ceremony—'tis at your service, with all my heart and soul—Tompion's! Hang ye. [*Aside.*]

1 Bra. But, Sir, above all things, I admire the fashion and make of your sword-hilt.

Mir. I'm mighty glad you like it, Sir.

1 Bra. Will you part with it, Sir?

Mir. I won't sell it.

1 Bra. Not sell it, Sir?

Mir. No, gentlemen—but I'll bestow it with all my heart. [*Offers it.*]

1 Bra. O, Sir, we rob you.

Mir. That you do, I'll be sworn. [*Aside.*] I have another at home, pray, Sir—Gentlemen, you're too modest; have I any thing else that you fancy? Sir, will you do me a favour? [*To the first BRAVO.*] I am extremely in love with that wig which you wear; will you do me the favour to change with me?

1 Bra. Lookye, Sir, this is a family wig, and I would not part with it; but if you like it—

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Mir. Sir, your most humble servant.

[*They change wigs.*]

1 Bra. Madam, your most humble slave.

[*Goes up foppishly to the Lady, and salutes her.*]

2 Bra. The fellow's very liberal; shall we murder him? [*Apart.*]

1 Bra. No, no! I want but a handsome pretence to quarrel with him, for you know we must act like gentlemen. Here, some wine—[*Wine brought.*] Sir, your good health.

[*Pulls MIRABEL by the nose.*]

Mir. Oh! Sir, your most humble servant: a pleasant frolic enough, to drink a man's health, and pull him by the nose: ha, ha, ha! the pleasantest pretty-humoured gentleman.

Lam. Help the gentleman to a glass.

[*MIR. drinks.*]

1 Bra. How d'ye like the wine, Sir?

Mir. Very good o' the kind, Sir: but I tell ye what, I find we're all inclined to be frolicsome, and 'egad, for my own part, I was never more disposed to be merry; let's make a night on't, ha!—This wine is pretty, but I have such Burgundy at home.—Lookye, gentlemen, let me send for half a dozen flasks of my Burgundy; I defy France to match it;—'Twill make us all life, all air, pray, gentlemen.

2 Bra. Eh! Shall us have his Burgundy?

[*Apart.*]

1 Bra. Yes, faith, we'll have all we can; here call up the gentleman's servant. [*Apart.*]—What think you, Lamorce?

Lam. Yes, yes. [*Apart.*] Your servant is a foolish country boy, Sir; he understands nothing but innocence.

Mir. Ay, ay, Madam.—Here, page!

Enter ORIANA.

Take this key, and go to my butler, order him to send half a dozen flasks of the red Burgundy, marked a thousand; and be sure you make haste; I long to entertain my friends here, my very good friends.

Omnès. Ah, dear Sir!

1 Bra. Here, child, take a glass of wine—Your master and I have changed wigs, honey, in a frolic. Where had you this pretty boy, honest Mustapha?

Ori. Mustapha!

[*Aside.*]

Mir. Out of Picardy—this is the first errand he has made for me, and if he does it right, I'll encourage him.

Ori. The red Burgundy, Sir?

Mir. The red marked a thousand; and be sure you make haste.

Ori. I shall, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

1 Bra. Sir, you were pleased to like my wig have you any fancy for my coat?—Lookye, Sir, it has served a great many honest gentlemen very faithfully.

Mir. The insolence of these dogs is beyond their cruelty.

[*Aside.*]

Lam. You're melancholy, Sir.

Mir. Only concerned, Madam, that I should have no servant here but this little boy—he'll make some confounded blunder, I'll lay my life on't; I would not be disappointed of my wine for the universe.

Lam. He'll do well enough, Sir; but supper's ready; will you please to eat a bit, Sir?

Mir. O, Madam, I never had a better stomach in my life.

Lam. Come then—we have nothing but a plate of soup.

Mir. Ah! the marriage soup I could dispense with now.

[*Aside; exit, handing the Lady.*]

2 *Bra.* Shall we despatch him?

3 *Bra.* To be sure. I think he knows me.

1 *Bra.* Ay, ay, dead men tell no tales; I ha'n't the confidence to look a man in the face after I have done him an injury, therefore we'll murder him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—OLD MIRABEL'S House.

Enter DURETETE.

Dur. My friend has forsaken me, I have abandoned my mistress, my time lies heavy upon my hands, and my money burns in my pocket.—But now I think on't, my myrmidons are upon duty to-night; I'll fairly stroll down to the guard, and nod away the night with my honest lieutenant over a flask of wine, a good story, and a pipe of tobacco. [*Going off.*]

Enter BISARRE.

Bis. Who comes there? Stand!

Dur. Hey dey, now she's turned dragoon.

Bis. Lookye, Sir, I'm told you intend to travel again.—I design to wait on you as far as Italy.

Dur. Then I'll travel into Wales.

Bis. Wales! What country's that?

Dur. The land of mountains, child, where you're never out of the way, 'cause there's no such thing as a high road.

Bis. Rather always in a high road, 'cause you travel all upon hills;—but be't as it will, I'll jog along with you.

Dur. But we intend to sail to the East Indies.

Bis. East or West, 'tis all one to me; I'm tight and light, and the fitter for sailing.

Dur. But suppose we take through Germany, and drink hard?

Bis. Suppose I take through Germany, and drink harder than you?

Dur. 'Sdeath, woman, will you go to the guard with me, and smoke a pipe?

Bis. *Allons donc!*

Dur. The devil's in the woman.—Suppose I hang myself?

Bis. There I'll leave you.

Dur. And a happy riddance; the gallows is welcome.

Bis. Hold, hold, Sir! [*Catches him by the arm as he is going.*] one word before we part.

Dur. Let me go, Madam—

Bis. Stir, if you dare.—Come, Sir, stand there now, and ogle me. [*He frowns upon her.*] Now a languishing sigh! [*He groans.*] Now run and take my fan—faster. [*He runs and takes it up.*] Now play with it handsomely.

Dur. Ay, ay. [*He tears it to pieces.*]

Bis. Hold, hold, dear, humorous coxcomb; captain, spare my fan, and I'll—Why, you rude, inhuman monster, don't you expect to pay for this?

Dur. Yes, Madam, there's twelvepence; for that is the price on't.

Bis. Sir, it cost a guinea.

Dur. Well, Madam, you shall have the sticks again. [*Throws them to her, and exit.*]

Bis. Ha, ha, ha! ridiculous, below my concern. I must follow him, however, to know if he can give me any news of Oriana. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—LAMORCE'S Lodgings.

Enter MIRABEL.

Mir. Bloody hell-hounds, I overheard you!—Was not I two hours ago the happy, gay, rejoicing Mirabel? How did I plume my hopes in a fair coming prospect of a long scene of years Life courted me with all the charms of vigour youth, and fortune; and to be torn away from all my promised joys is more than death; the manner too, by villains.—O my Oriana, this very moment might have blessed me in thy arms, and my poor boy! the innocent boy!—Confusion!—But hush! they come: I must dissemble still—

Enter the four BRAVOES.

No news of my wine, gentlemen?

1 *Bra.* No, Sir; I believe your country booby has lost himself, and we can wait no longer for't—True, Sir, you're a pleasant gentleman; but I suppose you understand our business.

Mir. Sir, I may go near to guess at your employments; you, Sir, are a lawyer, I presume, you a physician, you a scrivener, and you a stock-jobber.—All cut-throats, 'egad. [*Aside.*]

4 *Bra.* Sir, I am a broken officer; I was cashiered at the head of the army for a coward; so I took up the trade of murder to retrieve the reputation of my courage.

3 *Bra.* I am a soldier too, and would serve my king; but I don't like the quarrel, and I have more honour than to fight in a bad cause.

2 *Bra.* I was bred a gentleman, and I have no estate, but I must have my whore and my bottle, through the prejudice of education.

1 *Bra.* I am a ruffian too, by the prejudice of education; I was bred a butcher. In short, Sir, if your wine had come, we might have trifled a little longer.—Come, Sir, which sword will you die by? mine, Sir?

2 *Bra.* Or mine?

[*Draws.*]

3 *Bra.* Or mine?

[*Draws.*]

4 *Bra.* Or mine?

[*Draws.*]

Mir. I scorn to beg my life; but to be butchered thus! [*Knocking.*] O, there's the wine—this moment for my life or death.

Enter ORIANA.

Lost, for ever lost!—Where's the wine, child?

[*Faintly.*]

Ori. Coming up, Sir.

[*Stamps.*]

Enter DURETETE and six of the grand Musqueteers; the Ruffians drop their Swords; exit ORIANA.

Mir. The wine, the wine, the wine! Youth, pleasure, fortune, days, and years, are now my own again.—Ah, my dear friends, did not I tell you this wine would make me merry!—Dear captain, these gentlemen are the best natured, facetious, witty creatures that ever you knew.

Enter LAMORCE.

Lam. Is the wine come, Sir?

Mir. O yes, Madam, the wine is come—see there! [*Pointing to the Soldiers.*] Your ladyship has got a very fine ring upon your finger.

Lam. Sir, 'tis at your service.

Mir. O ho! is it so? Thou dear seven hundred pounds, thou'rt welcome home again with all my heart—Ad's my life, Madam, you have got the finest built watch there! Tompion's, I presume?

Lam. Sir, you may wear it.

Mir. O, Madam, by no means; 'tis too much—

Rob you of all! [*Takes it from her.*] Good, dear, time, thou'rt a precious thing; I'm glad I have retrieved thee. [*Puts it up.*] What, my friends neglected all this while! Gentlemen, you'll pardon my complaisance to the lady.—How now?—Is it civil to be so out of humour at my entertainment, and I so pleased with yours?—Captain, you're surprised at all this; but we're in our frolics, you must know.—Some wine here.

Enter Servant, with wine.

Come, captain, this worthy gentleman's health.

[*Tweaks the first BRAVO by the nose; he roars.*]

But now—where's my dear, dear deliverer, my boy, my charming boy?

I Bra. I hope some of our crew below stairs have despatched him.

Mir. Villain! what sayest thou? Despatched! I'll have ye all tortured, racked, torn to pieces alive, if you have touched my boy.—Here, page! page! page! [*Runs out.*]

Dur. Here, gentlemen, be sure you secure those fellows.

I Bra. Yes, Sir, we know you and your guard will be very civil to us.

Dur. Now for you, Madam—He, he, he!—I'm so pleased to think that I shall be revenged of one woman before I die.

Dur. Take 'em to justice.

[*Guards carry off BRAVOES.*]

Enter OLD MIRABEL, DUGARD, and BISARRE.

Old Mir. Robin, Robin, where's Bob? where's my boy?—What, is this the lady? a pretty vixen, faith!—Harkye, child, because my son was so civil as to oblige you with a coach, I'll treat you with a cart, indeed I will.

Dug. Ay, Madam,—and you shall have a swinging equipage, three or four thousand footmen at your heels at least.

Dur. No less becomes her quality.

Bis. Faugh! the monster!

Dur. Monster! ay, you're all a little monstrous, let me tell you.

Re-enter MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Ah, my dear Bob, art thou safe, man?

Mir. No, no, Sir, I'm ruined! the saver of my life is lost!

Old Mir. No, he came and brought us the news.

Mir. But where is he?

Re-enter ORIANA.

Ha! [*Runs and embraces her.*] My dear preserver, what shall I do to recompense your trust?

Father, friends, gentlemen, behold the youth that has relieved me from the most ignominious death.—Command me, child; before you all, before my late so kind indulgent stars, I swear to grant whate'er you ask.

Ori. To the same stars, indulgent now to me, I will appeal as to the justice of my claim; I shall demand but what was mine before—the just performance of your contract to Oriana.

[*Discovers herself.*]

Omnes. Oriana!

Ori. In this disguise I resolved to follow you abroad, counterfeited the letter that got me into your service; and so, by this strange turn of fate, I became the instrument of your preservation.

Dur. Mirabel, you're caught.

Mir. Caught! I scorn the thought of imposition! Caught! No, 'tis my voluntary act; this was no human stratagem; but by my providential stars, designed to show the dangers wandering youth incurs by the pursuit of an unlawful love, to plunge me headlong in the snares of vice, and then to free me by the hands of virtue: here on my knees I humbly beg my fair preserver's pardon; my thanks are needless, for myself I owe. And now for ever do protest me yours.

Old Mir. Tal, al, di, dal. [*Sings.*] Kiss me, daughter—no, you shall kiss me first. [*To LAMORCE.*] for you're the cause on't. Well, Bisarre, what say you to the captain?

Bis. I like the beast well enough; but I don't understand his paces so well as to venture him in a strange road.

Old Mir. But marriage is so beaten a path that you can't go wrong.

Bis. Ay, 'tis so beaten, that the way is spoiled.

Dur. There is but one thing should make me thy husband—I could marry thee to-day for the privilege of beating thee to-morrow.

Old Mir. Come, come, you may agree for all this. Mr. Dugard, are not you pleased with this?

Dug. So pleased, that if I thought it might secure your son's affection to my sister, I would double her fortune.

Mir. Fortune! has she not given me mine? my life, my estate, my all, and what is more, her virtuous self.—Behold the foil [*Pointing to LAMORCE.*] that sets this brightness off! [*To ORIANA.*] Here, view the pride [*To LAMORCE.*] and scandal of the sex.

[*To LAMORCE.*]
What liberty can be so tempting there,

[*To LAMORCE.*]

As a soft, virtuous, am'rous bondage here?

[*To ORIANA.*]

THE MAYOR OF GARRATT:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

REMARKS.

This humorous and entertaining piece was first performed at the Haymarket Theatre, in 1763.—The sketch of character here is bold and coarse, but calculated for the multitude. Major Sturgeon, the city militia officer, is highly wrought, and was admirably performed by Mr. Foote, who received an applause not less merited than that which is bestowed on the exertions of Mr. Dowton, in his inimitable keeping of the same character. Bruin is a sample not absolutely unparalleled within the sound of Bow bells, and Jerries we meet every day.

The main incident of this piece is derived from a popular burlesque on our parliamentary elections: this takes place after every general election, when the successful candidate, selected as the most deformed and stupid individual of the multitude, is chaired at Garratt Lane, in the parish of Wandsworth, and receives the honour of knighthood from his constituents. A considerable sum is squandered by the mob on these occasions, and the forms of election are strictly observed: the several candidates are taught to deliver an oration, replete with popular sentiments and promises; that they will lower the prices of gin, bread, beer, &c.; make old women bishops; and that they will not accept any place in the House. Sir Jeffrey Dunstan, a roguish and very deformed mendicant, well known in London, was for many years *Mayor of Garratt*, and Sir Harry Dinsdale succeeded him in his titles and honours, and in his sinecure of Garratt, which differs chiefly from other sinecures, by the absence of a good salary.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

	DRURY LANE, 1764.	DRURY LANE, 1814.
MAJOR STURGEON,.....	<i>Mr. Foote</i>	<i>Mr. Dowton</i> .
SIR JACOB JOLLUP,.....	<i>Mr. Baddeley</i>	<i>Mr. Penley</i> .
JERRY SNEAK,.....	<i>Mr. Weston</i>	<i>Mr. Russell</i> .
BRUIN,.....	<i>Mr. Moody</i>	<i>Mr. G. Smith</i> .
ROGER,.....	<i>Mr. Clough</i>	<i>Mr. Evans</i> .
MOB,.....	{ <i>Messrs. Fox, Mar,</i>	{ <i>Messrs. Chatterly,</i>
	<i>Watkins, &c.</i>	<i>West, &c.</i>
SNUFFLE,.....	<i>Mr. Vaughan</i>	<i>Mr. Maddocks</i>
CRISPIN HEELTAP,.....	<i>Mr. Bransby</i>	<i>Mr. Wewitzer</i>
MRS. BRUIN,.....	<i>Mrs. Lee</i>	<i>Mrs. Scott</i> .
MRS. SNEAK,.....	<i>Mrs. Clive</i>	<i>Mrs. Harlowe</i> .

ACT I.

SCENE I.—SIR JACOB JOLLUP'S House at Garratt.

Enter SIR JACOB JOLLUP.

Sir J. Roger!

Enter ROGER.

Roger. Anan, Sir!

Sir J. Sir, sirrah! and why not Sir Jacob, you

rascal? Is that all your manners? Has his majesty dubbed me a knight for you to make me a mister? Are the candidates near upon coming?

Roger. Nic Goose, the tailor, from Putney, they say, will be here in a crack, Sir Jacob.

Sir J. Has Margery fetched in the linen?

Roger. Yes, Sir Jacob.

Sir J. Are the pigs and the poultry locked up in the barn?

Roger. Safe, Sir Jacob.

Sir J. And the plate and spoons in the pantry?

Roger. Yes, Sir Jacob.

Sir J. Then give me the key; the mob will soon be upon us; and all is fish that comes to their net. Has Ralph laid the cloth in the hall?

Roger. Yes, Sir Jacob.

Sir J. Then let him bring out the turkey and chine, and be sure there is plenty of mustard; and, d'ye hear, Roger, do you stand yourself at the gate, and be careful who you let in.

Roger. I will, Sir Jacob.

[*Exit.*]

Sir J. So, now I believe things are pretty secure. But I can't think what makes my daughters so late ere they—[*A knocking at the gate.*] Who is that, Roger?

Roger. [*Without.*] Justice Sturgeon, the fishmonger, from Brentford.

Sir J. Gad's my life! and major to the Middlesex militia. Usher him in, Roger.

Enter MAJOR STURGEON.

I could have wished you had come a little sooner, Major Sturgeon.

Maj. S. Why, what has been the matter, Sir Jacob?

Sir J. There has, major, been here an impudent pill-monger, who has dared to scandalize the whole body of the bench.

Maj. S. Insolent companion! had I been here, I would have mittimus'd the rascal at once.

Sir J. No, no, he wanted the major more than the magistrate: a few smart strokes from your cane would have fully answered the purpose.—Well, major, our wars are done; the rattling drum and squeaking fife now wound our ears no more.

Maj. S. True, Sir Jacob, our corps is disembodied; so the French may sleep in security.

Sir J. But, major, was it not rather late in life for you to enter upon the profession of arms?

Maj. S. A little awkward in the beginning, Sir Jacob: the great difficulty they had was, to get me to turn out my toes; but use, use reconciles all them kind of things: why, after my first campaign, I no more minded the noise of the guns than a flea-bite.

Sir J. No!

Maj. S. No. There is more made of those matters than they merit. For the general good, indeed, I am glad of the peace: but as to my single self—and yet we have had some desperate duty, Sir Jacob.

Sir J. No doubt.

Maj. S. Oh! such marchings and counter-marchings, from Brentford to Ealing, from Ealing to Acton, from Acton to Uxbridge; the dust flying, sun scorching, men sweating!—Why, there was our last expedition to Hounslow; that day's work carried off Major Molassas. Bunhill-fields never saw a braver commander! He was an irreparable loss to the service.

Sir J. How came that about?

Maj. S. Why, it was partly the major's own fault: I advised him to pull off his spurs before he went upon action: but he was resolute, and would not be ruled.

Sir J. Spirit—zeal for the service.

Maj. S. Doubtless. But to proceed: in order to get our men in good spirits, we were quartered at Thistleworth the evening before. At day-break our regiment formed at Hounslow town's end, as it might be about here. The major made a fine disposition: on we marched, the men all in high

spirits, to attack the gibbet where Gardel is hanging: but, turning down a narrow lane to the left, as it might be about there, in order to possess a pig-sty, that we might take the gallows in flank, and at all events secure a retreat, who should come by but a drove of fat oxen for Smithfield. The drums beat in the front, the dogs barked in the rear, the oxen set up a gallop: on they came thundering upon us, broke through our ranks in an instant, and threw the whole corps in confusion.

Sir J. Terrible!

Maj. S. The major's horse took to his heels; away he scoured over the heath. That gallant commander stuck both his spurs into the flank, and for some time held by his mane; but, in crossing a ditch, the horse threw up his head, gave the major a dowse in the chops, and plumped him into a gravel-pit, just by the powder mills.

Sir J. Dreadful!

Maj. S. Whether from the fall or the fright, the major moved off in a month. Indeed, it was an unfortunate day for us all.

Sir J. As how?

Maj. S. Why, as Captain Cucumber, Lieutenant Pattypan, Ensign Tripe, and myself, were returning to town in the Turnham-green stage, we were stopped near the Hammersmith turnpike, and robbed and stripped by a single footpad.

Sir J. An unfortunate day indeed!

Maj. S. But, in some measure to make me amends, I got the major's commission.

Sir J. You did?

Maj. S. O yes. I was the only one of the corps that could ride; otherwise we always succeeded of course: no jumping over heads, no underhand work among us; all men of honour; and I must do the regiment the justice to say, there never was a set of more amiable officers.

Sir J. Quiet and peaceable.

Maj. S. As lambs, Sir Jacob. Excepting one boxing bout at the Three Compasses in Acton, between Captain Sheers and the Colonel, concerning a game at all-fours, I don't remember a single dispute.

Sir J. Why, that was mere mutiny; the captain ought to have been broke.

Maj. S. He was; for the colonel not only took away his cockade, but his custom: and I don't think poor Captain Sheers has done a stitch for him since.

Sir J. But you soon supplied the loss of Molassas?

Maj. S. In part only: no, Sir Jacob, he had great experience; he was trained up to arms from his youth; at sixteen, he trailed a pike in the Artillery-ground; at eighteen, got a company in the Smithfield pioneers; and by the time he was twenty, was made aid-de-camp to Sir Jeffrey Grub, knight, alderman, and colonel of the yellow.

Sir J. A rapid rise!

Maj. S. Yes, he had a genius for war; but what I wanted in practice, I made up by doubling my diligence. Our porter at home had been a sergeant of marines; so, after shop was shut up at night, he used to teach me my exercise; and he had not to deal with a dunce, Sir Jacob.

Sir J. Your progress was great.

Maj. S. Amazing. In a week I could shoulder, and rest, and poize, and turn to the right, and wheel to the left; and in less than a month I could fire without winking or blinking.

Sir J. A perfect Hannibal.

Maj. S. Ah, and then I learned to form lines, and hollows, and squares, and evolutions, and revolutions. Let me tell you, Sir Jacob, it was lucky that monsieur kept his myrmidons at home, or we should have peppered his flat-bottomed boats.

Sir J. Ay, marry, he had a marvellous escape.

Maj. S. We would have taught him what a Briton can do, who is fighting *pro arvis* and *focus*.

Sir J. Pray now, major, which do you look upon as the best disciplined troops, the London regiments, or the Middlesex militia?

Maj. S. Why, Sir Jacob, it does not become me to say? but, lack-a-day, they have never seen any service—Holiday soldiers! Why, I don't believe, unless indeed upon a lord mayor's day, and that mere matter of accident, that they were ever wet to the skin in their lives.

Sir J. Indeed!

Maj. S. No! soldiers for sunshine; cockneys; they have not the appearance, the air, the freedom, the *jenny sequoi* that—Oh, could you but see me salute! You have never a spontoon in the house?

Sir J. No; but we could get you a shove-pike.

Maj. S. No matter. Well, Sir Jacob, and how are your fair daughters, sweet Mrs. Sneak, and the lovely Mrs. Bruin; is she as lively and as brilliant as ever?

Sir J. Oh, oh, now the murder is out; this visit was intended for them: come, own now, major, did not you expect to meet with them here? you officers are men of such gallantry!

Maj. S. Why, we do tickle up the ladies, Sir Jacob: there is no resisting a red coat.

Sir J. True, true, major.

Maj. S. But that is now all over with me: "Farewell to the plumed steeds, and neighing troops," as the black man says in the play; like the Roman censor, I shall retire to my Savine field, and there cultivate cabbages.

Sir J. Under the shade of your laurels.

Maj. S. True: I have done with the major, and now return to the magistrate; *cedunt arma togge*.

Mob. [*Without.*] Huzza!

Re-enter ROGER.

Sir J. What's the matter now, Roger?

Roger. The electors desire to know if your worship has any body to recommend?

Sir J. By no means; let them be free in their choice; I sha'n't interfere.

Roger. And if your worship has any objection to Crispin Heeltap, the cobbler, being returning officer?

Sir J. None, provided the rascal can keep himself sober. Is he there?

Roger. Yes, Sir Jacob. Make way there; stand farther off from the gate: Here is Madam Sneak in a chair along with her husband.

Maj. S. 'Gadso, you will permit me to convey her in. [*Exit.*]

Sir J. Now here is one of the evils of war. This Sturgeon was as pains-taking a Billingsgate-broker as any in the bills of mortality. But the fish is got out of his element; the soldier has quite demolished the citizen.

Re-enter MAJOR STURGEON, leading in MRS. SNEAK.

Mrs. S. Dear major, I demand a million of pardons. I have given you a profusion of trouble; but my husband is such a goose-cap, that I can't get no good out of him at home or abroad.—Jerry, Jerry Sneak!—Your blessing, Sir Jacob.
Sir J. Daughter, you are welcome to Garratt.
Mrs. S. Why, Jerry Sneak! I say.

Enter JERRY SNEAK, with a band-box and a hoop-petticoat under his arm, and cardinal, &c.

Sneak. Here, lovy.

Mrs. S. Here, looby: there, lay these things in the hall; and then go and look after the horse. Are you sure you have got all the things out of the chaise?

Sneak. Yes, chuck.

Mrs. S. Then give me my fan.

[*JERRY drops the things in searching his pocket for the fan.*]

Mrs. S. Did ever mortal see such a—I declare, I am quite ashamed to be seen with him abroad; go, get you gone out of my sight.

Sneak. I go, lovy. Good day to my father-in-law.

Sir J. I am glad to see you, son Sneak; but where is your brother Bruin and his wife?

Sneak. He will be here anon, father, Sir Jacob; he did but just step into the Alley to gather how tickets were sold.

Sir J. Very well, son Sneak. [*Exit SNEAK*]

Mrs. S. Son! yes, and a pretty son you have provided.

Sir J. I hope all for the best: why, what terrible work there would have been, had you married such a one as your sister; one house could never have contained you. Now, I thought this meek mate—

Mrs. S. Meek! a mushroom! a milkspol!

Sir J. Look ye, Molly, I have married you to a man; take care you don't make him a monster.

[*Exit SIR J.*]

Mrs. S. Monster! Why, major, the fellow has no more heart than a mouse. Had my kind stars indeed allotted me a military man, I should, doubtless, have deported myself in a befitting manner.

Maj. S. Unquestionably, Madam.

Mrs. S. Nor would the major have found, had it been my fortune to intermarry with him, that Molly Jollup would have dishonoured his cloth.

Maj. S. I should have been too happy.

Mrs. S. Indeed Sir, I reverence the army; they are all so brave, so polite, so every thing a woman can wish.

Maj. S. Oh, Madam—

Mrs. S. So elegant, so genteel, so obliging: and then the rank; why, who would dare to affront the wife of a major?

Maj. S. No man with impunity; that I take the freedom to say, Madam.

Mrs. S. I know it, good Sir. Oh! I am a stranger to what I have missed.

Maj. S. Oh, Madam!—Let me die, but she has infinite merit. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. S. Then to be joined to a sneaking, slovenly cit: a paltry, prying, pitiful pin-maker!

Maj. S. Melancholy!

Mrs. S. To be jostled and crammed with the crowd; no respect, no place, no precedence; to

be choked with the smoke of the city; no country jaunts but to Islington; no balls but at Pewterers' hall.

Maj. S. Intolerable!

Mrs. S. I see, Sir, you have a proper sense of my sufferings.

Maj. S. And would shed my best blood to relieve them.

Mrs. S. Gallant gentleman!

Maj. S. The brave must favour the fair.

Mrs. S. Intrepid major!

Maj. S. Divine Mrs. Sneak!

Mrs. S. Obliging commander!

Maj. S. Might I be permitted the honour—

Mrs. S. Sir!

Maj. S. Just to ravish a kiss from your hand?

Mrs. S. You have a right to all we can grant.

Maj. S. Courteous, condescending, complying—Hum—Ha!

Re-enter JERRY SNEAK.

Sneak. Chuck, my brother and sister Bruin are just turning the corner; the Clapham stage was quite full, and so they came by vater.

Mrs. S. I wish they had all been soused in the Thames.—A prying, impertinent puppy!

Maj. S. Next time I will clap a sentinel to secure the door.

Mrs. S. Major Sturgeon, permit me to withdraw for a moment; my dress demands a little repair.

Maj. S. Your ladyship's most entirely devoted.

Mrs. S. Ladyship! he is the very Broglie and Belleisle of the army!

Sneak. Shall I wait upon you, dove?

Mrs. S. No, dolt; what, would you leave the major alone? Is that your manners, you monstrel?

Maj. S. Oh, Madam, I can never be alone; your sweet idea will be my constant companion.

Mrs. S. Mark that: I am sorry, Sir, I am obligated to leave you.

Maj. S. Madam—

Mrs. S. Especially with such a wretched companion.

Maj. S. Oh, Madam—

Mrs. S. But as soon as my dress is restored, I shall fly to relieve your distress.

Maj. S. For that moment I shall wait with the greatest impatience.

Mrs. S. Courteous commander!

Maj. S. Paragon of women!

Mrs. S. Adieu!

Maj. S. Adieu!

[*Exit Mrs. SNEAK.*]

Sneak. Notwithstanding, Sir, all my chicken has said, I am special company when she is not by.

Maj. S. I doubt not, Master Sneak.

Sneak. If you would but come one Thursday night to our club, at the Nag's-head in the Poultry, you would meet some roaring, rare boys, i' faith; there's Jenny Perkins, the packer; little Tom Simkins, the grocer; honest Master Muzzle, the midwife—

Maj. S. A goodly company.

Sneak. Ay, and then sometimes we have the choice spirits from Comus' court, and we crack jokes, and are so jolly and funny. I have learnt myself to sing "An old woman clothed in gray," but I durst not sing out loud, because my wife

would overhear me: and she says as how I bawl worser than the broom-man.*

Maj. S. And you must not think of disobliging your lady.

Sneak. I never does: I never contradicts her, not I.

Maj. S. That's right: she is a woman of infinite merit.

Sneak. O, a power! And don't you think she is very pretty withal?

Maj. S. A Venus!

Sneak. Yes, werry like Venus.—Mayhap you have known her some time?

Maj. S. Long.

Sneak. Belike before she was married?

Maj. S. I did Master Sneak.

Sneak. Ay, when she was a virgin. I thought you was an old acquaintance, by your kissing her hand; for we ben't quite so familiar as that.—But then indeed we ha'n't been married a year.

Maj. S. The mere honeymoon.

Sneak. Ay, ay, I suppose we shall come to it by degrees.

Bruin. [*Without.*] Come along, Jane; why you are as pursy and lazy, you jade—

Enter BRUIN and Mrs. BRUIN; BRUIN with a cotton cap on; his wife with his wig, great coat, and fishing-rod.

Come, Jane, give me my wig: you slut, how you have towlsed the curls! Master Sneak, a good morning to you. Sir, I am your humble servant unknown.

Re-enter ROGER.

Roger. Mrs. Sneak begs to speak with the major.

Maj. S. I will wait on the lady immediately.

Sneak. Don't tarry an instant; you can't think how impatient she is. [*Exit MAJOR.*] A good morrow to you, brother Bruin: you have had a warm walk across the fields.

Mrs. B. Good lord, I am all in a muck—

Bruin. And who may you thank for it, hussy? if you had got up time enough, you might have secured the stage; but you are a lazy lie-abed—

Mrs. B. There's Mr. Sneak keeps my sister a chay.

Bruin. And so he may; but I know better what to do with my money.

Mrs. B. For the matter of that, we can afford it well enough as it is.

Bruin. And how do you know that? Who told you as much, Mrs. Mixen? I hope I know the world better than to trust my concerns with a wife: no, no, thank you for that, Mrs. Jane.

Mrs. B. And pray who is more fitterer to be trusted?

Bruin. Hey-day! Why, the wench is bewitch'd: come, come, let's have none of your palaver here.—Take twelve-pence and pay the waterman.—But first see if he has broke none of the pipes:—and, d'ye hear, Jane, be sure to lay the fishing-rod safe. [*Exit Mrs. BRUIN.*]

Sneak. Odds me, how finely she's managed! what would I give to have my wife as much under!

Bruin. It is all your own fault, brother Sneak.

Sneak. D'ye think so? She is a sweet pretty creature.

* An alteration in this sentence is generally made to introduce a comic song, for which see p. 195.

Bruin. A vixen.

Sneak. Why, to say the truth, she does now and then hector a little; and, between ourselves, domineers like the devil. O Lord, I lead the life of a dog. Why, she allows me but two shillings a week for my pocket.

Bruin. No!

Sneak. No, man; 'tis she that receives and pays all: and then I am forced to trot after her to church, with her cardinal, pattens, and prayer-book, for all the world as if I was still a 'prentice.

Bruin. Zounds! I would souse them all in the kennel.

Sneak. I durst not. And then at table, I never gets what I loves.

Bruin. The devil!

Sneak. No; she always helps me herself to the tough drumsticks of the turkeys, and the damned fat flaps of shoulders of mutton. I don't think I have eat a bit of under-crust since we have been married. You see, brother Bruin, I am almost as thin as a lath.

Bruin. An absolute skeleton!

Sneak. Now, if you think I could carry my point, I would so swinge and leather my lambkin; God, I would so curry and claw her!

Bruin. By the lord Harry, she richly deserves it.

Sneak. Will you, brother, lend me a lift?

Bruin. Command me at all times.

Sneak. Why then, I will verily pluck up a spirit; and the first time she offers to—

Mrs. S. [Without.] Jerry, Jerry Sneak!

Sneak. 'Gad's my life, sure as a gun that's her voice: lookye, brother, I don't choose to breed a disturbance in another body's house; but as soon as ever I get home—

Bruin. Now is your time.

Sneak. No, no; it would not be decent.

Mrs. S. [Without.] Jerry! Jerry!

Sneak. I come, lovy. But you will be sure to stand by me?

Bruin. Trot, nincompoop.

Sneak. Well, if I don't—I wish—

Mrs. S. [Without.] Where is this lazy puppy a-loitering?

Sneak. I come, chuck, as fast as I can. Good Lord, what a sad life do I lead! *[Exit.]*

Bruin. Ex quovis linguo: who can make a silk purse of a sow's ear?

Re-enter SIR JACOB.

Sir J. Come, son Bruin, we are all seated at table, man; we have but just time for a snack; the candidates are near upon coming.

Bruin. A poor, paltry, mean-spirited.—Damn it, before I would submit to such a—

Sir J. Come come, man; don't be so crusty.

Bruin. I follow, Sir Jacob. Dammie, when once a man gives up his prerogative, he might as well give up—But, however, it is no bread and butter of mine.—Jerry!—Zounds, I would Jerry and jerk her too. *[Exit.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

SIR JACOB JOLLUP, MAJOR STURGEON, BRUIN, MRS. BRUIN, JERRY SNEAK, and MRS. SNEAK, discovered on SIR JACOB'S garden wall.—*Enter* MOP, with HEELTAP at their head; some crying a Goose, others a Mug, and others a Primmer.

Heel. Silence, there; silence!

1 *Mob.* Hear neighbour Heeltap.

2 *Mob.* Ay, ay, hear Crispin.

3 *Mob.* Ay, ay, hear him, hear Crispin: he will put us into the model of the thing at once.

Heel. Why then, silence! I say.

All. Silence!

Heel. Silence, and let us proceed, neighbours with all the decency and confusion usual upon these occasions.

1 *Mob.* Ay, ay, there is no doing without that.

All. No, no, no.

Heel. Silence then, and keep the peace; what, is there no respect paid to authority: am not I the returning officer?

All. Ay, ay, ay.

Heel. Chosen by yourselves, and approved of by Sir Jacob?

All. True, true.

Heel. Well then, be silent and civil; stand back there, that gentleman without a shirt, and make room for your betters. Where's Simon Snuffle, the sexton?

Snuffle. Here.

Heel. Let him come forward; we appoint him our secretary: for Simon is a scollard, and can read written hand; and so let him be respected accordingly.

3 *Mob.* Room for Master Snuffle.

Heel. Here, stand by me: and let us, neighbours, proceed to open the premunire of the thing: but first, your reverence to the lord of the manor: a long life and a merry one to our landlord, Sir Jacob! Huzza!

Mob. Huzza!

Sneak. How fares it, honest Crispin?

Heel. Servant, Master Sneak. Let us now open the premunire of the thing, which I shall do briefly, with all the loquacity possible; that is, in a medium way; which, that we may the better do it, let the secretary read the names of the candidates, and what they say for themselves; and then we shall know what to say of them. Master Snuffle, begin.

Snuffle. [Reads.] "To the worthy inhabitants of the ancient corporation of Garratt. Gentlemen, your votes and interests are humbly requested in favour of Timothy Goose, to succeed our late worthy mayor, Mr. Richard Dripping, in the said office, he being—"

Heel. This Goose is but a kind of gosling, a sort of sneaking scoundrel. Who is he?

Snuffle. A journeyman tailor from Putney.

Heel. A journeyman tailor! A rascal, has he the impudence to transpire to be mayor? D'ye consider, neighbours, the weight of this office? Why, it is a burden for the back of a porter; and can you think that this cross-legg'd, cabbage-eating son of a cucumber, this whey-faced ninny, who is but the ninth part of a man, has strength to support it?

1 *Mob.* No Goose! no Goose!

2 *Mob.* A Goose!

Heel. Hold your hissing, and proceed to the next.

Snuffle. [Reads.] "Your votes are desired for Matthew Mug."

Mob. A Mug! a Mug!

Heel. Oh, oh, what you are all ready to have a touch of the tankard! but fair and soft, good neighbours, and, unless I am mistaken, you will find him a damned bitter draught.

1 *Mob.* A Mug! a Mug!

2 *Mob.* Hear him; hear Master Heeltap.

1 *Mob.* A Mug! a Mug!

Heel. Harkee, you fellow, with your mouth full of mug, let me ask you a question: bring him forward. Pray is not this Matthew Mug, a victualler?

3 *Mob.* I believe he may.

Heel. And lives at the sign of the Adam and Eve?

3 *Mob.* I believe he may.

Heel. Now answer upon your honour, and as you are a gentleman, what is the present price of a quart of home-brewed at the Adam and Eve?

3 *Mob.* I don't know.

Heel. You lie, sirrah: an't it a groat?

3 *Mob.* I believe it may.

Heel. Oh, may be so. Now, neighbours, here's a pretty rascal; this same Mug, because, d'ye see, state affairs would not jog glibly without laying a farthing a quart upon ale, this scoundrel, not contented to take things in a medium way, has had the impudence to rise it a penny.

Mob. No Mug! no Mug!

Heel. So, I thought I should crack Mr. Mug. Come, proceed to the next, Simon.

Shuffle. The next upon the list is Peter Primmer, the schoolmaster.

Heel. Ay, neighbours, and a sufficient man: let me tell you, Master Primmer is the man for my money; a man of learning, that can lay down the law; why, adzooks, he is wise enough to puzzle the parson: and then, how you have heard him oration at the Adam and Eve, of a Saturday night, about Russia and Prussia. 'Ecod, George Gage the exciseman is nothing at all to un.

4 *Mob.* A Primmer!

Heel. Ay, if the folks above did but know him. Why, lads, he will make us all statesmen in time.

2 *Mob.* Indeed!

Heel. Why he swears as how, all the miscarriages are owing to the great people's not learning to read.

3 *Mob.* Indeed!

Heel. "For," says Peter, says he, "if they would but once submit to be learned by me, there is no knowing to what a pitch the nation might rise."

1 *Mob.* Ay, I wish they would.

Sneak. Crispin, what is Peter Primmer a candidate?

Heel. He is, Master Sneak.

Sneak. Lord, I know him, mun, as well as my mother: why, I used to go to his lectures to Pewterers' hall, 'long with deputy Firkin.

Heel. Like enough.

Sneak. Odds me, brother Bruin, can you tell me what is become of my wife?

Bruin. She is gone off with the major.

Sneak. Mayhap to take a walk in the garden. I will go and take a peep at what they are doing. [*Exit.*]

Mob. [*Without.*] Huzaa!

Heel. Gad-so! the candidates are coming.

[*Exeunt Mob.* &c.]

Re-enter SIR JACOB JOLLUP, BRUIN, and MRS. BRUIN, through the garden gate.

Sir J. Well, son Bruin, how d'ye relish the corporation of Garratt?

Bruin. Why, lookye, Sir Jacob, my way is always to speak what I think: I don't approve on't at all.

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Mrs. B. No!

Sir J. And what's your objection?

Bruin. Why, I was never over-fond of your Maygames: besides, corporations are too serious things; they are edge-tools, Sir Jacob.

Sir J. That they are frequently tools, I can readily grant: but I never heard much of their edge.

Mrs. B. Well now, I protest I am pleased with it mightily.

Bruin. And who the devil doubts it? You women folks are easily pleased.

Mrs. B. Well, I like it so well, that I hope to see one every year.

Bruin. Do you? Why then you will be damnably bit; you may take your leave, I can tell you: for this is the last you shall see.

Sir J. Fie, Nr. Bruin, how can you be such a bear? Is that a manner of treating your wife.

Bruin. What, I suppose you would have me such a snivelling sot as your son-in-law Sneak, to truckle and cringe, to fetch and to—

Re-enter JERRY SNEAK, in a violent hurry.

Sneak. Where's brother Bruin? O Lord! brother, I have such a dismal story to tell you.

Bruin. What's the matter.

Sneak. Why, you know I went into the garden to look for my wife and the major, and there I hunted and hunted as sharp as if it had been for one of my own minikins; but the deuce a major or madam could I see; at last, a thought came into my head to look for them up in the summer-house.

Bruin. And there you found them?

Sneak. I'll tell you: the door was locked; and then I looked through the key-hole: and there, Lord ha' mercy upon us! [*Whispers.*] as sure as a gun.

Bruin. Indeed! Zounds, why did not you break open the door?

Sneak. I durst not. What, would you have me set my wit to a soldier? I warrant the major would have knocked me down with one of his boots.

Bruin. Very well! Pretty doings! you see, Sir Jacob, these are the fruits of indulgence. You may call me a bear, but your daughter shall never make me a beast. [*Mob huzzas.*]

Sir J. Hey-dey! What, is the election over already?

Re-enter CRISPIN HEELTAP, &c.

Heel. Where is Master Sneak?

Sneak. Here, Crispin.

Heel. The ancient corporation of Garratt, in consideration of your great parts and abilities, and out of respect to their landlord, Sir Jacob, have unanimously chosen you mayor.

Sneak. Me! huzaa! Good Lord, who would have thought it? But how came Master Primmer to lose it?

Heel. Why, Phil Fleam had told the electors, that Master Primmer was an Irishman; and so they would none of them give their vote for a foreigner.

Sneak. So then I have it for certain: huzaa! Now, brother Bruin, you shall see how I'll manage my madam. 'Gad, I'll make her know I am a man of authority; she shan't think to pullock and domineer over me.

Mrs. S. [*Without.*] Jerry! Jerry!

Bruin. Now for it, Sneak; the enemy's at hand.

Sneak. You promise to stand by me, brother Bruin?

Bruin. Tooth and nail.

Sneak. Then now for it; I am ready, let her come when she will.

Re-enter MRS. SNEAK.

Mrs. S. Where is the puppy?

Sneak. Yes, yes, she is axing for me.

Mrs. S. So, sot; what, is this true that I hear?

Sneak. May be 'tis, may be tan't; I don't choose to trust my affairs with a woman.—Is that right, brother Bruin?

Bruin. Fine! don't bate her an inch.

Sneak. Stand by me.

Mrs. S. Hey-day! I am amazed! Why, what is the meaning of this?

Sneak. The meaning is plain; that I am grown a man, and vil do what I please, without being accountable to nobody.

Mrs. S. Why, the fellow is surely bewitched.

Sneak. No, I am unwitched, and that you shall know to your cost; and since you provoke me, I will tell you a bit of my mind; what, I am the husband, I hope?

Bruin. That's right; at her again.

Sneak. Yes, and you sha'n't think to hector and domineer over me as you have done; for I'll go to the club when I please, and stay out as late as I list, and row in a boat to Putney on Sundays, and visit my friends at Vitsontide, and keep the key of the till, and help myself at table to what wittles I like; and I'll have a bit of the brown.

Bruin. Bravo, brother Sneak, the day's your own.

Sneak. An't it? Why, I did not think it was in me. Shall I tell her all I know?

Bruin. Every thing. You see she is struck dumb.

Sneak. As an oyster. [Apart.] Besides, Madam, I have something furer to tell you: 'ecod, if some folks go into gardens with majors, mayhap other people may go into garrets with maids.—

There, I gave it her home, brother Bruin.

Mrs. S. Why, noodle! jackanapes! harkye, who am I?

Sneak. Come, don't go to call names. Am I? why, my wife, and I am your master.

Mrs. S. My master! you paltry, puddling puppy! you sneaking, shabby, scrubby, snivelling whelp!

Sneak. Brother Bruin, don't let her come near me.

Mrs. S. Have I, sirrah, demeaned myself to wed such a thing, such a reptile as thee? Have I not made myself a by-word to all my acquaintance? Don't all the world cry, Lord, who would have thought it? Miss Molly Jollup to be married to Sneak; to take up at last with such a noodle as he?

Sneak. Ay, and glad enough you could catch me; you know you was pretty near your last legs.

Mrs. S. Was there ever such a confident cur? My last legs! Why, all the country knows I could have picked and choosed where I would. Did not I refuse Squire Ap-Griffith from Wales? Did not Counsellor Crab come a courting a twelve-month? Did not Mr. Wort, the great brewer of Brentford, make an offer that I should keep my post-chay?

Sneak. Nay, brother Bruin, she has had werry good proffers, that is certain.

Mrs. S. My last legs!—but I can rein my passion no longer; let me get at the villain.

Bruin. O fie, sister Sneak.

Sneak. Hold her fast.

Mrs. S. Mr. Bruin, unhand me; what, is it you that have stirred up these coals then? He is set on by you to abuse me.

Bruin. Not I; I would only have a man behave like a man.

Mrs. S. What, and you are to teach him, I warrant. But here comes the major.

Re-enter MAJOR STURGEON.

Oh, major! such a riot and rumpus! Like a man, indeed! I wish people would mind their own affairs, and not meddle with matters that does not concern them:—but all in good time; I shall one day catch him alone, when he has not his bullies to back him.

Sneak. Adod, that's true, brother Bruin: what shall I do when she has me at home, and nobody by but ourselves?

Bruin. If you get her once under, you may do with her whatever you will.

Maj. S. Lookye, Master Bruin, I don't know how this behaviour may suit with a citizen; but were you an officer, and Major Sturgeon upon your court-martial—

Bruin. What then?

Maj. S. Then? why then you would be broke.

Bruin. Broke! and for what?

Maj. S. What! read the articles of war. But these things are out of your spear; points of honour are for the sons of the sword.

Sneak. Honour! if you come to that, where was your honour when you got my wife in the garden?

Maj. S. Now, Sir Jacob, this is the curse of our cloth: all suspected for the faults of a few.

Sneak. Ay, and not without reason. I heard of your tricks at the King of Bohemy, when you was campaigning about, I did. Father Sir Jacob, he is as vicious as an old ram.

Maj. S. Stop whilst you are safe, Master Sneak; for the sake of your amiable lady, I pardon what is past—but for you—

Bruin. Well.

Maj. S. Dread the whole force of my fury.

Bruin. Why, lookye, Major Sturgeon, I don't much care for your poppers and sharps, because why, they are out of my way; but if you will doff with your boots, and box a couple of bouts—

Maj. S. Box! box!—Blades! bullets! bag-shot!

Mrs. S. Not for the world, my dear major; oh, risk not so precious a life. Ungrateful wretches! and is this the reward for all the great feats he has done? After all his marchings, his soussings, his sweatings, his swimings, must his dear blood be spilt by a broker?

Maj. S. Be satisfied, sweet Mrs. Sneak; these little fracasas we soldiers are subject to; trifles, bagatailes, Mrs. Sneak. But, that matters may be conducted in a military manner, I will get our chaplain to pen me a challenge. Expect to hear from my adjutant.

Mrs. S. Major! Sir Jacob! what, are you all leagued against his dear life? A man! yes, a very manly action indeed, to set married people a quarrelling, and ferment a difference between hus-

band and wife: if you were a man, you would not stand by and see a poor woman beat and abused by a brute, you would not.

Sneak. O Lord, I can hold out no longer, why, brother Bruin, you have set her a weeping. My life, my love, don't weep: did I ever think I should have made my Molly to weep?

Mrs. S. Last legs! you lubberly—

[*Strikes him.*]

Sir J. Oh, fie, Molly!

Mrs. S. What, are you leagued against me, Sir Jacob?

Sir J. Prythee, don't expose yourself before the whole parish. But what has been the occasion of this?

Mrs. S. Why, has not he gone and made himself the fool of the fair? Mayor of Garratt, indeed! ecod, I could trample him under my feet.

Sneak. Nay, why should you grudge me my purfament?

Mrs. S. Did you ever hear such an oaf? Why thee wilt be pointed at wherever thee goest. Lookye, Jerry, mind what I say; go get 'em to choose somebody else, or never come near me again.

Sneak. What shall I do, father Sir Jacob?

Sir J. Nay, daughter, you take this thing in too serious a light; my honest neighbours thought to compliment me: but come, we'll settle the business at once. Neighbours, my son Sneak being seldom amongst us, the duty will never be done; so we will get our honest friend, Heeltap, to execute the office: he is, I think, every way qualified.

Mob. A Heeltap!

Heel. What, do you mean as Master Jeremy's deputy?

Sir J. Ay, ay, his *locum tenens*.

Sneak. Do, Crispin, do be my *locum tenens*.

Heel. Give me your hand, Master Sneak, and to oblige you I will be the *locum tenens*.

Sir J. So, that is settled: but now to heal the other breach: come, major, the gentlemen of your cloth seldom bear malice; let me interpose between you and my son.

Maj. S. Your son-in-law, Sir Jacob, does deserve a castigation; but on recollection, a cit would but sully my arms. I forgive him.

Sir J. That's right. As a token of amity, and to celebrate our feast, let us call in the fiddlers. Now if the major had but his shoes, he might join in a country dance.

Maj. S. Sir Jacob, no shoes; a major must be never out of his boots; always ready for action. Mrs. Sneak will find me lightsome enough.

Sneak. What, are all the women engaged? why then my *locum tenens* and I will jig together. Forget and forgive, major.

Maj. S. Freely.

Nor be it said, that after all my toil,
I stain'd my regimentals by a broil.

To you I dedicate boots, sword, and shield,

Sir J. As harmless in the chamber as the field.

[*Exeunt.*]

In the character of Jerry Sneak, it has been usual to introduce the following comic song, of

ROBINSON CRUSOE.

*When I was a lad, my fortune was bad,
My grandfather I did lose, O;
I'll bet you a can, you have heard of the man,
His name it was Robinson Crusoe.*

*Oh! poor Robinson Crusoe,
Tinky ting tang, tinky ting tang,
Oh! poor Robinson Crusoe.*

*You've read in a book of a voyage he took,
While the raging whirlwinds blew so;
That the ship with a shock fell plump on a rock,
Near drowning poor Robinson Crusoe.*

Oh! poor, &c.

*Poor soul! none but he escap'd on the sea,
Ah! Fate, Fate! how could you do so;
'Till at length he was thrown on an island unknown
Which received poor Robinson Crusoe.*

Oh! poor, &c.

*But he sav'd from on board a gun and a sword,
And another old matter or two, so;
That by dint of his thrift he manag'd to shift
Pretty well, for poor Robinson Crusoe.*

Oh! poor, &c.

*He wanted something to eat, and couldn't get meat,
The cattle away from him flew so;
That but for his gun he'd been sorely undone,
And starv'd, would poor Robinson Crusoe.*

Oh! poor, &c.

*And he happen'd to save from the merciless wave
A poor parrot, I assure you 'tis true, so;
That, when he came home from a wearisome roam,
Us'd to cry out, poor Robinson Crusoe.*

Oh! poor, &c.

*Then he got all the wood that ever he could,
And he stuck it together with glue, so;
That he made him a hut in which he might put
The carcass of Robinson Crusoe.*

Oh! poor, &c.

*While his man Friday kept the house snug and dry,
To be sure 'twas his business to do so,
They liv'd friendly together, less like servant than
neighbour,*

Liv'd Friday and Robinson Crusoe.

Oh! poor, &c.

*Then he wore a large cap, and a coat without nap,
And a beard as long as a Jew, so,
That, by all that's civil, he look'd like a devil
More than poor Robinson Crusoe.*

Oh! poor, &c.

*At length, within hail, he saw a stout sail,
And he took to his little canoe, so;
When he reach'd the ship, they gave him a tripp,
Back to England brought Robinson Crusoe.*

Oh! poor, &c.

BARBAROSSA:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY DR. BROWNE.

REMARKS.

THE advantage of Garrick in Achmet, and Mossop in Barbarossa, when this play first appeared in 1755, contributed more to its success than the invention of the author, who has evidently borrowed his design from other dramatic productions; particularly, from the tragedy of *Merope*, and in some delineations of character from *Tamerlane* and the *Morning Bride*.

Master Betty made his first appearance before a London audience, in the interesting character of Achmet, in this play; and was received with loud laughter, which ended in tumultuous applause at his surprising ability and genuine grace.

It is here correctly given, as then performed.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN, 1803.
ACHMET,.....*Master Betty.*
BARBAROSSA,.....*Mr. Hargrave.*
OTHMAN,.....*Mr. Murray.*
SADI,.....*Mr. Creswell.*
ALADIN,.....*Mr. Chapman.*
YUSEF,.....*Mr. Abbot.*

COVENT GARDEN, 1803
HASSAN,.....*Mr. Atkins.*
ZAPHIRA,.....*Mrs. Litchfield.*
IRENE,.....*Miss Bruntton.*
SEMIRA,.....*Mrs. Gaudry.*

Officers, Attendants, Soldiers, &c.

SCENE.—The Royal Palace of Algiers.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Palace.

Enter OTHMAN and a SLAVE.

Oth. A stranger, say'st thou, that inquires of Othman?

Slave. He does; and waits admittance.

Oth. Did he tell

His name and quality?

Slave. That he declined:

But call'd himself thy friend.

Oth. Conduct the stranger to me.

[*Exit SLAVE.*]

Perhaps some worthy citizen, returned
From voluntary exile, to Algiers,
Once known in happier days.

Enter SADI.

Ah, Sadi here!

My honoured friend!

Sadi. Stand off—pollute me not:

These honest arms, though worn with want, disdain

Thy gorgeous trappings, earned by foul dishonour.

Oth. Forbear thy rash reproaches; for beneath

This habit, which to thy mistaken eye

Confirms my guilt, I wear a heart as true

As Sadi's to my king.

Sadi. Why then beneath

This cursed roof, this black usurper's palace,

Dar'st thou to draw infected air, and live

The slave of insolence!

O shame to dwell

With murder, lust, and rapine! did he not

Come from the depths of Barea's solitude,

With fair pretence of faith and firm alliance ?
 Did not our grateful king, with open arms,
 Receive him as his guest ? O fatal hour !
 Did he not then with hot, adult'rous eye,
 Gaze on the Queen Zaphira ? Yes, 'twas lust,
 Lust gave th' infernal whisper to his soul,
 And bade him murder, if he would enjoy !
 Yet thou, pernicious traitor, unabash'd
 Canst wear the murderer's badge.

Oth. Mistaken man !

Yet still I love thee :
 Still unprovok'd by thy intemperate zeal,
 Could passion prompt me to licentious speech,
 Bethink thee—might I not reproach thy flight
 With the foul names of fear and perfidy ?
 Didst thou not fly, when Barbarossa's sword
 Reek'd with the blood of thy brave countrymen ?
 What then did I ?—Beneath this hated roof,
 In pity to thy widow'd queen—

Sadi. In pity ?

Oth. Yes, Sadi ! Heaven is witness, pity sway'd me.

With honest guile I did enrol my name
 In the black list of Barbarossa's friends :
 In hope, that some propitious hour might rise,
 When heaven would dash the murderer from his throne,

And give young Selim to his orphan'd people.

Sadi. Indeed ! canst thou be true ?

Oth. By heaven, I am.

Sadi. Why then dissemble thus ?

Oth. Have I not told thee ?

I held it vain, to stem the tyrant's power,
 By the weak efforts of an ill-tim'd rage.

Sadi. I find thee honest ; and with pride
 Will join thy counsels.

Can aught, my friend, be done ?

Can aught be dar'd ?

Oth. We groan beneath the scourge.

This very morn, on false pretence of vengeance
 For the foul murder of our honour'd king,
 Five guiltless wretches perish'd on the rack.

Sadi. O my devoted country !

But say, the widow'd queen—my heart bleeds for her.

Oth. Hemm'd round by terrors,

Within this cruel palace, once the seat
 Of every joy, through seven long tedious years,
 She mourns her murder'd lord, her exil'd son,
 Her people fallen : the murderer of her lord,
 Returning now from conquest o'er the Moors,
 Tempts her to marriage ; but with noble firmness,
 Surpassing female, she rejects his vows,
 Scorning the horrid union. Meantime he,
 With ceaseless hate, pursues her exil'd son,
 The virtuous youth, even into foreign climes.
 Ere this, perhaps, he bleeds. A murd'ring ruffian
 Is sent to watch his steps, and plunge the dagger
 Into his guiltless breast.

Sadi. Is this thy faith !

Tamely to witness to such deeds of horror !
 Give me thy poignard ? lead me to the tyrant.
 What though surrounding guards—

Oth. Repress thy rage.

Thou wilt alarm the palace, wilt involve
 Thyself, thy friend, in ruin. Haste thee hence ;
 Haste to the remnant of our loyal friends.
 And let maturer councils rule thy zeal.

Sadi. Yet let us ne'er forget our prince's wrongs :
 Remember, Othman, (and let vengeance rise)
 How in the pangs of death, and in his gore
 We'll'ing, we found our prince !

17*

His royal blood,
 The life-blood of his people, o'er the bath
 Ran purple ! Oh, remember ! and revenge !

Oth. Doubt not my zeal. But haste, and seek
 our friends.

Near to the western port Almanzor dwells,
 Yet uneduc'd by Barbarossa's power.
 He will disclose to thee, if aught be heard
 Of Selim's safety, or (what more I dread)
 Of Selim's death. Thence best may our resolves
 Be drawn hereafter. But let caution guide thee.

Sadi. I obey thee.

Near to the western port, thou say'st ?

Oth. Even there.

Close by the blasted palm-tree, where the mosque
 O'erlooks the city. Haste thee hence, my friend.
 I would not have thee found within these walls.

[*Flourish.*

And hark—these warlike sounds proclaim the
 approach

Of the proud Barbarossa, with his train.

Begone—

Sadi. May dire disease and pestilence
 Hang o'er his steps !—Farewell—Remember,
 Othman,

Thy queen's, thy prince's, and thy country's wrong.

[*Exit.*

Oth. When I forget them be contempt my lot !

Enter BARBAROSSA, Guards, &c.

Bar. Valiant Othman,
 Are those vile slaves impal'd ?

Oth. My lord, they are.

Bar. Did not the rack extort confession from
 them ?

Oth. They died obdurate : while the melting
 crowd

Wept at their groans and anguish.

Bar. Curse on their womanish hearts !

But why sits

That sadness on thy brow ? for oft I find thee
 Musing and sad ; while joy for my return,
 My sword victorious, and the Moors o'erthrown,
 Resounds through all my palace.

Oth. Mighty warrior !

The soul, intent on offices of love,
 Will oft neglect or scorn the weaker proof,
 Which smiles or speech can give.

Bar. Well : be it so.

To guard Algiers from anarchy's misrule,
 I sway the regal sceptre.

But 'tis strange,

That when, with open arms, I would receive
 Young Selim ; would restore the crown, which
 death

Reft from his father's head—he scorns my bounty,
 And proudly kindles war in foreign climes,
 Against my power, who sav'd his bleeding country.

Enter ALADIN.

Aladin. Brave prince, I bring thee tidings
 Of high concernment to Algiers and thee.
 Young Selim is no more.

Oth. Selim no more !

Bar. Why that astonishment ?

He was our bitterest foe.

Oth. So perish all thy causeless enemies !

Bar. How died the prince, and where ?

Aladin. The rumour tells

That, flying to Oran, he there begg'd succour
 From Ferdinand of Spain, t' invade Algiers.

Bar. From Christian dogs !

Oth. How! league with infidels!

Aladin. And there held council with the haughty Spaniard,

To conquer and dethrone thee; but in vain:
For in a dark encounter with two slaves,
Wherein the one fell by his youthful arm,
Selim at length was slain.

Bar. Ungrateful boy!

Oft have I courted him to meet my kindness;
But still in vain; he shunn'd me like a pestilence;
Nor could I e'er behold him, since the down
Cover'd his manly cheek.—How many years
Numbered he?

Oth. I think, scarce thirteen, when his father died,

And now some twenty.

Bar. Othman, now for proof
Of undissembled service.—Well I know,
Thy long experienc'd faith hath placed thee high
In the queen's confidence:

Othman, she must be won.

Plead thou my cause of love:

Make her but mine,
And such unsought reward shall crown thy zeal,
As shall outsoar thy wishes.

Oth. Mighty king,
Where duty bids, I go.

Bar. Then haste thee, Othman,
Ere yet the rumour of her son's decease
Hath reach'd her ear;

Tell her, I come, borne on the wings of love!—
Haste—fly—I follow thee. *[Exit OTHMAN.]*

Now, Aladin,
Now fortune bears us to the wish'd-for port:
This was the rock I dreaded. Dost not think
Th' attempt was greatly daring?

Aladin. Bold as needful.

What booteth it, to cut the old serpent off,
While the young adder nested in his place?

Bar. True: Algiers is mine,
Without a rival.

Yet I wonder much,
Omar returns not: Omar, whom I sent
On this high trust. I fear, 'tis he hath fallen.

Didst thou not say, two slaves encounter'd Selim?

Aladin. Ay, two; 'tis rumour'd so.

Bar. And that one fell?

Aladin. Even so:—by Selim's hand; while his
companion

Planted his happier steel in Selim's heart.

Bar. Omar, I fear, is fallen. From my right
hand

I gave my signet to the trusty slave;
And bade him send it, as the certain pledge
Of Selim's death; if sickness or captivity,
Or wayward fate, should thwart his quick return.

Aladin. The rumour yet is young; perhaps
foreruns

The trusty slave's approach.

Bar. We'll wait the event.

Meantime give out, that now the widow'd queen
Hath dried her tears, prepar'd to crown my love
By marriage rites; spread wide the flattering tale:
For, if persuasion win not her consent,
Power shall compel.

This night my will devotes to feast and joy,
For conquest o'er the Moor. Hence, Aladin,
And see the night-watch close the palace round.
Now to the queen. *[Exit ALADIN.]*

Enter IRENE.

My wayward daughter—Still with thy folly thwart

Each purpose of my soul? Why these sullen
tears?

Irene. Let not these tears offend my father's
eye;

They are the tears of pity. From the queen
I come, thy suppliant.

Bar. What wouldst thou urge?

Irene. Thy dread return from war,
And proffer'd love, have open'd every wound,
The soft and lenient hand of time had clos'd.
If ever gentle pity touch'd thy heart,
Urge not thy harsh command

To see her; her distracted soul is bent

To mourn in solitude. She asks no more.

Bar. She mocks my love. Had not war,
And great ambition, call'd me from Algiers,
Ere this, my power had reach'd what she denies
But there's a cause, which touches on my peace,
And bids me brook no more her false delays.

Irene. Oh, frown not thus! Sure, pity ne'er
deserv'd

A parent's frown! but look more kindly on me,
Let thy consenting pity mix with mine,
And heal the woes of weeping majesty.
Unhappy queen!

Bar. What means that gushing tear?

Irene. Oh, never shall Irene taste of peace,
While poor Zaphira mourns.

Bar. Dry up thy tears. What! damp the ge-
neral triumph,
That echoes through Algiers! which now shall
pierce

The vaulted heaven, as soon as fame shall spread
Young Selim's death, my empire's bitterest foe.

Irene. O generous Selim! *[Weeps.]*

Bar. Ah! there's more in this?

Tell me, Irene:—on thy duty, tell me,
Why, at this detested name of Selim,
Afresh thy sorrow streams?

Irene. Yes, I will tell thee,
For he is gone, and dreads thy hate no more;
My father knows, that scarce five moons are past,
Since the Moors seiz'd and sold me at Oran,—
A hopeless captive in a foreign clime.

Bar. Too well I know, and rue the fatal day.
But what of this?

Irene. Oft have I told thee,
How, midst the throng, a youth appear'd: his eye
Bright as the morning star.

Bar. And was it Selim?

Did he redeem thee?

Irene. With unsparing hand
He paid th' allotted ransom: at his feet I wept,
Dissolv'd in tears of gratitude and joy.
But when I told my quality and birth,
He started at the name of Barbarossa:
And thrice turn'd pale. Yet, with recovery mild,
"Go to Algiers," he cried; "protect my mother,
And be to her what Selim is to thee."
Even such, my father, was the generous youth,
Who, by the hands of bloody men,
Lies number'd with the dead.

Bar. Amazement chills me!

Was this thy unknown friend conceal'd from me?
False—faithless child!

Irene. Could gratitude do less? *[me]*
He said, thy wrath pursu'd him; thence conjur'd
Not to reveal his name.

Bar. Thou treacherous maid!
To stoop to freedom from thy father's foe!

Irene. Alas, my father!
He never was thy foe.

Bar. What! plead for Selim!
O coward! traitress to thy father's glory!
Hence from my sight!
Beware thee;—shun the queen: nor taint her ear
With Selim's fate.—Yes she shall crown my love;
Or by our prophet, she shall dread my power.

[*Exit.*]

Irene. Unhappy queen!
To what new scenes of horror art thou doom'd!
She but entreats to die
In her dear father's tent; thither, good queen,
My care shall speed thee, while suspicion sleeps.
What tho' my frowning father pour his rage
On my defenceless head; yet innocence
Shall yield her firm support, and conscious virtue
Gild all my days. Could I but save Zaphira,
Let the storm beat; I'll weep and pray, till she,
Bereft of her lov'd lord—of every joy bereft,
And heaven forget, my father e'er was cruel.

[*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Another Apartment.

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Zaph. When shall I be at peace? O righteous
Heaven,
Strengthen my fainting soul, which fain would
rise,
To confidence in thee!—But woes on woes
O'erwhelm me! first my husband—now my son!
Both dead!—both slaughter'd by the bloody hand
Of Barbarossa!

Enter OTHMAN.

O faithful Othman!
Our fears were true:—my Selim is no more!
Oth. Has then the fatal secret reach'd thine ear?
Inhuman tyrant!

Zaph. Strike him, Heaven, with thunder!
Nor let Zaphira doubt thy Providence.

Oth. 'Twas that we fear'd. Oppose not Heaven's
high will,
Nor struggle with the tenfold chain of fate,
That links thee to thy woes! Oh, rather yield,
And wait the happier hour, when innocence
Shall weep no more. My honour'd queen,
Thy king—

Zaph. Whom styl'st thou king?*Oth.* 'Tis Barbarossa.—*Zaph.* Tyrant!

Does he assume the name of king?
Oth. He does.

Zaph. O title vilely purchas'd! by the blood
Of innocence! by treachery and murder!
May Heaven, incens'd, pour down its vengeance
on him,

Blast all his joys, and turn them into horror;
Till frenzy rise, and bid him curse the hour
That gave his crimes their birth! My faithful
Othman,

My sole surviving comfort! can no means be found,
To fly these black'ning horrors that surround me?

Oth. That hope is vain! The tyrant knows
thy hate.

Hence, day and night, his watchful guards
Surround thee. Rouse not then his anger;
Let soft persuasion and mild eloquence
Redeem that liberty, which stern rebuke
Would rob thee of for ever.

Zaph. Cruel task!
An injured queen

To kneel for liberty! and, oh! to whom?
Even to the murderer of her lord and son!
O, perish first, Zaphira! yes, I'll die!
For what is life to me? my dear, dear lord!
My hapless child!—yes, I will follow you.

Oth. Wilt thou not see him, then?*Zaph.* I will not, Othman;

Or if I do, with bitter imprecation,
More keen than poison shot from serpent's tongues,
I'll pour my curses on him!

Oth. Will Zaphira

Thus meanly sink in woman's fruitless rage,
When she should wake revenge?

Zaph. Revenge?—O tell me—

Tell me but how? what can a helpless woman?

Oth. Gain but the tyrant's leave, and reach thy
father:

Pour thy complaints before him: let thy wrongs
Kindle his indignation to pursue

This vile usurper, till unceasing war
Blast his ill-gotten power.

Zaph. Ah, say'st thou, Othman?

Thy words have shot like lightning through my
frame;

And all my soul's on fire!—Thou faithful friend!
Yes—with more gentle speech I'll sooth his pride—
Regain my freedom; reach my father's tents;
There paint my countless woes. His kindling
rage

Shall wake the valleys into honest vengeance:
The sudden storm shall pour on Barbarossa;

And every glowing warrior steep his shaft
In deadlier poison, to revenge my wrongs.

Oth. There spoke the queen. But as thou
lov'st thy freedom,

Touch not on Selim's death. Thy soul will kindle,
And passion mount in flames that will consume
thee.

Zaph. My murder'd son! Yes to revenge thy
death,

I'll speak a language which my heart disdains.

Oth. Peace, peace! the tyrant comes: now in
jur'd queen,

Plead for thy freedom, hope for just revenge,
And check each rising passion. [*Exit OTHMAN.*]

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. Hail, sovereign fair! in whom
Beauty and majesty conspire to charm!
Behold the conqueror.

Zaph. O Barbarossa!

No more the pride of conquest e'er can charm
My widow'd heart? With my departed lord
My love lies buried?

Then turn thee to some happier fair, whose heart
May crown thy growing love with love sincere;
For I have none to give.

Bar. Love ne'er should die:

'Tis the soul's cordial; 'tis the fount of life;

Therefore should spring eternal in the breast—
One subject lost, another should succeed;

And all our life be love.

Zaph. Urge me no more: thou might'st with
equal hope

Woo the cold marble weeping o'er a tomb,
To meet thy wishes! But, if gen'rous love

Dwell in thy breast, vouchsafe me proof sincere:

Give me safe convoy to the native vales
Of dear Mutija, where my father reigns.

Bar. Oh, blind to proffer'd bliss! what, fondly
quit

This pomp

Of empire, for an Arab's wand'ring tent,
Where the mock chieftain leads his vagrant tribes
From plain to plain, and faintly shadows out
The majesty of kings!—Far other joys
Here shall attend thy call.
To thee, exalted fair! submissive realms
Shall bow the neck; and swarthy kings and
queens,

From the far distant Niger and the Nile,
Drawn captive at my conq'ring chariot wheels,
Shall kneel before thee.

Zaph. Pomp and power are toys,
Which even the mind at ease may well disdain;
But, ah! what mockery is the tinsel pride
Of splendour, when, by wasting woes, the mind
Lies desolate within;—such, such is mine!
O'erwhelm'd with ills, and dead to every joy;
Envy me not this last request, to die
In my dear father's tents!

Bar. Thy suit is vain—

Zaph. Thus kneeling at thy feet—I do beseech
thee.

Bar. Thou thankless fair!
Thus to repay the labours of my love!
Had I not seiz'd the throne when Selim died,
Ere this, thy foes had laid Algiers in ruin:
I check'd the warring powers, and gave you peace.
Make thee but mine,
I will descend the throne, and call thy son
From banishment to empire.

Zaph. Oh my heart!
Can I bear this?—
Inhuman tyrant! Curses on thy head!
May dire remorse and anguish haunt thy throne,
And gender in thy bosom fell despair!
Despair, as deep as mine!

Bar. What means Zaphira?
What means this burst of grief?

Zaph. Thou fell destroyer!
Had not guilt steel'd thy heart, awak'ning con-
science

Would flash conviction on thee, and each look,
Shot from these eyes, be arm'd with serpent hor-
rors,

To turn thee into stone!—Relentless man!
Who did the bloody deed? Oh tremble, guilt,
Where'er thou art!—Look on me,—tell me, tyrant!
Who slew my blameless son?

Bar. What envious tongue
Hath dar'd to taint my name with slander?
Thy Selim lives: nay more, he soon shall reign,
If thou consent to bless me.

Zaph. Never! Oh, never—Sooner would I roam
An unknown exile through the torrid climes
Of Afric, sooner dwell with wolves and tigers,
Than mount with thee my murder'd Selim's
throne?

Bar. Rash queen, forbear! think on thy captive
state;

Remember, that within these palace walls
I am omnipotent:—yield thee then:
Avert my gathering horrors that surround thee,
And dread the power incens'd.

Zaph. Dares thy licentious tongue pollute mine
ear

With that foul menace!—Tyrant, dread'st thou
not

I'h' all-seeing eye of Heaven, its lifted thunder,
And all the redd'ning vengeance which it stores
For crimes like thine?—Yet know, Zaphira scorns
thee.

I though robb'd by thee of every dear support,

No tyrant's threat can awe the free-born soul,
That greatly dares to die. [*Exit ZAPHIRA*]

Bar. Where should she learn the tale of Selim's
death?

Could Othman dare to tell it? If he did,
My rage shall sweep him, swifter than the whirl
wind,
To instant death!—

Enter ALADIN.

O Aladin!

Timely thou com'st, to ease my lab'ring thought,
That swells with indignation and despair.

This stubborn woman—

Aladin. What, unconquer'd still?

Bar. The news of Selim's fate hath reach'd her
ear.

Whence could this come?

Aladin. I can resolve the doubt.

A female slave, attendant on Zaphira,
O'erheard the messenger who brought the tale,
And gave it to her ear.

Bar. Perdition seize her!

Nor threats can move, nor promise now allure,
Her haughty soul: nay, she defies my power;
And talks of death, as if her female form
Inshrin'd some hero's spirit.

Aladin. Let her rage foam.

I bring thee tidings that will ease thy pain.

Bar. Say'st thou?—Speak on—O give me
quick relief!

Aladin. The gallant youth is come, who slew
her son.

Bar. Who, Omar?

Aladin. No; unhappy Omar fell
By Selim's hand. But Achmet, whom he join'd
His brave associate, so the youth bids tell thee,
Reveng'd his death, by Selim's.

Bar. Gallant youth!

Bears he the signet?

Aladin. Ay.

Bar. That speaks him true.—Conduct him,
Aladin. [*Exit ALADIN*]

This is beyond my hope. The secret pledge
Restor'd, prevents suspicion of the deed,
While it confirms it done

Enter SELIM disguised as ACHMET, and ALADIN.

Selim. Hail, mighty Barbarossa! as the pledge
[*Kneels.*]

Of Selim's death, behold thy ring restor'd:—
That pledge will speak the rest.

Bar. Rise, valiant youth!

But first, no more a slave—I give thee freedom.
Thou art the youth, whom Omar (now no more)
Join'd his companion in this brave attempt?

Selim. I am.

Bar. Then tell me how you sped.—Where
found ye

That insolent?

Selim. We found him at Oran,
Plotting deep mischief to thy throne and people.

Bar. Well ye repaid the traitor.—

Selim. As we ought.

While night drew on, we leapt upon our prey.
Full at his heart brave Omar aim'd the poignard,
Which Selim shunning, wrench'd it from his hand
Then plung'd it in his breast. I hasted on,
Too late to save, yet I reveng'd my friend:
My thirsty dagger with repeated blows
Search'd every artery: they fell together,

Gasping in folds of mortal enmity;
And thus in frowns expir'd.

Bar. Well hast thou sped:
Thy dagger did its office, faithful Achmet!
And high reward shall wait thee.—One thing
more—

Be the thought fortunate!—Go, seek the queen.
For know, the rumour of her Selim's death
Hath reach'd her ear: hence dark suspicions rise,
Glancing at me. Go, tell her, that thou saw'st
Her son expire;—that, with his dying breath,
He did conjure her to receive my vows,
And give her country peace.

Enter OTHMAN.

Most welcome, Othman;
Behold this gallant stranger. He hath done
The state good service. Let some high reward
Await him, such as may o'erpay his zeal.
Conduct him to the queen, for he hath news
Worthy her ear, from her departed son;
Such as may win her love—Come, Aladin,
The banquet waits our presence;—festal joy
Laughs in the mantling goblet; and the night,
Illumin'd by the taper's dazzling beam,
Rivals departed day.

[Exeunt BARBAROSSA and ALADIN.]

Selim. What anxious thought
Rolls in thine eye, and heaves thy lab'ring breast?
Why join'st thou not the loud excess of joy,
That riots through the palace?

Oth. Dar'st thou tell me,
On what dark errand thou art here?

Selim. I dare.
Dost thou not perceive the savage lines of blood
Deform my visage? Read'st not in mine eye
Remorseless fury? I am Selim's murd'rer.

Oth. Selim's murd'rer!
Selim. Start not from me.
My dagger thirsts not but for regal blood—
Why this amazement?

Oth. Amazement! No—'tis well; 'tis as it
should be—

He was indeed a foe to Barbarossa.

Selim. And therefore to Algiers. Was it not
so?

Why dost thou pause? What passion shakes
thy frame?

Oth. Fate, do thy worst! I can no more dis-
semble;

Can I unmov'd behold the murd'ring ruffian,
Smear'd with my prince's blood? Go, tell the ty-
rant,

Othman defies his power; that, tired with life,
He dares his bloody hand, and pleads to die.

Selim. What, didst thou love this Selim?

Oth. All men lov'd him.

He was of such unmix'd and blameless quality,
That envy, at his praise, stood mute, nor dar'd
To sully his fair name! Remorseless tyrant!

Selim. I do commend thy faith. And since
thou lov'st him,

I'll whisper to thee, that with honest guile
I have deceiv'd this tyrant, Barbarossa:
Selim is yet alive.

Oth. Alive!

Selim. Nay, more—

Selim is in Algiers.

Oth. Impossible!

Selim. Nay, if thou doubt'st, I'll bring him hi-
ther, straight.

Oth. Not for an empire!

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Thou might'st as well bring the devoted lamb
Into the tiger's den.

Selim. But I'll bring him
Hid in such deep disguise, as shall deride
Suspicion, though she wear the lynx's eyes.
Not even thyself couldst know him.

Oth. Yes, sure: too sure, to hazard such an
awful trial.

Selim. Yet seven revolving years, worn out
In tedious exile, may have wrought such change
Of voice and feature, in the state of youth,
As might elude thine eye.

Oth. No time can blot
The mem'ry of his sweet majestic mien,
The lustre of his eye! besides, he wears
A mark indelible, a beauteous scar,
Made on his forehead by a furious pard,
Which, rushing on his mother, Selim slew.

Selim. A scar?

Oth. Ay, on his forehead.

Selim. What, like this! *[Lifting his turban.]*

Oth. Whom do I see?—am I awake?—my
prince! *[Kneels.]*

My honour'd, honour'd king!

Selim. Rise faithful Othman:

Thus let me thank thy truth! *[Embraces him.]*

Oth. O happy hour!

Selim. Why dost thou tremble thus? Why
grasp my hand?

And why that ardent gaze? Thou can'st not
doubt me!

Oth. Ah, no! I see thy sire in every line.—
How did my prince escape the murd'rer's hand?

Selim. I wrench'd the dagger from him; and
gave back

That death he meant to bring. The ruffian wore
The tyrant's signet.—Take this ring, he cried,
The sole return my dying hand can make thee
For its accurs'd attempt: this pledge restor'd,
Will prove thee slain. Safe may'st thou see Al-
giers,

Unknown to all.—This said, th' assassin died.

Oth. But how to gain admittance, thus un-
known?

Selim. Disguis'd as Selim's murderer I come:
Th' accomplice of the deed: the ring restor'd,
Gain'd credence to my words.

Oth. Yet, ere thou can'st, thy death was ru-
mour'd here.

Selim. I spread the flatt'ring tale, and sent it
hither;

That babbling rumour, like a lying dream,
Might make belief more easy. Tell me, Othman,
And yet I tremble to approach the theme,—
How fares my mother? does she still retain
Her native greatness?

Oth. Still:—In vain the tyrant

Tempts her to marriage, though with impious
threats

Of death or violation.

Selim. May kind Heaven

Strengthen her virtue, and by me reward it!

When shall I see her, Othman?

Oth. Yet, my prince,

I tremble for thy presence.

Selim. Let not fear

Sully thy virtue: 'tis the lot of guilt *[fear?]*

To tremble. What hath innocence to do with

Oth. Still my heart

Forbodes some dire event.—O quit these walls!

Selim. Not till a deed be done, which every ty-
Shall tremble when he hears. *[rant]*

Oth. What means my prince?

Selim. To take just vengeance for a father's
A mother's sufferings, and a people's groans.

Oth. Alas, my prince! thy single arm is weak
To combat multitudes.

Selim. Therefore I come,
Clad in this murderer's guise.—Ere morning shines,
This, Othman!—this—shall drink the tyrant's
blood. *[Shows a dagger.]*

Oth. Heaven shield thy life.—Let caution rule
Thy zeal!

Selim. Nay, think not that I come
Blindly impell'd by fury or despair:
For I have seen our friends, and parted now
From Sadi and Almanzor.

Oth. Say—what hope?

My soul is all attention—

Selim. Mark me, then;
A chosen band of citizens this night
Will storm the palace: while the glutt'd troops
Lie drench'd in surfeit, the confed'rate city,
Bold through despair, have sworn to break their
chain

By one wide slaughter. I, mean time, have gain'd
The palace, and will wait th' appointed hour,
To guard Zaphira from the tyrant's rage,
Amid the deathful uproar.

Oth. Heaven protect thee—

'Tis dreadful—what's the hour?

Selim. I left our friends
In secret council. Ere the dead of night,
Brave Sadi will report their last resolves.—
Now lead me to the queen.—

Oth. Brave prince, beware!

Her joy's or fear's excess, would sure betray thee.
Thou shalt not see her, till the tyrant perish!

Selim. I must.—I feel some secret impulse urge
me.

Who knows that 'tis not the last parting interview
We ever shall obtain?

Oth. Then, on thy life,
Do not reveal thyself.—Assume the name
Of Selim's friend; sent to confirm her virtue,
And warn her that he lives.

Selim. It shall be so: I yield me to thy will.

Oth. Thou greatly daring youth! May angels
watch,

And guard thy upright purpose! That Algiers
May reap the blessings of a virtuous reign,
And all thy godlike father shine in thee!

Selim. Oh, thou hast rous'd a thought, on
which revenge *[here,—]*
Mounts with redoubled fire!—Yes, here, even
Beneath this very roof, my honour'd father
Shed round his blessings, till accurs'd treach'ry
Stole on his peaceful hour! O, blessed shade!

[Kneels.]

If yet thou hover'st o'er thy once lov'd clime,
Now aid me to redress thy bleeding wrongs!
Infuse thy mighty spirit in my breast,
Thy firm and dauntless fortitude, unaw'd
By peril, pain, or death! that, undismay'd,
I may pursue the just intent, and dare
Or bravely to revenge, or bravely die. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter IRENE.

Irene. Can air-drawn visions mock the waking
eye?

It was his image!—

This way, sure, he mov'd.

But, oh, how chang'd! He wears no gentle smiles,
But terror in his frown. He comes.—'Tis he:
For Othman points him thither, and departs.
Disguis'd, he seeks the queen: secure, perhaps,
And heedless of the ruin that surrounds him.
O, generous Selim! can I see thee thus
And not forewarn such virtue of its fate!
Forbid it, gratitude!

Enter SELIM.

Selim. Be still, ye sighs!

Ye struggling tears of filial love, be still.

Down, down, fond heart!

Irene. Why, stranger, dost thou wander here?

Selim. Oh, ruin! *[Shunning her.]*

Irene. Bless'd is Irene! Bless'd, if Selim lives!

Selim. Am I betray'd!

Irene. Betray'd to whom? To her
Whose grateful heart would rush on death to save
thee!

Selim. It was my hope
That time had veil'd all semblance of my youth,
And thrown the mask of manhood o'er my visage.
Am I then known?

Irene. To none, but love and me—

To me, who late beheld thee at Oran:
Who saw thee here, beset with unseen peril,
And flew to save the guardian of my honour.

Selim. Thou sum of every worth! Thou hea-
ven of sweetness!

How could I pour forth all my soul before thee,
In vows of endless truth! It must not be!
This is my destin'd goal! The mansion drear,
Where grief and anguish dwell! where bitter tears,
And sighs, and lamentations, choke the voice,
And quench the flame of love!

Irene. Yet, virtuous prince,
Though love be silent, gratitude may speak.
Hear, then, her voice, which warns thee from
these walls.

Mine be the grateful task, to tell the queen
Her Selim lives. Ruin and death enclose thee.
O, speed thee hence, while yet destruction sleeps!

Selim. Would it were possible!

Irene. What can prevent it?

Selim. Justice! Fate, and justice

A murder'd father's wrongs?

Irene. Justice, said'st thou?

That word hath struck me, like a peal of thunder!
Thine eye, which wont to melt with gentle love,
Now glares with terror! Thy approach by night—
Thy dark disguise, thy looks and fierce demeanour,
Yes, all conspire to tell me, I am lost!

Ah! prince, take heed! I have a father too!

Think, Selim, what Irene must endure,

Should she be guilty of a father's blood.

Selim. Come on, then. Lead me to him. Glut
thine eye

With Selim's blood—

Irene. Was e'er distress like mine!

O, Selim, can I see my father perish!

Quit, O quit these walls!

Heaven will ordain some gentler, happier means,
To heal thy woes! Thy dark attempt is big
With horror and destruction! Generous prince!
Resign thy dreadful purpose and depart!

Selim. May not I see Zaphira, ere I go?

Thy gentle pity will not, sure, deny us
The mournful pleasure of a parting tear?

Irene. Go, then, and give her peace. But fly these walls

As soon as morning shines. Else, though despair Drive me to madness; yet—to save a father! O, Selim! spare my tongue the horrid sentence! Fly! ere destruction seize thee. [*Exit IRENE.*]

Selim. Death and ruin!

Must I then fly? what! coward like, betray My father, mother, friends! Vain terrors, hence! Danger looks big to fear's deluded eye: But courage, on the heights and steeps of fate, Dares snatch her glorious purpose from the edge Of peril; and, while sick'ning caution shrinks, Or, self-betray'd, falls headlong down the steep, Calm resolution, unappall'd, can walk The giddy brink, secure. Now to the queen. How shall I dare to meet her, thus unknown! How stifle the warm transports of my heart, That pants at her approach! Who waits Zaphira?

Enter a female SLAVE.

Slave. Whence this intrusion, stranger, at an hour

Destin'd to rest?

Selim. I come to seek the queen, On matter of such import, as may claim Her speedy audience.

Slave. Thy request is vain. Even now the queen hath heard the mournful tale Of her son's death, and drown'd in grief she lies. Thou canst not see her.

Selim. Tell the queen, I come On message from her dear, departed son; And bring his last request.

Slave. I'll haste to tell her. [*Exit.*]

Selim. O, ill-dissembling heart! my every limb Trembles with grateful terror! 'Would to Heaven I had not come! Some look, or starting tear, Will sure betray me. Honest guile assist My falt'ring tongue!

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Zaph. Where is this pious stranger?

Say, generous youth, whose pity leads thee thus To seek the weeping mansions of distress! Didst thou behold in death my hapless son? Didst thou receive my Selim's parting breath? Did he remember me?

Selim. Most honour'd queen! Thy son,—forgive these gushing tears that flow To see distress like thine!

Zaph. I thank thy pity! 'Tis generous thus to feel for others' woe!—What of my son?—Say, didst thou see him die?

Selim. By Barbarossa's dread command I come, To tell thee that these eyes alone beheld Thy son expire.

Zaph. Relentless fate!—that I should be denied The mournful privilege to see him die! To clasp him in the agony of death, And catch his parting soul? Oh, tell me all, All that he said and look'd?—Deep in my heart That I may treasure every parting word, Each dying whisper of my dear, dear son!

Selim. Let not my words offend—what if he said,

Go, tell my hapless mother, that her tears Have stream'd too long: then bid her weep no more:

Bid her forget the husband and the son, In Barbarossa's arms!

Zaph. O, basely false!

Thou art some creeping slave to Barbarossa, Sent to surprise my unsuspecting heart! Vile slave begone!—My son betray me thus! Could he have e'er conceiv'd so base a purpose, My griefs for him should end in great disdain!—But he was brave, and scorn'd a thought so vile! Wretched Zaphira! How art thou become The sport of slaves!—

Selim. Yet hope for peace, unhappy queen! Thy woes

May yet have end.

Zaph. Why weep'st thou, crocodile?

Thy treacherous tears are vain.

Selim. My tears are honest.

I am not what thou think'st.

Zaph. What art thou then?

Selim. Oh, my full heart!—I am—thy friend, and Selim's.

I came not to insult, but heal thy woes— Now check thy heart's wild tumult, while I tell thee—

Perhaps—thy son yet lives.

Zaph. Lives! O, gracious Heaven!

Do I not dream! say, stranger,—didst thou tell me, Perhaps my Selim lives?—What do I ask? Wild, wild, and fruitless hope!—What mortal power

Can e'er re-animate his mangled corse, Shoot life into the cold and silent tomb, Or bid the ruthless grave give up its dead?

Selim. O, powerful nature! thou wilt sure betray me! [*Aside.*]

Thy Selim lives: for since his rumour'd death, I saw him at Oran.

Zaph. O, generous youth, who art thou?—From what clime

Comes such exalted virtue, as dares give

A pause to grief like mine?

Selim. A friendless youth, self-banish'd with thy son;

Long his companion in distress and danger:

One who rever'd thy worth in prosp'rous days, And more reveres thy virtue in distress.

Zaph. O, gentle stranger!—Mock not my woes, But tell me truly,—does my Selim live?

Selim. He does, by Heaven!

Zaph. O generous Heaven! thou at length o'erpay'st

My bitterest pangs, if my dear Selim lives!

And does he still remember

His father's wrongs, and mine.

Selim. He bade me tell thee, That in his heart indelibly are stamp'd His father's wrongs, and thine: that he but waits Till awful justice may unsheath her sword, And lust and murder tremble at her frown! That till the arrival of that happy hour, Deep in his soul the hidden fire shall glow, And his breast labour with the great revenge!

Zaph. Eternal blessings crown my virtuous son!

Selim. Much honour'd queen, farewell.

Zaph. Not yet,—not yet;—indulge a mother's love!

In thee, the kind companion of his griefs, Methinks I see my Selim stand before me. Depart not yet. A thousand fond requests Crowd on my mind. Wishes, and prayers, and tears,

Are all I have to give. O, bear him these!

Selim. Take comfort, then; for know, thy son o'erjoy'd

To rescue thee, would bleed at every vein !—
 Bid her, he said, yet hope we may be bless'd !
 Bid her remember that the ways of Heaven,
 Though dark, are just : that oft some guardian
 power

Attends, unseen, to save the innocent !
 But if high Heaven decrees our fall !—Oh bid her
 Firmly to wait the stroke, prepar'd alike
 To live or die ! and then he wept, as I do.

Zaph. O, righteous Heaven !
 Protect his tender years !
 Be thou his guide through dangers and distress !
 Soften the rigours of his cruel exile,
 And lead him to his throne ! [Exit.]

Selim. Now, swelling heart,
 Indulge the luxury of grief ! flow, tears !
 And rain down transport in the shape of sorrow !
 Yes, I have sooth'd her woes ; have found her
 noble :

And, to have given this respite to her pangs,
 O'erpays all pain and peril !—Powerful virtue !
 How infinite thy joys, when even thy griefs
 Are pleasing !—Thou, superior to the frowns
 Of fate, canst pour thy sunshine o'er the soul,
 And brighten wo to rapture !

Enter OTHMAN and SADI.

Honour'd friends !

How goes the night ?

Sadi. 'Tis well nigh midnight.

Oth. What ! in tears, my prince ?

Selim. But tears of joy : for I have seen Za-
 phira,

And pour'd the balm of peace into her breast :
 Think not these tears unnerve me, valiant friends ;
 They have but harmoniz'd my soul ; and wak'd
 All that is man within me, to disdain
 Peril, or death—What tidings from the city ?

Sadi. All, all, is ready. Our confederate friends
 Burn with impatience, till the hour arrive.

Selim. What is the signal of the appointed hour ?

Sadi. The midnight watch gives signal of our
 meeting :

And when the second watch of night is rung,
 The work of death begins.

Selim. Speed, speed, ye minutes !

Now let the rising whirlwind shake Algiers,
 And justice guide the storm ! Scarce two hours
 hence—

Sadi. Scarce more than one.

Selim. Oh, as ye love my life,

Let your zeal hasten on the great event :
 The tyrant's daughter found, and knew me here,
 And half suspects the cause.

Oth. Too daring prince,

Retire with us ! her fears will sure betray thee !

Selim. What ! leave my helpless mother here
 a prey

'To cruelty and lust—I'll perish first :
 This very night the tyrant threatens violence :
 I'll watch his steps : I'll haunt him through the
 palace :

And, should he meditate a deed so vile,
 I'll hover o'er him, like an unseen pestilence,
 And blast him in his guilt !

Sadi. Intrepid prince !

Worthy of empire !—Yet accept my life,
 My worthless life : do thou retire with Othman ;
 I will protect Zaphira.

Selim. Think'st thou, Sadi,

'That, when the trying hour of peril comes,
 Selim will shrink into a common man !

Worthless were he to rule, who dares not claim
 Pre-eminence in danger. Urge no more :
 Here shall my station be ; and, if I fall,
 O, friends, let me have vengeance !—Tell me now,
 Where is the tyrant ?

Oth. Revelling at the banquet.

Selim. 'Tis good. Now tell me how our pow-
 ers are destin'd ?

Sadi. Near every port, a secret band is posted :
 By these, the watchful sentinels must perish :
 The rest is easy ; for the glutt'd troops
 Lie drown'd in sleep.

Almanzor, with his friends, will circle round
 The avenues of the palace. Othman and I
 Will join our brave confederates (all sworn
 To conquer or to die,) and burst the gates
 Of this foul den. Then, tremble, Barbarossa !

Selim. Oh, how the approach of this great hour
 Fires all my soul ! but, valiant friends, I charge
 you,

Reserve the murder to my just revenge ;
 My poignard claims his blood.

Oth. Forgive me, prince ! [Irene—

Forgive my doubts !—Think—should the fair

Selim. Thy doubts are vain. I would not spare
 the tyrant,

Though the sweet maid lay weeping at my feet ;
 Nay, should he fall by any hand but mine,
 By Heaven I'd think my honour'd father's blood
 Scarce half reveng'd ! My love, indeed, is strong !
 But love shall yield to justice !

Sadi. Gallant prince,
 Bravely resolv'd !

Selim. But is the city quiet ?

Sadi. All, all, is hush'd. Throughout the
 empty streets,

Nor voice nor sound ; as if th' inhabitants,
 Like the presaging herds, that seek the covert
 Ere the loud thunder rolls, had inly felt
 And shunn'd th' impending uproar.

Oth. There is a solemn horror in the night, too,
 That pleases me ; a general pause through nature :
 The winds are hush'd—

Sadi. And as I pass'd the beech,
 The lazy willow scarce could lash the shore :
 No star peeps through the firmament of heaven—

Selim. One lo ! where eastward, o'er the sullen
 wave,

The waning moon, depriv'd of half her orb,
 Rises in blood : her beam, well nigh extinct,
 Faintly contends with darkness— [Bell tolls
 Hark—what meant
 That tolling bell ?

Oth. It sounds the midnight watch.

Sadi. This was the signal—

Come, Othman, we are call'd : the passing minutes
 Chide our delay : brave Othman, let us hence.

Selim. One last embrace !—nor doubt, but
 crown'd with glory

We soon shall meet again. But oh ! remember—

Amid the tumult's rage, remember mercy !

Stain not a righteous cause with guiltless blood !

Warn our brave friends, that we unsheath the
 sword,

Not to destroy, but save ! nor let blind zeal,

Or wanton cruelty, e'er turn its edge

On age or innocence ! or bid us strike

Where the most pitying angel in the skies,

That now looks on us from his bless'd abode,

Would wish that we should spare.

Oth. So may we prosper,

As mercy shall direct us !

Selim. Farewell, friends!

Sadi. Intrepid prince, farewell!

[*Exeunt* OTHMAN and SADI.]

Selim. Now sleep and silence
Brood o'er the city.—The devoted sentinel
Now takes his lonely stand, and idly dreams
Of that to-morrow he shall never see.
In this dread interval, O busy thought,
From outward things descend into thyself!
Search deep my heart! bring with thee awful
conscience,

And firm resolve! that in th' approaching hour
Of blood and horror, I may stand unmov'd;
Nor fear to strike where justice calls, nor dare
To strike where she forbids! [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Palace.

Enter IRENE and ALADIN.

Irene. But didst thou tell him, Aladin, my fears
Brook no delay?

Aladin. I did.

Irene. Why comes he not?

Oh, what a dreadful dream!—'Twas surely more
Than troubled fancy: never was my soul
Shook with such hideous phantoms!—Still he
lingers!

Return, return; and tell him, that his daughter
Dies, till she warn him of his threat'ning ruin.

Aladin. Behold, he comes. [*Exit* ALADIN.]

Enter BARBAROSSA and Guards.

Bar. Thou bane of all my joys!
Some gloomy planet surely rul'd thy birth!
Even now thy ill tim'd fear suspends the banquet,
And damps the festal hour.

Irene. Forgive my fear!

Bar. What fear, what phantom hath possess'd
thy brain?

Irene. Oh, guard thee from the terrors of this
night;

For terrors lurk unseen.

Bar. What terror? speak.

Say, what thou dread'st, and why! I have a soul
To meet the blackest dangers undismay'd.

Irene. Let not my father check with stern re-
buke,

The warning voice of nature. For even now,
Retir'd to rest, soon as I clos'd mine eyes,
A horrid vision rose—Methought I saw
Young Selim rising from the silent tomb:
Mangled and bloody was his corse: his hair
Clotted with gore; his glaring eyes on fire!
Dreadful he shook a dagger in his hand.
By some mysterious power he rose in air.
When, lo! at his command, this yawning roof
Was cleft in twain, and gave the phantom en-
trance!

Swift he descended with terrific brow,
Rush'd on my guardless father at the banquet,
And plung'd his furious dagger in thy breast!

Bar. Wouldst thou appal me by a brainsick
vision?

Get thee to rest.

Irene. Yet hear me, dearest father!

Bar. Provoke me not.—

Irene. What shall I say, to move him?
Merciful Heaven, instruct me what to do!

Enter ALADIN.

Bar. What mean thy looks?—Why dost thou
gaze so wildly?

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Aladin. I hasted to inform thee, that even now
Rounding the watch, I met the brave Abdallah,
Breathless with tidings of a rumour dark,
That young Selim is yet alive—

Bar. May plagues consume the tongue
That broach'd the falsehood!—'Tis not possible—
What did he tell thee further?

Aladin. More he said not;
Save only, that the spreading rumour wak'd
A spirit of revolt.

Irene. O, gracious father!

Bar. The rumour's false—And yet, your cow-
ard fears

Infect me!—What!—shall I be terrified
By midnight visions?—I'll not believe it.

Aladin. But this gathering rumour—
Think but on that my lord.

Bar. Infernal darkness

Swallow the slave that rais'd it!—Hark thee.
Aladin,

Find out this stranger, Achmet; and forthwith
Let him be brought before me.

[*Exeunt* two guards.]

Irene. O my father!

I do conjure thee, as thou lov'st thy life,
Retire, and trust thee to thy faithful guards—
See not this Achmet.

Bar. Not see him?

If he prove false,—if hated Selim live,
I'll heap such vengeance on him—

Irene. Mercy! mercy!

Bar. Mercy to whom?

Irene. To me—and to thyself:

To him—to all.—Thou think'st I rave; yet true
My visions are, as ever prophet utter'd,
When Heaven inspires his tongue!

Bar. Ne'er did the moon-struck madman rave
with dreams

More wild than thine!—Get thee to rest;
Call Achmet hither.

Irene. Thus prostrate on my knees:—O see
him not,

Selim is dead!—indeed the rumour's false,
There is no danger near!—or, if there be,
Achmet is innocent!

Bar. Off, frantic wretch!

Hence—to thy chamber, on thy duty hence?

Irene. Cruel fate!

What have I done?—Heaven shield my dearest
father!

Heaven shield the innocent—undone Irene!

Whate'er the event, thy doom is misery.

[*Exit* IRENE.]

Bar. Her words are wrapt in darkness.—Aladin,
Forthwith send Achmet hither.—Then, with speed,
Double the sentinels.

[*Exit* ALADIN.]

Infernal guilt!
How dost thou rise in every hideous shape
Of rage and doubt, suspicion and despair,
To rend my soul!

Enter SELIM and two Guards.

Come hither, slave!

Hear me, and tremble! Art thou what thou
seem'st?

Selim. Ha!—

Bar. Dost thou pause?—By hell, the slave's
confounded!

Selim. That Barbarossa should suspect my
truth!

Bar. Take heed! for by the hovering powers
of vengeance,

If I do find thee treach'rous, I'll doom thee
To death and torment, such as human thought
Ne'er yet conceiv'd! Thou com'st beneath the
guise

Of Selim's murderer.—Now tell me:—is not
That Selim yet alive?

Selim. Selim alive!

Bar. Perdition on thee? dost thou echo me?
Answer me quick, or die! [*Draws his dagger.*]

Selim. Yes, freely strike—

Already hast thou given the fatal wound,
And pierc'd my heart with thy unkind suspicion;
Oh, could my dagger find a tongue to tell
How deep it drank his blood!—but since thy doubt
Thus wrongs my zeal,—behold my breast—strike
here—

For bold is innocence.

Bar. I scorn the task, [*Puts up his dagger.*]
Time shall decide thy doom:—Guards, mark me
well.

See that ye watch the motions of this slave:

And if he meditates t'escape your eye,
Let your good sabres cleave him to the chine.

Selim. I yield me to thy will, and when thou
know'st

That Selim lives, or see'st his hated face,
Then wreak thy vengeance on me.

Bar. Bear him hence.—

Yet, on your lives, await me within call.
I will have deeper inquisition made.

[*Exit SELIM and Guards.*]

Call Zaphira.

[*Exit a slave.*]

If Selim lives—then, what is Barbarossa?

My throne's a bubble, that but floats in air,

Till marriage rites declare Zaphira mine.

I will not brook delay. By love and vengeance,
This hour decides her fate:

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Well, haughty fair!

Hath reason yet subdu'd thee?—Wilt thou hear
The voice of love?

Zaph. Why dost thou vainly urge me?

Thou know'st my fix'd resolve.

Bar. Can aught but frenzy

Rush on perdition?

Zaph. Therefore shall no power
E'er make me thine!

Bar. Nay, sport not with my rage

Know, that thy final hour of choice is come!

Zaph. I have no choice. Think'st thou I e'er
will wed

The murderer of my lord?

Bar. Take heed, rash queen!

Tell me thy last resolve.

Zaph. Then hear me, Heaven.

Hear, all ye powers, that watch o'er innocence!

Angels of light! And thou, dear honour'd shade

Of my departed lord! attend, while here

I ratify with vows my last resolve:

If e'er I wed this tyrant murderer,

If I pollute me with this horrid union,

May ye, the ministers of Heaven, depart,

Nor shed your influence on the guilty scene!

May horror blacken all our days and nights!

May discord light the nuptial torch! and, rising

From hell, may swarming fiends in triumph howl

Around th' accursed bed!

Bar. Begone, remorse!

Guards, do your office: drag her to the altar—

Heed not her tears or cries. What! dare ye doubt?

[*Guards go to seize ZAPHIRA.*]

Zaph. O spare me! Heaven protect me! O
my son,
Wert thou but here, to save thy helpless mother:
What shall I do? Undone, undone, Zaphira!

Enter SELIM.

Selim. Who call'd on Achmet?—Did not Bar-
barossa
Require me here?

Bar. Officious slave, retire!

I call'd thee not.

Zaph. O kind and gen'rous stranger, lend thy
aid!

O rescue me from these impending horrors!

Heaven will reward thy pity!

Selim. Pity her woes, O mighty Barbarossa!

Bar. Rouse not my vengeance, slave!

Selim. O hear me, hear me! [*Kneels.*]

Bar. Curse on thy forward zeal!

Selim. Yet, yet, have mercy.

[*Lays hold of BARBAROSSA'S garment.*]

Bar. Presuming slave, begone!

[*Strikes SELIM.*]

Selim. Nay then,—die, tyrant!

[*Rises and aims to stab BARBAROSSA who
wrests his dagger from him.*]

Bar. Ah, traitor! have I caught thee?

Perfidious wretch, who art thou?—Bring the rack—
Let that extort the secrets of his heart.

Selim. Thy impious threats are lost! I know,
that death

And torments are my doom. Yet, ere I die,
I'll strike thy soul with horror. Off, vile habit!

If thou dar'st,

Now view me!—Hear me, tyrant!—while, with
voice

More terrible than thunder, I proclaim,

That he, who aim'd the dagger at thy heart,
Is, Selim!

Zaph. O Heaven! my son! my son!

Selim. Unhappy mother!

[*Runs to embrace her.*]

Bar. Tear them asunder.

[*Guards separate them.*]

Zaph. Barb'rous, barb'rous ruffians!

[*They offer to seize him.*]

Selim. Off, ye vile slaves! I am your king!—
Retire,

And tremble at my frowns! That is the traitor—

That is the murd'rer—tyrant ravisher! Seize him,
And do your country right!

Bar. Ah, coward dogs!

Start ye at words?—or seize him, or, by he'll,

This dagger sends you all— [*They seize him.*]

Selim. Dost thou revive, unhappy queen!

Now arm my soul with patience!

Zaph. My dear son!

Do I then live, once more to see my Selim!

But Oh—to see thee thus!—

Selim. Canst thou behold

Her speechless agonies, and not relent?

Zaph. O mercy, mercy!

Selim. Lo, Barbarossa! thou at length hast
conquer'd!

Behold a hapless prince, o'erwhelm'd with woes,

[*Kneels.*]

Prostrate before thy feet!—not for myself

I plead.—Yes, plunge the dagger in my breast!

Tear, tear me piecemeal! But, O, spare Zaphira!

Yet—yet relent! force not her matron honour!

Reproach not Heaven.

Bar. Have I then bent thy pride?

Why, this is conquest even beyond my hope!—
Lie there, thou slave! lie, till Zaphira's cries
Arouse thee from thy posture!

Selim. Dost thou insult my griefs?—unmanly
wretch!

Curse on the fear, that could betray my limbs,
[*Rising.*

My coward limbs, to this dishonest posture;
Long have I scorn'd, I now defy, thy power!

Bar. I'll put thy boasted virtue to the trial.—
Slaves, bear him to the rack.

Zaph. O spare my son!
Sure filial virtue never was a crime!
Save but my son!—I yield me to thy wish!
What do I say?—The marriage vow—O horror!
This hour shall make me thine!—

Selim. What! doom thyself
The guilty partner of a murder's bed,
Whose hands yet reek with thy dear husband's
blood!

To be the mother of destructive tyrants—
The curses of mankind! By Heaven, I swear,
The guilty hour, that gives thee to the arms
Of that detested murderer, shall end
This hated life!

Bar. Or yield thee, or he dies.

Zaph. The conflict's past. I will resume my
greatness;

We'll bravely die, as we have liv'd,—with honour!
[*Embracing.*

Selim. Now, tyrant, pour thy fiercest fury on
us:

Now see, despairing guilt! that virtue still
Shall conquer, though in ruin.

Bar. Drag them hence:
Her to the altar:—*Selim* to his fate.

Zaph. O *Selim*! O my son!—Thy doom is death!
'Would it were mine!

Selim. 'Would I could give it thee!
Is there no means to save her? Lend, ye guards,
Ye ministers of death, in pity lend
Your swords, or some kind weapon of destruction!
Sure the most mournful boon, that ever son
Ask'd for the best of mothers!

One last embrace!
Farewell! Farewell, for ever!

Zaph. One moment yet! Pity a mother's
pangs!

O *Selim*!

Selim. O my mother!

[*Exeunt SELIM, ZAPHIRA, and Guards.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter BARBAROSSA, ALADIN, and Guards.

Bar. Is the watch doubled? Are the gates
secur'd
Against surprise?

Aladin. They are, and mock th' attempt
Of force or treachery.

Bar. This whisper'd rumour
Of dark conspiracy,
Seems but a false alarm. Our spies, sent out,
Affirm, that sleep
Has wrapp'd the city.

Aladin. But while *Selim* lives,
Destruction lurks within the palace walls.

Bar. Right, *Aladin*. His hour of fate ap-
proaches.

How goes the night?

Aladin. The second watch is near.

Bar. 'Tis well. Whene'er it rings, the traitor
dies.

Yet first the rack shall rend

Each secret from his heart.

Haste, seek out Othman:

Go, tell him, that destruction and the sword

Hang o'er young *Selim*'s head, if swift compliance

Plead not his pardon. [*Exit ALADIN.*

Enter IRENE.

Irene. O night of horror!—Hear me, honour'd
father!

If e'er *Irene*'s peace was dear to thee,

Now hear me!

Bar. Impious! dar'st thou disobey?

Did not my sacred will ordain thee hence?

Get thee to rest; for death is stirring here.

Irene. O fatal words! By every sacred tie,
Recall the dire decree.

Bar. What wouldst thou say?

Whom plead for?

Irene. For a brave unhappy prince,

Sentenc'd to die.

Bar. And justly! But this hour

The traitor half fulfill'd thy dream, and aim'd

His dagger at my heart.

Irene. Might pity plead!

Bar. What! plead for treachery?

Irene. Yet pity might bestow a milder name.

Wouldst thou not love the child, whose fortitude

Should hazard life for thee?

Bar. Damn'd was his purpose; and accurs'd
art thou,

Whose perfidy would save the dark assassin,
Who sought thy father's life! Hence, from my
sight.

Irene. Oh, never, till thy mercy spare my *Selim*!

Bar. Thy *Selim*? Thine?

Irene. Thou know'st—by gratitude

He's mine. Had not his gen'rous hand redeem'd
me,

What then had been *Irene*? Oh!

Who sav'd me from dishonour?

Bar. By the powers

Of great revenge, thy fond entreaties seal

His instant death.—In him, I'll punish thee.

Away!

Irene. Yet hear me! Ere my tortur'd soul

Rush on some deed of horror!

Bar. Convey the frantic idiot from my presence:

See that she do no violence on herself.

Irene. O *Selim*!—generous youth!—how have
my fears

Betray'd thee to destruction!

Inhuman father! Generous, injur'd prince!

Methinks, I see thee stretch'd upon the rack,

Hear thy expiring groans. O horror! horror!

What shall I do to save him? Vain, alas!

Vain are my tears and prayers. At least, I'll die.

Death shall unite us yet!

Bar. O torment! torment!

Even in the midst of power! the vilest slave

More happy far than I! The very child,

Whom my love cherish'd from her infant years,

Conspires to blast my peace!

Enter ALADIN.

Now, *Aladin*,

Hast thou seen Othman?

He will not, sure, conspire against my peace?

Aladin. He's fled, my lord. I dread some
lurking ruin.

The sentinel on watch says, that he pass'd
The gate, since midnight, with an unknown friend:
And, as they pass'd, Othman in whisper said,
Now farewell, bloody tyrant!

Bar. Slave, thou liest.
He did not dare to say it; or, if he did,
Why dost thou wound my ear
By the foul repetition?
What 's to be done? Some mischief lurks unseen.

Aladin. Prevent it then—

Bar. By Selim's instant death—

Aladin. Ay, doubtless.

Bar. Is the rack prepar'd?

Aladin. 'Tis ready.

Along the ground he lies, o'erwhelm'd with chains.
The ministers of death stand round; and wait
Thy last command.

Bar. Once more I'll try to bend
His stubborn soul. Conduct me forthwith to him;
And if he now refuse my proffer'd kindness,
Destruction swallows him! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Prison in the Palace.

SELIM in chains, Executioners, &c. and the rack.

Selim. I pray you, friends,
When I am dead, let not indignity
Insult these poor remains; see them interr'd
Close to my father's tomb! I ask no more.

Off. They shall.

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. So—raise him from the ground.

[*They raise him.*]

Perfidious boy! behold the just rewards
Of guilt and treachery! Didst thou not give
Thy forfeit life, whene'er I should behold
Selim's detested face?

Selim. Then take it, tyrant.

Bar. Didst thou not aim a dagger at my heart?

Selim. I did.

Bar. Yet heaven defeated thy intent;
And sav'd me from the dagger.

Selim. 'Tis not ours
To question Heaven. Th' intent and not the deed
Is in our power; and therefore who dares
greatly,

Does greatly.

Bar. Yet bethink thee stubborn boy,
What horrors now surround thee—

Selim. Think'st thou, tyrant,
I came so ill prepar'd? Thy rage is weak,
Thy torments powerless o'er the steady mind:
He, who can bravely dare, can bravely suffer.

Bar. Yet lo, I come, by pity led, to spare thee.
Relent, and save Zaphira!—For the bell
Even now expects the sentinel, to toll
The signal of thy death.

Selim. Let guilt like thine
Tremble at death: I scorn its darkest frown.
Hence, tyrant, nor profane my dying hour!

Bar. Then take thy wish. [*Bell tolls.*]
There goes the fatal knell.

Thy fate is seal'd. Not all thy mother's tears,
Nor prayers, nor eloquence of grief, shall save thee
From instant death. [*Exit.*]

Selim. Come on, then. [*They bind him.*]
Begin the work of death—what! bound with cords,
Like a vile criminal!—O valiant friends,
When will ye give me vengeance!

Enter IRENE.

Irene. Stop, O, stop!
Hold your accursed hands!—On me, on me,

Pour all your torments.—How shall I approach
thee!

Selim. These are thy father's gifts!—Yet thou
art guiltless:

Then let me take thee to my heart, thou best,
Most amiable of women!

Irene. Rather curse me,
As the betrayer of thy virtue!

Selim. Ah!

Irene. 'Twas I,—my fears, my frantic fears be-
tray'd thee!

Thus, falling at thy feet, may I but hope
For pardon ere I die!

Selim. Hence to thy father!

Irene. Never, O never!—crawling in the dust,
I'll clasp thy feet, and bathe them with my tears!
Tread me to earth! I never will complain;
But my last breath shall bless thee!

Selim. Lov'd Irene!

What hath my fury done?

Irene. Canst thou, then,

Forgive and pity me?

Selim. I do, I do.

[*They embrace.*]

Off. No more.—Prepare the rack.

Irene. Here will I cling. No power on earth
shall part us,

Till I have sav'd my Selim!

[*Shout; clashing of swords.*]

Aladin. [*Without.*] Arm, arm!—Treach'ry
and murder! [*to arms,*]

Selim. Off, slaves!—Or I will turn my chains
And dash you piece-meal!

Enter ALADIN.

Aladin. Where is the king?
The foe pours in. The palace gates are burst:
The sentinels are murder'd! Save the king;
They seek him through the palace!

Off. Death and ruin!

Follow me, slaves, and save him.

[*Exeunt ALADIN, OFFICER, and Guards.*]

Selim. Now, bloody tyrant! Now, thy hour is
come!

Vengeance at length hath pierc'd these guilty walls,
And walks her deadly round!

Irene. Whom dost thou mean? my father!

[*Clash of swords.*]

Hark! 'twas the clash of swords! Heaven save
my father!

O cruel, cruel Selim!

[*Exit.*]

Selim. Curse on this servile chain, that binds
me fast

In powerless ignominy; while my sword
Should hunt its prey, and cleave the tyrant down!

Oth. [*Without.*] Where is the prince?

Selim. Here, Othman bound to earth!

Set me but free!—O cursed, cursed chain!

Enter OTHMAN and Party, who free SELIM.

Oth. O my brave prince!—Heaven favours our
design. [*Embraces him.*]

Take that: I need not bid thee use it nobly.

[*Giving him a sword.*]

Selim. Now, Barbarossa, let my arm meet thine,
'Tis all I ask of Heaven! [*Exit.*]

Oth. Guard ye the prince— [*Part go out.*]
Pursue his steps. Now this way let us turn,
And seek the tyrant. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE III.—A Court in the Palace.

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. Empire is lost, and life: yet brave revenge
Shall close my life in glory.

Enter OTHMAN.

Have I found thee,
Dissembling traitor? Die!—

[*They fight; BARBAROSSA falls.*]

Enter SELIM and SADI.

Selim. The foe gives way: sure this way went
the storm.

Where is the tiger fled? What do I see?

Sadi. Algiers is free!

Oth. This sabre did the deed!

Selim. I envy thee the blow! Yet valour scorns
To wound the fallen. But if life remain,

I will speak daggers to his guilty soul—

Hoa! Barbarossa! Tyrant, murderer!

'Tis Selim, Selim calls thee.

Bar. Off, ye fiends!

Torment me not! O Selim, art thou there!

Swallow me, earth!

Oh, that I ne'er had wrong'd thee!

Selim. Dost thou then

Repent thee of thy crimes! He does, he does!

He grasps my hand—see, the repentant tear

Starts from his eye! Dost thou indeed repent?

Why then I do forgive thee: from my soul

I freely do forgive thee!—

Bar. Gen'rous Selim!

Too good—I have a daughter—Oh! protect her!

Let not my crimes—

[*Dies.*]

Oth. There fled the guilty soul!

Selim. Haste to the city—stop the rage of
slaughter.

Tell my brave people, that Algiers is free;

And tyranny no more.

[*Exeunt Guards.*]

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Zaph. What mean these horrors? wheresoe'er
I turn

My trembling steps, I find some dying wretch,

Weltering in gore! And dost thou live, my Selim?

Selim. Lo, there the tyrant lies!

Zaph. O righteous Heaven!

Selim. Behold thy valiant friends, [power
Whose faith and courage have o'erwhelm'd thee
Of Barbarossa.

Zaph. Just are thy ways, O Heaven! Vain
terrors, hence!

Once more Zaphira's bless'd!—

Selim. O happy hour! happy, beyond

Even hope! Look down, bless'd shade,

From the bright realms of bliss! Behold thy queen

Unspotted, uneduc'd, unmov'd in virtue.

Behold the tyrant prostrate at thy feet!

And to the memory of thy bleeding wrongs,

Accept this sacrifice.

Zaph. My generous Selim!

Selim. Where is Irene?

Oth. Zamor, our trusty friend, at my command,

Convey'd the weeping fair one to her chamber

Selim. Thanks to thy generous care.

Zaph. Her virtues might atone

For all her father's guilt! Thy throne be hers

She merits all thy love. [ther's crimes,

Selim. Then haste, and find her. O'er her fa-

Pity shall draw her veil; nay, half absolve thou,

When she beholds the virtues of his child.

Now let us thank th' eternal Power: convinc'd.

That Heaven but tries our virtue by affliction;

That oft the cloud, which wraps the present hour,

Serves but to brighten all our future days!

[*Exeunt.*]

THE RECRUITING SERGEANT:

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT,

IN ONE ACT.

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

REMARKS.

The musical merits of this Burletta have always been acknowledged: it is now seldom performed, but it is well entitled to preference. In 1789, it was produced at the Royalty Theatre, under the management of Mr. John Palmer and met with great success.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted.

COVENT GARDEN, 1816

SERGEANT,.....	<i>Mr. Bannister</i>	<i>Mr. Incedon</i> .
COUNTRYMAN,.....	<i>Mr. Dibdin</i>	<i>Mr. Solomons</i> .
WIFE,.....	<i>Mrs. Wrighten</i>	<i>Mrs. Iliff</i> .
MOTHER,.....	<i>Mrs. Dorman</i>	<i>Mrs. T. Dibdin</i> .

SCENE.—A Country Place.

SCENE.—*View of a Village, with a Bridge.*

On one side, near the front, a Cottage; on the other, at the foot of the Bridge, an Alehouse.

The Curtain rises and discovers two Light Horsemen, supposed to be on their march, sitting at an Alehouse door; with their arms against the wall, their horses at some distance. The SERGEANT then passes with his party over the bridge, drums, and fifes playing; and afterwards the COUNTRYMAN, his WIFE, and his MOTHER, come out from the Cottage.

QUARTET.—SERGEANT, COUNTRYMAN, MOTHER, and WIFE.

Serg. All gallant lads, who know no fears,
To the drum-head repair,
To serve the king for volunteers;
Speak you, my boys, that dare.
Come, who'll be a grenadier?
The listing money down
Is three guineas and a crown,
To be spent in punch or beer.
Coun. Adds flesh, I'll go with him.
Moth. Oh, no,

Wife. Dear Joe!
Coun. Adds flesh, I'll go with him.
Moth. Oh, no!
Coun. Adds flesh, but I will;
So hold your tongues still:
Nor mother, nor wife,
Tho'f they strive for their life,
Shall baulk't, an' my fancy be so.
Serg. Come, beat away a royal march,
Rub, rub, rub a dub;
Rub, rub, rub a dub;
Of no poltroons I come in search,
Who cowardly sneak
When the tongues of war speak,
But of noble souls, who death dare stand,
Against the foes of old England.
Coun. I'll be a soldier, so that 's flat.
Moth. You want, you want.
Coun. I'll be dead, an' I don't.
What would the teasing toads be at?
Moth. You graceless rogue,
Is your heart a stone?
Wife. I'm flesh of your flesh,
And bone of your bone.
Coun. Zounds, let me alone.

Serg. Drums, strike up a flourish, and follow me now

All honest hearts and clever:
Free quarters and beer at the sign of
the Plough:

Huzza! king George for ever.

[*Some of the party go into the Alehouse with the Light Horsemen.*]

Coun. Hip, Measter Sergeant.

Wife. Go, yourself destroy.

Serg. What says my cock?

Coun. Mayhop, I wants employ.

A lad about my soize, though, would na' do.

Serg. Ay, for a colonel.

Coun. And a captain too!

Serg. For both, or either.

Coun. But I doubts, d'ye see,

Such places are na' for the loikes o' me.

Serg. List for a soldier first, ne'er fear the rest:
This guinea—

Moth. Joe, this cursed gould detest.
Art not asham'd, an honest man to 'tice?
The king should know it.

Coun. Who wants yowr advice?

AIR.—MOTHER.

Out upon thee, wicked locust,
Worse in country nor a plague;
Men by thee are hocust pocust
Into danger and fatigue.

And the justices outbear thee
In thy tricks, but I don't fear thee,
No, nor those that with thee league.

My son has enough at home,
He needs not for bread to roam;
Already his pay
Is twelvepence a day,

His honest labour's fruits;
Then get thee a trudging quick,
For 'gad, if I take a stick,
I'll make thee repent,
When here thee wert sent,
A drumming for recruits.

[*Exit into the Cottage.*]

Re-enter MOTHER, with three little Children.

Coun. Then won't you go, and let a body be?

Serg. Zounds, is the woman mad?

Moth. Dawn't swear at me.

Wife. Dear Joseph, what's come o'er thee?
tell me, do:

Three babes we have, I work for them and you;
You work for us, and both together earn
What keeps them tight, and puts them out to
learn.

But, if a soldiering you're bent to roam,
We all shall shortly to the parish come;
And the churchwardens, no one to befriend us,
Will, for the next thing, to the workhouse send
us. [serv'd;

These know'st at workhouse how poor folks are
Bill, Tom, and Susan, will be quickly starv'd.

AIR.—*Taking a Boy in one hand and a Girl
in the other.*

Oh, could you bear to view
Your little Tom and Sue
Ta'en up by cross o'rsersers:
And think that helpless I,
To give them, when they cry,
Have nothing but my tears?
You cannot have the heart,
With them and me to part,

For folks you know not who!
With richer friends than we,
And prouder you may be,
But none will prove so true.

[*Exit with the Children.*]

Serg. Comrade, your hand: I love a lad of
soul;

Your name, to enter on my muster-roll:
To Justice Swear'em then, to take our oath.

Coun. Hold, sergeant, hold, there's time enough
for both.

If I've a moind to list, I'll list, d'y'e see;
But some discourse first, betwixt yow and me.
A souldier's life—

Serg. The finest life that goes;

Free quarters every where—

Coun. Ay, that we knows.

Serg. Then, wenches!

Coun. You've free quarters too with they;
Girls love the red coats—

Serg. 'Gad, and well they may. [soul,

Coun. But when to foreign wars your men re-
Fighting—a battle—

Serg. 'Tis the rarest sport.

Coun. Tell us a little about that.

Serg. I will.

Wife. Don't listen to him, Joe!

Coun. Do you be still.

AIR.—SERGEANT.

What a charming thing 's a battle!
Trumpets sounding, drums a beating
Crack, crick, crack, the cannons rattle
Every heart with joy elating.
With what pleasure are we spying,
From the front and from the rear,
Round us in the smoky air,

Heads, and limbs, and bullets flying!
Then the groans of soldiers dying:
Just like sparrows, as it were,

At each pop,
Hundreds drop;
While the muskets prittle prattle.
Kill'd and wounded
Lie confounded.

What a charming thing 's a battle!
But the pleasant joke of all,
Is when to close attack we fall:
Like mad bulls each other butting,
Shooting, stabbing, maiming, cutting,
Horse and foot,
All go to't,

Kill 's the word, both men and cattle;
Then to plunder,
Blood and thunder,

What a charming thing 's a battle!

Moth. Call you this charming? 'Tis the work
of hell.

Wife. How dost thou like it, Joe?

Coun. Why, pretty well.

Serg. But pretty well?

Coun. Why need there more be said?

But mayn't I happen too to lose my head?

Serg. Your head?

Coun. Ay.

Serg. Let me see: your head, my buck—

Coun. A leg or arm too?

Serg. Not if you've good luck.

Coun. Good luck!

Serg. The chance of war is doubtful still—
Soldiers must run the risk.

Coun. They may, that will.

Serg. Why, how now, Joseph? Sure you mean to jest!

Coun. I have thought twice, and second thoughts are best.

Show folks with beasts to our village came,
And hung at door a picture of their game;
Bears, lions, tigers, there were four or five;
And all so like, you'd swear they were alive.
A gaping at the cloth, the mon spied me;
"Fortwopence, friend, you may walk in," says he;
But 'gad, I was more wise, and walk'd my way;
I saw so much for nought, I would not pay.
To see a battle thus, my moind was bent;
But you've so well describ'd it, I'm content.

Serg. Come, brother soldiers, let us then begone:
Thou art a base poltroon.

Coun. That's all as one.

AIR.

Ay, ay, master sergeant, I wish you good day:
You've no need at present, I thank you, to stay;
My stomach for battle's gone from me, I trow;
When it comes back again, I'll take care you shall know.

With cudgel or fist, as long as you list;
But as for this fighting, [gun;
Which some take delight in;
This slashing and smashing, with sword and with
On consideration,
I've no inclination

To be the partaker of any such fun.
I'll e'en stay at home in my village,
And carry no arms but for tillage;
My wounds shall be made
With the scythe or the spade,
If ever my blood should be shed.

A finger or so
Should one wound, or a toe
For such a disaster
There may be a plaster;
But no plaster sticks on a head. [*Exit SERGEANT.*

Wife. Then wilt thou stay, Joe?

Moth. Wilt thou, boy of mine?

Coun. Wife, give's thy hand, and mother, give us thine.

Last night you dodg'd me to the alehouse, Jane;
I swore to be reveng'd—

Wife. I see it plain. [short,

Coun. I swore to be reveng'd, and vow'd, in

To list ma, to be even with thee for't;

But kiss me, now my plaguy anger's o'er.

Wife. And I'll ne'er dodge thee to the alehouse more.

DUET.—COUNTRYMAN and WIFE.

Coun. From henceforth, wedded to my farm,
My thoughts shall never rove on harm,
I to the field perchance may go,
But it shall be to reap or sow.

Wife. Now blessings on thy honest heart,
Thy wife shall bear an equal part;
Work thee without doors, she within
Will keep the house, and card and spin.

Coun. How foolish they, in love with strife,
Who quit the peaceful country life;

Wife. Where wholesome labour is the best,
And surest guide to balmy rest!

Both. That lot true happiness secures,
And, bless'd, be prais'd, is mine and yours.

Content beneath the numble shed,
We'll toil to earn our babies bread;

With mutual kindness bear love's yoke,
And pity greater, finer folk.

[*Here is introduced a dance of Light-horse men, Recruits, and Country girls; after which the SERGEANT comes out, with a drinking glass in his hand, followed by his party, to the COUNTRYMAN, the WIFE, and the MOTHER, who have been looking on the dance.*

Serg. Well, countryman, art off the listing pin,
Yet wilt thou beat a march?

Wife. Dear Joe! come in.

Moth. Hang-dog, be gone, and tempt my boy no more.

Wife. Do, sergeant, pray now.

Coun. Mother, wife give o'er.

I see the gentleman no harm intends. [friends.

Serg. Heaven forbid; but let us part like
We've got a bottle here of humming ale.

'Tis the king's health.

Coun. And that I never fail.

Lord love and bless him, he's an honest man.

Serg. Lads, where your music?

Coun. Nay, fill up the can.

We'll drink the royal family.

Serg. So do;

King, queen, and all.

Coun. And Jane shall drink them too.

AIR.

Here's a health to king George, peace and glory
attend him!

He's merciful, pious; he's prudent and just;
Long life, and a race like himself, Heaven send
him,

And humble the foes to his crown in the dust.

Chorus. Beat drums, beat amain,
Let the ear-piercing fife
To our measures give life;
While each British heart
In the health bears a part,
And joins the loyal strain.

Wife. Here's a health to the queen; gracious,
mild, and engaging,
Accomplish'd in all that a woman
should own;
The cares of her consort with softness
assuaging,
Whose manners add splendour and
grace to a throne.

Chorus. Beat drums, &c.

Moth. Here's a health to those beautiful babes,
whom the nation
Regards as a pledge from the sire it
reveres;
Heaven shield the sweet plants from each
rude visitation,
And rear them to fulness of virtue
and years.

Chorus. Beat drums, &c.

Serg. Here's success to his majesty's arms,
ever glorious,
And great may they be on the land
and the main;
As just is their cause, may they still
prove victorious,
And punish the rashness of France
and of Spain.

Chorus. Beat drums, &c.

HERO AND LEANDER:

A COMIC BURLETTA,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY ISAAC JACKMAN.

REMARKS.

THIS burletta, remarkable principally for the occasion which produced it, was written by Isaac Jackman for Mr. John Palmer, who had then recently built and opened the Royalty Theatre, in Well Street, Goodman's-fields, for the regular drama. Continued opposition from the patentees of the royal theatres, obliged that gentleman to renounce his first intention; and this elegant theatre (though better calculated, in every respect, for the legitimate drama than the winter theatres) has been, since that period, opened under an annual license for burletta, pantomime, &c. according to the act 25th Geo. II.

In his dedication, the author observes, that "The worthy manager requested me to write something for him within the statute, and I thought poor Hero and Leander might be introduced to the public, without being considered '*wagrants* or *wagabones*!' I did intend to souse Leander in the waves, as a part of the old romance, and to have a requiem sung over his manes; but a wicked wit told me, that such a denouement would be tragedy direct, and against the law."

At the first representation of this afterpiece, the talents of Mr. Bannister, Mr. W. Palmer, Mr. Arrowsmith, Mrs. Fox, Master Braham, &c. ensured it the highest success.

During the controversy elicited by Mr. Palmer's endeavours to obtain a patent for his theatre, it was aptly observed, that "It is of no consequence to government, or to the million residing within the walls of London, whether the winter managers and Mr. Colman play to empty benches or overflowing audiences. If they are able, diligent, and liberal, they cannot fail of accumulating very considerable fortunes, and may bid defiance to every exertion of Mr. Palmer in the east: let this be as it may, the public good ought first to be consulted."

An unjust and impolitic monopoly, however, preserved the ascendancy; and the public good, as on many other more important occasions, was sacrificed to private interest.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ROYALTY THEATRE, 1787.

ABUDAH,	Mr. W. Palmer.
DELAH,	Mr. Chambers.
LEANDER,	Mr. Arrowsmith.
HYMEN,	Master Braham.
SOLANO,	Mr. Bannister.

HERO,	Mrs. Fox
SAFRINA,	Mrs. Burnet
MINERVA,	Miss Burnet.

Soldiers, Labouring People, Men and Women.

SCENE.—The Banks of the Hellespont. Time.—Sun-rise.

Music by Mr. Reeve.—Scenery by Mr. Dixon.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Harvest Scene, at sun-rise, on the Banks of the Hellespont.

Turkish husbandmen at work, their wives employed at the same time.—A perspective view of the Castle of Abydos, in Natolia, or the Lesser Asia—the Hellespont appearing to divide the two countries.

Enter SOLANO, SAFRINA, HERO, labouring Men and Women.

Chorus. All hail the cheerful god of day,
Parent of every human bliss;
Who (ere 'he wings his heavenly way)

Salutes his Thetis with a kiss.
Saf. See how creation smiles around;
What melody enchants the grove!

Hero. 'Tis there the voice of nature's found
Responsive to the note of love.

Chorus. All hail, &c.

Sol. Well done, my lads, the morning seems to lower;

In yonder cloud, methinks, I view a shower:
Bind up the corn, harness all the cattle,
And let the women quit their idle prattle;
'Those lazy sluts are constantly a gadding;
'Tis such as you, that set the fellows madding.

Hero. Behold Aurora, with a blushing ray
And rosy fingers, spreads the infant day!

SONG.

Ere yet Aurora chase the dews,
The lark his matin song renews;
And seems to chide the swains' delay,
To lose so sweet a part of day.

See from the ground his mate arise,
And seems to mock our wond'ring eyes;
Still as she soars her notes decay,
'Till the faint warblings die away.

Sol. Well, Safrina, what's the matter now?

Saf. There sits, alas! on gentle Hero's brow
A settled grief.

Sol. Pshaw! I know the reason:
Hero's nineteen, and that, you know, 's the season
When females would be married, if they could.

Saf. Well, what of that? are we not flesh and blood?

SONG.

When I was young, I danc'd and sung,
My heart was lighter than a fly;
No care my youthful bosom stung,
At every rout, pray who but I?

At length the urchin bent his bow,
The vagrant arrow hit the mark;
But Hymen 'solv'd his skill to show,
Cur'd poor Safrina in the dark.

Sol. Well done, Safrina; 'foregad, we all can tell,
There was a time, you bore away the bell.

[*A peal of thunder; sky appears overcast; exeunt SAFRINA and HERO.*]

Sol. Away my lads—the storm is drawing near—

And save the produce of a fruitful year.

[*A peal of thunder, accompanied with lightning.*]

Sol. Well done, my boys! The clouds are all on fire;

A thunder-bolt hath struck the village spire.

[*A peal of thunder, lightning, rain, &c.*]

Sol. The hills are wrapt in stormy clouds on high,

And feel the dread convulsion of the sky;

Tempests arise, on fortune's ocean lower,

And rolling billows lash the affrighted shore.

[*Tempest rages; a Man, standing on a rock, cries out—*

Man. A ship, a ship! 'twixt sea and wind she strives.

Sol. Fly all, fly all, and save the people's lives.

SONG.

Alas, how chang'd the face of things;
[*Thunder and lightning.*]

Hark, hark, the howling tempest sings:

Ah, now the rebel winds she feels,

Toss'd on the billows, how she reels!

She's now a wreck, behold on high [*Thunders.*]

Exploded thunders rend the sky;

A dread convulsion moves the shore,

And rocks the deep, unmov'd before.

[*The crew now appear landing—thunder and lightning—music descriptive of the elemental warfare—storm gradually decreases—LEANDER disguised.*]

Sol. Welcome on shore, Sir, whether friend or foe,

All are our brothers in this scene of woe.

Lean. Thanks to you, gentle friends; and, Sir, to you

Our constant prayers are ever, ever due;
May all the powers divine your labours bless,
And send you friends, if ever in distress!

Sol. What means that sigh? ah, tell me, gentle youth;

You seem the child of honour and of truth:

Banish your cares, for see, the God of light

Dispels the gloom, that wrapp'd the world in night.

Lean. Stern Boreas, frowning now forsakes the plain,

And smiling Nature visits us again;

Each tree its wonted foliage re-assumes,

And new-born zephyrs breathe around perfumes.

Where'er we turn to view our ravish'd eyes,
Luxuriant scenes of endless beauty rise.

SONG.

Transparent now, and all serene,
The gentle current flows;
While fancy draws the flatt'ring scene,
How fair the landscape shows!

But soon its transient charms decay,
When ruffling tempests blow;
The soft delusions fleet away,
And pleasure ends in woe.

Sol. Tell me, gentle Sir, from whence you came;

Declare your sovereign, country, and your name,

Are ye from Natolia's rebel coast?

If that be so, 'twere better you were lost.

[*Trumpet without.*]

The chief is rous'd: behold him, great in arms;

Let Hero now subdue him with her charms:

From yonder mountain's brow he saw your sails

Dreadful he is—a bashaw of three tails.

[*Music plays, 'See the conquering hero comes'*]

Enter ABUDAH on an elephant, attended with a numerous body of guards, armed with spears.

Abu. What's this I see?—a set of rascal minions,

Hanging together like a set of onions.

I'll hang ye all, ay, scoundrels, before night,

If on the instant you don't quit my sight.

Sol. Dread Sir, we have got some prisoners here,

That seem half dead already with their fear;
Shipwreck'd upon our coast, we sav'd their lives,
And here they are—

Abu. Say, have they any wives?
The women all are mine—yes, if twenty,
Although indeed I've petticoats in plenty.

Sol. We found no female, Sir, among the crew;
Shall we discharge the men—pray, what say you?

Abu. Let them all breakfast,
Each a loaf of bread,
And then let every prisoner—
Lose his head. [PRISONERS bow.

CHORUS.—PRISONERS.

Have pity, great chief,
And send us relief;
We're all in a wretched condition:
O, spare our poor lives,
And we'll send you our wives;
Accept this our humble petition.

[During this chorus ABUDAH alights.

Abu. Silence, rascals!—I find you then can prate,
But, scoundrels, you shall know my word is fate.
My sword shall treat the vultures with a feast;
Shall lay whole realms, nay, human nature,
waste.

Sol. I told them, Sir, how great you were in power,
That with a single puff you'd rock a tower;
That you were ten feet high—was not that right?
Abu. Ten feet at least—five cubits—No—not quite:

Yet every inch is made of proper stuff,
Though idle nature cast me in the rough.

SONG.

Stand all aloof, ye paltry jades,
And you, ye filthy knaves of spades;
How dare you look beyond those pales;
On me, who wear three thumping tails?
Don't you all know, that at a blow,
I'd send you to the shades below?
Begone, or else I swear, odsbobs,
I'll send you home without your knobs.

Enter HERO.

But, Hero now her form displays,
And strives to charm a thousand ways;
From head to foot new modes of dress,
Her various arts to please express:
I find I'm caught within the snare,
So I'll enjoy the am'rous fair;
As I'm a soldier great and stout,
This girl has turn'd me inside out.

HERO and LEANDER look steadfastly at each other.

Lean. It is, it is, my love! Ye gods, be kind!
[Aside.

Hero. 'Tis he—I give my sorrows to the wind.
[Aside.

Abu. What does the fellow stare at? Speak,
you dog.

The rascal seems as stupid as a log.

Lean. Spare your reproaches, Sir; I'm ill at ease,

My life is yours, do with me as you please.
See tear succeeds to tear—a passage seeks,
And, bursting forth, bedews her lovely cheeks!

Abu. No grumbling, sirrah. Charmer, let's retire,
[Takes HERO by the hand.

The god of love shall fan the keen desire;
My body, blood, and soul, are all on fire. [Going.

Lean. Monster, avaunt!—Release the heavenly fair,

Or, by all the avenging powers, I swear—

[Seizes ABUDAH.
Abu. Seize, seize the villain; drag him to the block,

Or toss him headlong from the steepest rock.

No, off with his head. As I'm a sinner,
I'll have his knob, before I eat my dinner.

Hero. Mercy, O mercy, Sir, as you are great!
O save the youth, at least suspend his fate!

Abu. Who is the vagabond?

Lean. Why, caitiff, hear,

So shall thy savage nature shake with fear:

Know then, ingrate, from Abydos I came;

Still more; know thou, Leander is my name.

[Throws off his disguise

Now slip thy bloodhounds—dulge the savage

I stand unmov'd. [rout;

Abu. O now the murder's out.

Thanks to thee, prophet, thanks to thee again.

—Speak not in his behalf, you sue in vain;

This is the squire, that braves the Hellespont,

And steals at night to madam hot-upon't.

Zounds! I'll souse him in a tub of pickle;

And, as for Miss, her toby I will tickle.

Drag him away.

Hero. Great chief, be not cruel, but good as

you're brave, [save.

Remember, the hero but conquers to

Sol. Give life to the wretched, whose fate's

in your hand: [land.

'Tis humanity graces and blesses the

Lean. I sue not for mercy, I stand here un-

mov'd,

Protected by virtue, by beauty, and love.

Together. Look down, O ye gods, and let mor-

tals now prove,

The blessings that wait upon virtue and

love.

Hero. Hear me, great Sir—O spare Leander's

life,

Grant this request, and Hero is your wife.

Sol. Say, will your actions with your words

accord?

Hero. They will, indeed.

Sol. Then take her at her word.

Lean. I read my Hero's meaning in her eyes.

[Aside.

Abu. It is all flummery.—By Heaven, he dies.

Hero. Pardon me, Sir, my love for you pre-

vails,

What girl can stand, a bashaw with three tails?

[Coaxes him.

SONG.

O, Sir, be consenting, be kind, and relenting,

Release these poor creatures, and send them

Do but this, and you'll find

How good natur'd and kind

I'll prove to my spousee, by night and by day.

O, come now, sweet lover, a passion discover,

A sly little Cupid now lurks in that smile:

Every maid must surrender

To such a commander, [guile.

You've found out a way my poor heart to be-

Behold, like Apollo, his ringlets of yellow!
Behold how, like Mars, at this moment he
His breath too discloses [stands!]
The perfume of roses!
How plump his round cheeks, and how taper
his hands!

O, come now, sweet lover, &c.

Abu. A pretty soul it is!—Say, will you, Miss,
Give your bashaw the earnest of a kiss.

[Kisses him.]

'Tis done! 'tis done!—you're pardon'd, rascals
I give you life, my love will have it so. [—go,
But if that poaching dog comes here again,
And braves my anger, as he braves the main,
I'll whip the rebel rascal, till he's blind.—
Be scarce then, scoundrels, now you know my
mind.

CHORUS.

Prisoners. Happy, happy, happy day;
Every heart its homage pay.

CHORUS—By the Turks.

Wake to harmony the voice,
Rejoice, 'tis mercy calls, rejoice.

[During this chorus, ABUDAH mounts the
elephant; he first places his foot on the
shoulder of a slave, who kneels and raises
him gently, until ABUDAH vaults into the
saddle.]

CHORUS.

All. Happy, happy, happy day,
Every heart its homage pay.
Wake to harmony the voice,
Rejoice, 'tis mercy calls, rejoice

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Grove.

Enter ABUDAH, SOLANO, SAFRINA, and HERO.

Abu. Come, come, Solano, methinks we tarry,
I shall be all a-gog, until I marry.

The loves in council sit, and from above
Venus now calls me to the Paphian grove.

Sol. What says my gentle Hero, will you go?

Saf. Her heart seems bursting with its grief.

Hero. Heigh ho!

Saf. Divide your sorrows, Hero, give me part.
Suppress that sigh—or else you'll break my heart.

SONG.

Alas! I press'd, with growing love,
This darling to my breast;
Not the most favour'd, even above,
Was more completely bless'd.

Dear innocent! her lovely smiles
Delight me but to view;
And every pang my Hero feels,
Her mother feels it too.

Abu. I see she's coy, yet love is in her eye,
She'll know her bashaw better by and by;
Come, Hero, I hope there's no repenting,
The gods, my pretty chicken, are consenting.

SONG.

Gentle Hero! take my hand,
Love and life's at thy command:
Joys surrounding,
Sorrows drowning,
Bliss shall gladden all the land.

But if you refuse me,
And think but to noose me
In love's silken fetters,
And sneer at your betters,
By the gods now I swear,
From your bosom I'll tear—
No, stop—I'll do more,
I'll deluge the shore
With blood—
Till Nature looks wild,
And before I retire,
I'll kindle a fire,
That shall toast you,
And roast you,
Man, woman, and child.

Saf. O mercy on us! whither shall we fly?

Sol. He'll ravish you, perhaps.

Saf. No, first I'll die.

[Exit SAFRINA, and HERO; huzza without.]

Enter DELAH and Soldiers.

Abu. What's the matter, Delah?

Del. Dread Sir, attend—

We've seen a sail—I'm sure she's not a friend—
Hovering on our coast; she's full of people.

I saw her first, great Sir, from yonder steeple.

Abu. Rally my forces—instant line the strand;
They're rebel rascals, from Natolia's land.

[Exit DELAH; Soldiers remain. Huzza without.]

Like Mars, I'll dart the javelin from my car,
I scorn to wait, I'll meet the coming war.

[Going; trumpet sounds without.]

Sol. Fir'd by the sound, my genius bids me go,
To share the conflict, and repel the foe.

SONG.

Hark! the trumpet sounds afar,
The clam'rous harbinger of war;
Rouse, soldiers, rouse, to arms to arms,
The call my beating bosom warns;
The foe insults our native shore,
And proudly mocks his conqueror.

AIR.

O, genius of this happy land,
Descend! and bless thy chosen band;
Give us to meet the daring foe,
'Tis liberty shall nerve the blow.

So, when the toils of war are o'er,
And meek-eyed peace unlocks her store,
Each youthful hero then shall prove,
A sweet reward in faithful love.

Enter DELAH.

Del. Dread Sir, a prisoner we have taken.

Abu. Off with his head—I'll make the fellow
bacon.

Del. If you unhead him, Sir, he cannot speak.
Abu. What horrid fears sits trembling on thy
cheek?

Del. I find Leander, Sir, comes here to-night,
To visit Hero, and secure her flight.

Abu. Death and the devil!—this is news in-
deed—

O for Bellona's whip, to make him bleed!

He should be more than twenty months in dying,
'Twould make me smile, to see the rascal frying.

Sol. Suppose we seize him as he comes to-
night,

Waylay the villain—nab him?

Abu. That is right.
 You counsel well, Solano—Come away,
 My soul's in arms, and eager for its prey
 [Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE II.

Night.—*The Hellespont in perspective. LEANDER is seen rowing himself over. A candle appears in HERO's window, as a direction to her lover.*

Enter ABUDAH, SOLANO, and Soldiers.

Sol. Behold him, Sir!—his fate, alas! draws nigh,
 And forces e'en the tribute of a sigh.
 Like the dread genius of the deep, he steers,
 Nor shuns the labour, nor the danger fears.

SONG.

O, see how he comes, how he moves through
 the gloom,
 Conducted by fate, and by love, to his doom!
 O, see the fond youth, to the shore now he
 bends,
 And quits his companions, his country, and
 friends;
 Regardless of danger, he darts through the
 wave,
 'Tis nature commands him, and nature must
 save.

Abu. The fellow's got on shore, he'll soon be
 here;
 The light conducts him to my faithless fair.
 O here he comes—be silent all as death,
 Let not a creature speak above his breath.

Enter LEANDER.

Lean. Well so far safe—I now must wait to
 see
 The bright perfection of a deity.
 O do not, cruel love, my cares prolong!
 I'll wake my gentle Hero with a song.

SONG.

Awake, my sweet Hero, my heart's dearest
 treasure,
 Leander now calls you to love and delight;
 'Tis Hymen shall sanctify love's softest plea-
 sure,
 Give our days all to joy, and to rapture the
 night.
 Awake then, my charmer, and share the
 sweet blessing,
 The moments now fly me, alas! how dis-
 tressing,
 O, think of our joys, when caress'd and ca-
 ressing,
 Arise, my sweet Hero, love calls you away.
 [HERO opens the window.]

Hero. O my soul's joy! thy cheering voice I
 hear

Like notes from seraphs, rushing on my ear.

Lean. O come, my Hero, bless again my arms,
 My heart, still constant, beats with love's alarms!
 Danger could work no change, nor time remove
 The honest warmth of undissembled love.
 Haste then, sweet fair, thy lover's transport meet,
 Fly to his arms, and make his bliss complete.

[HERO shuts the window.]

That Heaven from which no secret is conceal'd,
 But every wish and thought must stand reveal'd,

Views not a love more pure, or truer mind,
 Amongst the various race of human kind;
 Where neither interest nor design have part,
 But all the warmth is native from the heart.

Enter HERO; LEANDER embraces her.

O bless'd event!—let's fly to yonder shore:
 We've met, my Hero, now, to part no more.
 Hail, happy groves, retreats of peace and joy,
 Where no black cares the mind's repose destroy!
 Hero. Discharg'd from care, on unfrequented
 plains,
 We'll sing of rural joys in rural strains;
 No false corrupt delights our thoughts shall move,
 But joys of friendship, tenderness, and love.

DUET.

Lean. Come now, my sweet love, to the growe,
 The graces are waiting for you;
 Thro' roses and woodbines we'll rove,
 And kiss, as all true lovers do.

Hero. O, take both my hand and my heart,
 My lover I know he is true;
 Till death shall direct us to part,
 We'll kiss, as all true lovers do.

Both. Adieu then to doubt and despair,
 Fair virtue our loves will pursue;
 We'll not know a moment of care,
 But kiss, as all true lovers do.

[They appear retiring to LEANDER'S vessee, but are stopped by ABUDAH, SOLANO, DELAH, and Soldiers; the Soldiers present their spears at LEANDER.]

Abu. Bind the villain.—O Sir, you're caught
 again!

Knock off his head, and let me have his brain;
 Now that my anger's rous'd, my rage is full,
 I'll make a punch-bowl of the rascal's skull.

[In this part of the Scene, MINERVA, in a cloud, attended by HYMEN, descends in the back Scene, supposed to be the Banks of the Hellespont.]

Lean. O now farewell to hope!—My love,
 I die content, because I die for you. [adieu!]

Hero. O make his cause, ye powers above, your
 care,

Let guilt shrink back, and innocence appear!
 Support his soul, now death demands his prey,
 And smooth his passage to the realms of day!

Lean. May Heaven still guard her, with pe-
 culiar care.

And make her happy, as it made her fair!
 May calmest peace her future days attend,
 And late may she to endless joys ascend!

Abu. Bring me a cauldron, hot as Alecto's
 kettle;

First Medusa's snaky whip shall try his mettle!
 'Sdeath! his blood I'll bottle, and in the dark pro-
 found

I'll sprinkle libations, to the furies round.

[MINERVA and HYMEN come forward,
 ABUDAH starts; all stand amazed.]

Min. Cease, hell-hound—infernal monster,
 cease—

I come, the blessed harbinger of peace,
 To join in Hymen's bands this constant pair,
 The youth deserving, and the virtuous fair;
 Their constancy and truth deserve my care.

Stand forth, my children—Hymen, join their hands,
[A Flourish of trumpets; they kneel, and HYMEN joins their hands.]
 'Tis Wisdom consecrates the sacred bands.

SONG—HYMEN.

Sweetest pleasures never ceasing,
 Blessings, which the gods present,
 Joys, with length of years increasing,
 Rosy health, and sweet content,
 Await the fair, and deck the youth,
 United in the bands of truth.
 And when old Time, with solemn pace,
 Shall call to tell them, both must die;
 Touch'd, as he views their fond embrace,
 He'll bless them first, then pass them by.
 Sweetest pleasures, &c.

Abu. What then, is all my greatness come to this?

Am I then baffled by a paltry Miss?—
 Your power, Madam, certainly prevails;
 Wisdom, I find, pays no respect to tails.

Lean. O thanks, eternal thanks, to you be given,

Thou best and brightest ornament of Heaven!

Min. Now strike the sprightly lyre; all care away;

To mirth and joy we dedicate the day;

I'll raise an altar to love's holy flame,

Inscrib'd with Hero's and Leander's name.

FINALE.

Lean. Joy and pleasure now go round,
 Beauty's triumph is to-day;
 Every voice in chorus sound,
 This is Hymen's holiday.
 Dress a garland for the fair,
 Care and sorrow hither go;
 Daffodillies,
 Virgin lilies—

Hymen says he'll have it so.

Hero. Take my hand, you have my heart,
 Indeed, you've had it long ago;
 And now we'll never, never part—
 Hymen says he'll have it so.

Chorus. Joy and pleasure, &c.

Saf. Cupid is a foolish boy,
 Once he tried on me his bow;
 But I never felt a joy,
 Till Hymen said he'd have it so.

Chorus. Joy and pleasure, &c.

Abu. Must I then give up the fair,
 And see them laughing at my wo;
 Live and lead a life of care?
 The devil sure would have it so.

Chorus. Joy and pleasure, &c.

Sol. Observe, ye fair, the moral here—
 Let virtue in your bosoms glow,
 You then may bid adieu to fear—
 Hymen says he'll have it so.

Chorus. Joy and pleasure, &c.

ISABELLA:

OR,

THE FATAL MARRIAGE:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY THOMAS SOUTHERN.

REMARKS.

This tragedy was restored to the stage, after a long period of neglect, by Garrick, who made many judicious alterations, and omitted some comic scenes, which it must be confessed were not well adapted to the moral taste of the age. In 1774, that inimitable actor appeared in the part of Biron, and contributed to the success of this excellent drama, which it was reserved for our own day to render irresistible and memorable, by the introduction of Mrs. Siddons to a London audience. That unrivalled mistress of the heart gave a pathos and importance to Isabella, which it had not before received; and Miss O'Neil's impassioned and native excellence, in her late personation of the character, will entitle her to a situation in Thespian annals, not far removed from her great predecessor.

Of the ten plays written by Southern, *Isabella* and *Oroonoko* keep their place on the modern stage.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN.		COVENT GARDEN.	
COUNT BALDWIN,	<i>Mr. Murray.</i>	GENTLEMEN,	<i>Messrs. Sargent, &c.</i>
BIRON,	<i>Mr. Young.</i>	OFFICER,	<i>Mr. Atkins.</i>
BIRON'S SON,	<i>Master Chapman.</i>	SAMPSON,	<i>Mr. Simmons.</i>
CARLOS,	<i>Mr. Abbott.</i>	ISABELLA,	<i>Miss O'Neil.</i>
VILLEROY,	<i>Mr. Egerton.</i>	NURSE,	<i>Mrs. Emery.</i>
BELFORD,	<i>Mr. Claremont.</i>		

Bravoës, Officers, Servants, Men, and Women.

SCENE.—Brussels.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Street.

Enter VILLEROY and CARLOS.

Car. This constancy of yours will establish an immortal reputation among the women.

Vil. If it would establish me with Isabella—

Car. Follow her, follow her: Troy town was won at last.

Vil. I have followed her these seven years, and now but live in hopes.

Car. But live in hopes! Why, hope is the ready road, the lover's baiting place; and for aught you know, but one stage short of the possession of your mistress.

Vil. But my hopes, I fear, are more of my own making than hers; and proceed rather from my wishes, than any encouragement she has given me.

Car. That I can't tell: the sex is very various: there are no certain measures to be prescribed or followed, in making our approaches to the women. All that we have to do, I think, is to attempt them

in the weakest part. Press them but hard, and they will all fall under the necessity of a surrender at last. That favour comes at once; and sometimes when we least expect it.

Vil. I'm going to visit her.

Car. What interest a brother-in-law can have with her, depend upon.

Vil. I know your interest, and I thank you.

Car. You are prevented; see, the mourner comes:

She weeps, as seven years were seven hours;
So fresh, unfading, is the memory
Of my poor brother Biron's death:
I leave you to your opportunity.

[*Exit VILEROY.*]

Though I have taken care to root her from our house,

I would transplant her into Villeroys'—
There is an evil fate that waits upon her,
To which I wish him wedded—only him;
His upstart family, with haughty brow,
(Though Villeroys and myself are seeming friends,)—
Look down upon our house; his sister too,
Whose hand I ask'd, and was with scorn refus'd,
Lives in my breast, and fires me to revenge.—
They bend this way.—
Perhaps, at last, she seeks my father's doors;
They shall be shut, and he prepar'd to give
The beggar and her brat a cold reception.
That boy's an adder in my path—they come,
I'll stand apart, and watch their motions.

[*Exit.*]

Enter VILEROY and ISABELLA, with her Child.

Isa. Why do you follow me? you know I am
A bankrupt every way; too far engag'd
Ever to make return: I own you have been
More than a brother to me, my friend:
And at a time when friends are found no more,
A friend to my misfortunes.

Vil. I must be
Always your friend.

Isa. I have known and found you
Truly my friend: and would I could be yours;
But the unfortunate cannot be friends:
Pray begone,

Take warning, and be happy.

Vil. Happiness!

There's none for me without you.—
What serve the goods of fortune for? To raise
My hopes, that you at last will share them with
me.

Isa. I must not hear you.

Vil. Thus, at this awful distance, I have serv'd
A seven years' bondage—Do I call it bondage,
When I can never wish to be redeem'd?
No, let me rather linger out a life
Of expectation, that you may be mine,
Than be restor'd to the indifference
Of seeing you, without this pleasing pain:
I've lost myself, and never would be found,
But in these arms.

Isa. Oh, I have heard all this!
—But must no more—the charmer is no
My buried husband rises in the face [more:
Of my dear boy, and chides me for my stay:
Canst thou forgive me, child?

Vil. What can I say?

'The arguments that make against my hopes
Prevail upon my heart, and fix me more;
Those pious tears, you hourly throw away
Upon the grave, have all their quick'ning charms,

And more engage my love, to make you mine:

When yet a virgin, free, and undispos'd,
I lov'd, but saw you only with mine eyes;
I could not reach the beauties of your soul:
I have since liv'd in contemplation,
And long experience, of your growing goodness:
What then was passion, is my judgment now,
Through all the several changes of your life,
Confirm'd and settled in adorning you.

Isa. Nay, then I must be gone. If you are my
friend,

If you regard my little interest,
No more of this.

I'm going to my father: he needs not an excuse
To use me ill: pray leave me to the trial.

Vil. I'm only born to be what you would have
me,

The creature of your power, and must obey,
In every thing obey you. I am going:
But all good fortune go along with you. [*Exit.*]

Isa. I shall need all your wishes— [*Knocks.*]

Lock'd! and fast!

Where is the charity that us'd to stand
In our forefathers' hospitable days
At great men's doors,
Like the good angel of the family,
With open arms taking the needy in,
To feed and clothe, to comfort and relieve, them?
Now, even their gates are shut against the poor.

Enter SAMPSON.

Samp. Well, what's to do now, I trow? You
knock as loud as if you were invited; and that's
more than I heard of; but I can tell you, you may
look twice about you for a welcome in a great
man's family, before you find it, unless you bring
it along with you.

Isa. I hope I do, Sir.

Is your lord at home?

Samp. My lord at home!

Isa. Count Baldwin lives here still?

Samp. Ay, ay, Count Baldwin does live here;
and I am his porter; but what's that to the pur-
pose, good woman, of my lord's being at home?

Isa. Why, don't you know me, friend?

Samp. Not I, not I, Mistress; I may have seen
you before, or so; but men of employment must
forget their acquaintance; especially such as we
are never to be the better for.

[*Going to shut the door.*]

Enter NURSE.

Nurse. Handsomer words should become you,
and mend your manners, Sampson; do you know
who you prate to?

Isa. I am glad you know me, Nurse.

Nurse. Marry, Heaven forbid, Madam, that I
should ever forget you, or my little jewel: pray go
in. [*ISABELLA goes in with her Child.*] Now my
blessing go along with you, wherever you go, or
whatever you are about. Fie, Sampson, how
couldst thou be such a Saracen? A Turk would
have been a better Christian, than to have done
so barbarously by so good a lady.

Samp. Why, look you, Nurse, I know you of
old: by your good will, you would have a finger
in every body's pye; but mark the end on't. If
I am called to account about it, I know what I
have to say.

Nurse. Marry come up here; say your plea-
sure, and spare not. Refuse his eldest son's

widow and poor child the comfort of seeing him? She does not trouble him so often.

Samp. Not that I am against it, Nurse, but we are but servants, you know; we must have no likings, but our lord's, and must do as we are ordered. But what is the business, Nurse? You have been in the family before I came into the world: what's the reason, pray, that this daughter-in-law, who has so good a report in every body's mouth, is so little set by, by my lord?

Nurse. Why, I tell you, Sampson, more or less: I'll tell the truth, that's my way, you know, without adding or diminishing.

Samp. Ay, marry, Nurse.

Nurse. My lord's eldest son, Biron by name, the son of his bosom, and the son that he would have loved best, if he had as many as king Pyramus of Troy;—this Biron, as I was saying, was a lovely sweet gentleman, and, indeed, nobody could blame his father for loving him: he was a son for the king of Spain; Heaven bless him! for I was his nurse. But now I come to the point, Sampson; this Biron, without asking the advice of his friends, hand over head, as young men will have their vagaries, not having the fear of his father before his eyes, as I may say, wilfully marries this Isabella.

Samp. How, wilfully! he should have had her consent, methinks.

Nurse. No, wilfully marries her; and which was worse, after she had settled all her fortune upon a nunnery, which she broke out of to run away with him. They say they had the church's forgiveness, but I had rather it had been his father's.

Samp. Why, in good truth, and I think our young master was not in the wrong but in marrying without a portion.

Nurse. That was the quarrel, I believe, Sampson: upon this my old lord would never see him: disinherited him: took his younger brother, Carlos, into favour, whom he never cared for before: and, at last, forced Biron to go to the siege of Candy, where he was killed.

Samp. Alack a-day, poor gentleman!

Nurse. For which my old lord hates her, as if she had been the cause of his going thither.

Samp. Alas, poor lady! she has suffered for it; she has lived a great while a widow!

Nurse. A great while indeed, for a young woman, Sampson.

Samp. Gad so! here they come; I won't venture to be seen. [They retire.]

Enter COUNT BALDWIN, ISABELLA, and her Child.

C. Bald. Whoever of your friends directed you, Misguided and abus'd you.—There's your What could you expect from me? [way:]

Isa. Oh, I have nothing to expect on earth! But misery is very apt to talk: I thought I might be heard.

C. Bald. What can you say? Is there in eloquence, can there be in words, A reparation of the injuries, The great calamities, that you have brought On me and mine? You have destroy'd those hopes

I fondly rais'd, through my declining life, To rest my age upon; and most undone me.

Isa. I have undone myself too.

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C. Bald. Speak it again;

Say still you are undone; and I will hear you, With pleasure hear you.

Isa. Would my ruin please you?

C. Bald. Beyond all other pleasures.

Isa. Then you are pleas'd—for I am most undone.

C. Bald. I pray'd but for revenge, and Heaven has heard,

And sent it to my wishes: these gray hairs Would have gone down in sorrow to the grave Which you have dug for me, without the thought, The thought of leaving you more wretched here.

Isa. Indeed I am most wretched—I I lost with Biron all the joys of life:

But now its last supporting means are gone. All the kind helps that Heaven in pity rais'd, In charitable pity to our wants, At last have left us: now bereft of all, But this last trial of a cruel father, To save us both from sinking. Oh, my child, Kneel with me, knock at nature in his heart: Let the resemblance of a once lov'd son Speak in this little one, who never wrong'd you, And plead the fatherless and widow's cause. Oh, if you ever hope to be forgiven, Forget our faults, that Heaven may pardon yours!

C. Bald. How dare you mention Heaven!

Call to mind

Your perjur'd vows; your plighted, broken faith To Heaven, and all things holy; were you not Devoted, wedded to a life recluse, The sacred habit on, profess'd and sworn, A votary for ever? Can you think The sacrilegious wretch, that robs the shrine, Is thunder proof?

Isa. There, there, began my woes.

Oh! had I never seen my Biron's face, Had he not tempted me, I had not fallen, But still continued innocent and free Of a bad world, which only he had power To reconcile, and make me try again.

C. Bald. Your own inconstancy Reconcil'd you to the world:

He had no hand to bring you back again, But what you gave him. Circe! you prevail'd Upon his honest mind, transforming him From virtue, and himself, into what shapes You had occasion for; and what he did Was first inspir'd by you.

Isa. Not for myself—for I am past the hopes Of being heard—but for this innocent—

And then I never will disturb you more.

C. Bald. I almost pity the unhappy child: But, being yours—

Isa. Look on him as your son's; And let this part in him answer for mine. Oh! save, defend him, save him from the wrongs That fall upon the poor!

C. Bald. It touches me—

And I will save him—But to keep him safe, Never come near him more.

Isa. What! take him from me!

No, we must never part.

I live but in my child.

No, let me pray in vain, and beg my bread From door to door, to feed his daily wants, Rather than always lose him.

C. Bald. Then have your child, and feed him with your prayer.

Isa. Then Heaven have mercy on me!

[Exit, with Child.]

C. Bald. You rascal, slave, what do I keep you for?
How came this woman in?

Samp. Why, indeed, my lord, I did as good as tell her before, my thoughts upon the matter——

C. Bald. Did you so, Sir! Now then tell her mine;
Tell her I sent you to her.
Begone, go all together—I shall be glad to hear of you; but never, never, see me more—
[Drives them off.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Street.

Enter VILLEROY and CARLOS, meeting.

Vil. My friend, I fear to ask—but Isabella—
The lovely widow's tears, her orphan's cries,
Thy father must feel for them—No, I read,
I read their cold reception in thine eyes—
Thou pitiest them—though Baldwin—but I spare him

For Carlos' sake; thou art no son of his.
There needs not this to endure thee more to me.

Car. My Villeroy, the fatherless, the widow,
Are terms not understood within these gates—
You must forgive him; Sir, he thinks this woman
Is Biron's fate, that hurried him to death—
I must not think on't, lest my friendship stagger.
My friend's, my sister's, mutual advantage,
Have reconcil'd my bosom to its task.

Vil. Advantage! think not I intend to raise
An interest from Isabella's wrongs,
Your father may have interested ends
In her undoing, but my heart has none;
Her happiness must be my interest,
And that I would restore.

Car. Why, so I mean.
These hardships, that my father lays upon her,
I'm sorry for, and wish I could prevent;
But he will have his way. Since there's no hope

From her prosperity, her change of fortune
May alter the condition of her thoughts,
And make for you.

Vil. She is above her fortune.

Car. Try her again. Women commonly love
According to the circumstances they are in.

Vil. Common women may—
No: Though I live but in the hopes of her,
And languish for th' enjoyment of those hopes,
I'd rather pine in a consuming want
Of what I wish, than have the blessing mine,
From any reason but consenting love.
Oh! let me never have it to remember,
I could betray her coldly to comply:
When a clear gen'rous choice bestows her on me,

I know to value the unequal'd gift:
I would not have it but to value it.

Car. Take your own way; remember what I offer'd.

Vil. I understand it so.
I'll serve her for herself, without the thought
Of a reward. [Exit.]

Car. Agree that point between you.
If you marry her any way, you do my business.
I know him.—What his generous soul intends
Ripens my plots—I'll first to Isabella—
I must keep up appearances with her too.
[Exit.]

SCENE II.—House.

ISABELLA and NURSE discovered. ISABELLA's son at play.

Isa. Sooner or later, all things pass away,
And are no more. The beggar and the king,
With equal steps, tread forward to their end:
The reconciling grave
Swallows distinction first, that made us foes;
Then all alike lie down in peace together.

[Weeping]

Nurse. Good Madam, be comforted.
Isa. Do I deserve to be this outcast wretch;
Abandon'd thus, and lost? But 'tis my lot,
The will of Heaven, and I must not complain:
I will not for myself: let me bear all
The violence of your wrath; but spare my child
Let not my sins be visited on him:
They are; they must: a general ruin falls
On every thing about me! thou art lost,
Poor Nurse, by being near me.

Nurse. I can work, or beg, to do you service.

Isa. Could I forget
What I have been, I might the better bear
What I am destin'd to. Wild hurrying thoughts
Start every way from my distracted soul,
To find out hope, and only meet despair.
What answer have I?

Enter SAMPSON.

Samp. Why, truly, very little to the purpose
like a Jew as he is, he says you have had more
already than the jewels are worth: he wishes you
would rather think of redeeming 'em, than expect
any more money upon 'em. [Exit.]

Isa. So:—Poverty at home, and debts abroad!
My present fortune bad; my hopes yet worse!
What will become of me?

This ring is all I have left of value now;
'Twas given me by my husband; his first gift
Upon our marriage: I've always kept it
With my best care, the treasure next my life:
And now but part with it to support life,
Which only can be dearer. Take it, Nurse,
Take care of it:
Manage it as the last remaining friend
That would relieve us. [Exit NURSE.] Heaven
can only tell

Where we shall find another—My dear boy!
The labour of his birth was lighter to me
Than of my fondness now; my fears for him
Are more than, in that hour of hovering death,
They could be for myself.—He minds me not,
His little sports have taken up his thoughts:
Oh, may they never feel the pangs of mine!
Thinking will make me mad: why must I think,
When no thought brings me comfort?

Enter NURSE.

Nurse. Oh, Madam! you are utterly ruined
and undone; your creditors of all kinds are come
in upon you; they have mustered up a regiment
of rogues, that are come to plunder your house,
and seize upon all you have in the world: they are
below. What will you do, Madam?

Isa. Do! nothing! no, for I am born to suffer

Enter CARLOS.

Car. Oh, sister! can I call you by that name.
And be the son of this inhuman man,
Inveterate to your ruin? Can you think
Of any way that I can serve you in?

But what enrages most my sense of grief,
My sorrow for your wrongs, is, that my father,
Foreknowing well the storm that was to fall,
Has order'd me not to appear for you.

Isa. I thank your pity; my poor husband fell
For disobeying him; do not you stay
To venture his displeasure too for me.

Car. You must resolve on something—

Isa. Hark, they are coming: let the torrent
roar:

It can but overwhelm me in its fall;
And life and death are both alike to me.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*Anti-Chamber in ISABELLA'S
House.*

CARLOS and VILLEROY, with OFFICERS.

Vil. No farther violence—
The debt in all is but four thousand crowns:
Were it ten times the sum, I think you know
My fortune very well can answer it.
You have my word for this: I'll see you paid.

Off. That's as much as we can desire: so we
have the money, no matter whence it comes.

Vil. To-morrow you shall have it.

Car. Thus far all's well—

Enter ISABELLA and NURSE, with the Child.

And now my sister comes to crown the work.

Isa. Where are these ravening blood hounds,
that pursue
In a full cry, gaping to swallow me?

I meet your rage, and come to be devour'd;
Say, which way are you to dispose of me;
To dungeons, darkness, death?

Car. Have patience.

Isa. Patience!

Off. You'll excuse us, we are but in our office.
Debts must be paid.

Isa. My death will pay you all.

Off. While there is law to be had, people will
have their own.

Vil. 'Tis very fit they should; but pray be
gone,

To-morrow certainly— [Exit OFFICERS.]

Isa. What of to-morrow?

Must I be reserv'd for fresh afflictions?

Vil. For long happiness of life, I hope.

Isa. There is no hope for me.

The load grows light, when we resolve to bear:
I'm ready for my trial.

Car. Pray, be calm.

And know your friends.

Isa. My friends? have I a friend?

Car. A faithful friend; in your extremest need,
Villeroi came in to save you—

Isa. Save me! How?

Car. By satisfying all your creditors.

Isa. Which way? for what?

Vil. Let me be understood,

And then condemn me: you have given me leave
To be your friend; and in that only name
I now appear before you. I could wish
There had been no occasion of a friend,
Because I know you hate to be oblig'd;
And still more loath to be oblig'd by me.

Isa. 'Twas that I would avoid— [Aside.]

Vil. I'm most unhappy that my services
Can be suspected to design upon you;
I have no farther ends than to redeem you
From fortune's wrongs; to show myself at last,
What I have long profess'd to be, your friend:
Allow me that; and to convince you more,
That I intend only your interest,
Forgive what I have done, and in amends
(If that can make you any, that can please you)
I'll tear myself for ever from my hopes,
Stifle this flaming passion in my soul,
And mention my unlucky love no more.

Isa. This generosity will ruin me. [Aside.]

Vil. Nay, if the blessing of my looking on you
Disturbs your peace, I will do all I can
To keep away, and never see you more. [Going]

Car. You must not go.

Vil. Could Isabella speak

Those few short words, I should be rooted here,

And never move but upon her commands.

Car. Speak to him, sister; do not throw away

A fortune that invites you to be happy.

In your extremity he begs your love;

And has deserv'd it nobly. Think upon

Your lost condition, helpless and alone.

Though now you have a friend, the time must

come

That you will want one; him you may secure

To be a friend, a father, a husband, to you.

Isa. A husband!

Car. You have discharg'd your duty to the

dead,

And to the living! 'tis a wilfulness

Not to give way to your necessities,

That force you to this marriage.

Nurse. What must become of this poor inno-

cence?

Car. He wants a father to protect his youth,

And rear him up to virtue: you must bear

The future blame, and answer to the world,

When you refuse the easy, honest means

Of taking care of him.

Isa. Do not think I need

Your reasons to confirm my gratitude;

I have a soul that's truly sensible

Of your great worth, and busy to contrive,

If possible, to make you a return. [To VILLEROY.]

Vil. Oh, easily possible!

Isa. It cannot be your way: my pleasures are

Buried, and cold in my dead husband's grave;

And should I wrong the truth, myself, and you,

To say that I can ever love again?

I owe this declaration to myself:

But, as a proof that I owe all to you,

If, after what I have said, you can resolve

To think me worth your love—Where am I go-

ing?

You cannot think it; 'tis impossible.

Vil. Impossible!

Isa. You should not ask me now, nor should I

grant;

I am so much oblig'd, that to consent,

Would want a name to recommend the gift:

'Twould show me poor, indebted, and compell'd.

Designing, mercenary: and I know

You would not wish to think I could be bought

Vil. Be bought! where is the price that can

pretend

To bargain for you? Not in Fortune's power.

The joys of Heaven, and love, must be bestow'd,

They are not to be sold, and cannot be deserv'd.

Isa. Some other time I'll hear you on this subject.

Vil. Nay, then, there is no time so fit for me. Since you consent to hear me, hear me now; That you may grant: you are above

[*Takes her hand.*]

The little forms which circumscribe your sex; We differ but in time, let that be mine.

Isa. You think fit

To get the better of me, and you shall; Since you will have it so—I will be yours.

Vil. I take you at your word.

Isa. I give you all,

My hand; and would I had a heart to give: But, if it ever can return again, 'Tis wholly yours.

Vil. Oh, ecstasy of joy!

Leave that to me. If all my services, If all that man can fondly say or do, Can beget love, love shall be born again. Oh, Carlos! now my friend and brother too: And, Nurse, I have eternal thanks for thee.

[*Exit NURSE.*]

This night you must be mine.

Let me command in this, and all my life Shall be devoted to you.

Isa. On your word, Never to press me to put off these weeds, Which best become these melancholy thoughts, You shall command me.

Vil. Witness, Heaven and earth!

Against my soul, when I do any thing To give you a disquiet.

Car. I long to wish you joy.

Vil. You'll be a witness of my happiness?

Car. For once I'll be my sister's father, And give her to you.

Vil. Next my Isabella,

Be near my heart: I am for ever yours.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—COUNT BALDWIN'S House.

Enter COUNT BALDWIN and CARLOS.

C. Bald. Married to Villeroy, say'st thou?

Car. Yes, my lord, Last night the priest perform'd his holy office, And made them one.

C. Bald. Misfortune join them! And may her violated vows pull down A lasting curse, a constancy of sorrow On both their heads.

Car. Soon he'll hate her: Though warm and violent in his raptures now, When all enjoyment palls his sicken'd sense, And reason with satiety returns, Her cold constrain'd acceptance of his hand Will gall his pride, which (though of late o'er-power'd

By stronger passions) will, as they grow weak, Rise in full force, and pour its vengeance on her.

C. Bald. Now, Carlos, take example to thy Let Biron's disobedience, and the curse [aid; He took into his bosom, prove a warning, A monitor to thee, to keep thy duty Firm and unshaken.

Car. May those rankling wounds, Which Biron's disobedience gave my father, Be heal'd by me.

C. Bald. With tears, I thank thee, Carlos— And may'st thou ever feel those inward joys,

Thy duty gives thy father;—but, my son, We must not let resentment choke our justice; 'Tis fit that Villeroy know he has no claim From me, in right of Isabella.—Biron, (Whose name brings tears) when wedded to this

woman,

By me abandon'd, sunk the little fortune His uncle left, in vanity and fondness: I am possess'd of those your brother's papers, Which now are Villeroy's, and, should aught remain,

In justice it is his; from me to him

You shall convey them—follow me, and take them. [*Exit C. BALDWIN*]

Car. Yes, I will take them; but ere I part with them

I will be sure my interest will not suffer By these his high, refin'd fantastic notions Of equity and right.—What a paradox Is man! My father here, who boasts his honour, And even but now was warm in praise of justice, Can steel his heart against the widow's tears, And infant's wants: the widow and the infant Of Biron; of his son, his fav'rite son.

'Tis ever thus: weak minds, who court opinion, And dead to virtuous feeling, hide their wants In pompous affection.—Now to Villeroy— Ere this his friends, for he is much belov'd, Crowd to his house, and with their nuptial songs Awake the wedded pair: I'll join the throng, And in my face, at least, bear joy and friendship.

[*Exit*]

SCENE II.—A Ball Room in VILLEROY'S House.

A band of music, with FRIENDS of VILLEROY.

Enter a SERVANT.

Friend. Where 's your master, my good friend?

Ser. Within, Sir, Preparing for the welcome of his friends.

Friend. Acquaint him we are here; yet stay, The voice of music gently shall surprise him, And breathe our salutations to his ear. Strike up the strain to Villeroy's happiness, To Isabella's—But he's here already.

Enter VILLEROY.

Vil. My friends, let me embrace you:

Welcome all—

What means this preparation?

[*Seeing the music.*]

Friend. A slight token Of our best wishes for your growing happiness.— You must permit our friendship—

Vil. You oblige me—

Friend. But your lovely bride, That wonder of her sex, she must appear, And add new brightness to this happy morning.

Vil. She is not yet prepar'd; and let her will, My worthiest friend, determine her behaviour; To win, and not to force her disposition, Has been my seven years' task. She will, anon. Speak welcome to you all. The music stays.

[*VILLEROY and his friends seat themselves*]

EPITHALAMIUM.

Woman. Let all, let all be gay,
Begin the rapt'rous lay;
Let mirth, let mirth and joy,
Each happy hour employ,
Of this fair bridal day.

Man. Ye love-wing'd hours, your flight,
Your downy flight, prepare;
Bring every soft delight
To sooth the brave and fair.
*Hail, happy pair, thus in each other bless'd;
Be ever free from care, of every joy possess'd!*

Vil. I thank you for the proof of your affection:

I am so much transported with the thoughts
Of what I am, I know not what to do.

My Isabella!—but possessing her,
Who would not lose himself?—You'll pardon me—

Oh! there was nothing wanting to my soul
But the kind wishes of my loving friends—
Where's Carlos now?

Methinks I am but half myself without him.

Friend. This is wonderful! married, and yet
in raptures.

Vil. Oh! when you all get wives, and such as
mine,

(If such another woman can be found)
You will rave too, dote on the dear content,
And prattle in their praise out of all bounds.

Enter ISABELLA and Child.

My Isabella! Oh, the joy of my heart,
That I have leave at last to call you mine!
But let me look upon you, view you well.
This is a welcome gallantry, indeed!
I durst not ask, but it was kind to grant,
Just at this time; dispensing with your dress
Upon this second day, to greet our friends.

Isa. Black might be ominous;
I would not bring ill luck along with me.

Vil. Oh, if your melancholy thoughts could
change [cures
With shifting of your dress—Time has done
Incredible this way, and may again.

Isa. I could have wish'd, if you had thought
it fit,

Our marriage had not been so public.

Vil. Do not you grudge me my excess of love;
That was the cause it could not be conceal'd:
Besides, 'twould injure the opinion
I have of my good fortune, having you;
And lessen it in other people's thoughts.

Isa. I have no more to say.

Enter CARLOS.

Vil. My Carlos too, who came in to the sup-
port

Of our bad fortune, has an honest right,
In better times, to share the good with us.

Car. I come to claim that right, to share your
joy;

To wish you joy; and find it in myself;
For a friend's happiness reflects a warmth,
A kindly comfort, into every heart
That is not envious.

Vil. He must be a friend indeed,
Who is not envious of a happiness
So absolute as mine; but if you are
(As I have reason to believe you are)
Concern'd for my well-being, there's the cause;
Thank her for what I am, and what must be.

[*Music.*

I see you mean a second entertainment.

My dearest Isabella, you must hear

The raptures of my friends; from thee they
spring;

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Thy virtues have diffus'd themselves around,
And made them all as happy as myself.

Isa. I feel their favours with a grateful heart,
And willingly comply.

DUET.

Take the gifts the gods intend ye;
Grateful meet the proffer'd joy;
Truth and honour shall attend ye;
Charms, that ne'er can change or cloy.

Oh, the raptures of possessing,
Taking beauty to thy arms!
Oh, the joy, the lasting blessing,
When with virtue beauty charms!
Purer flames shall gently warm ye;
Love and honour both shall charm thee.

Car. You'll take my advice another time, sister.

Vil. What have you done? A rising smile
Stole from her thoughts, just redd'ning on her
And you have dash'd it. [cheek,

Car. I'm sorry for't.

Vil. My friends, you will forgive me, when I
own,

I must prefer her peace to all the world!

Come, Isabella, let us lead the way:

Within we'll speak our welcome to our friends,
And crown the happy festival with joy.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Room.

Enter SAMPSON and NURSE.

Samp. Ay, marry, Nurse, here's a master, in-
deed: He'll double our wages for us! If he comes
on as fast with my lady as he does with his ser-
vants, we are all in the way to be well pleased.

Nurse. He's in a rare humour; if she be in as
good a one—

Samp. If she be, marry, we may even say, they
have begot it upon one another.

Nurse. Well; why don't you go back again to
your old count? You thought your throat cut, I
warrant you, to be turned out of a nobleman's
service.

Samp. For the future, I will never serve in a
house, where the master or mistress of it lie
single: they are out of humour with every body
when they are not pleased themselves. Now,
this matrimony makes every thing go well.
There's mirth and money stirring about, when
those matters go as they should do.

Nurse. Indeed, this matrimony, Sampson—

Samp. Ah, Nurse! this matrimony is a very
good thing—but what, now my lady is mar-
ried, I hope we shall have company come to the
house: there's something always coming from one
gentleman or other upon those occasions, if my
lady loves company. This feasting looks well,
Nurse. Odsso, my master: we must not be seen.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter VILLEROY, with a letter, and ISABELLA.

Vil. I must away this moment—see his letter,
Sign'd by himself: alas! he could no more;
My brother's desperate, and cannot die
In peace, but in my arms.

Isa. So suddenly!

Vil. Suddenly taken, on the road to Brussels,
To do us honour, love; unfortunate!
Thus to be torn from thee, and all those charms,
Though cold to me and dead.

Isa. I'm sorry for the cause.
Vil. Oh! could I think,
 Could I persuade myself, that your concern
 For me, or for my absence, were the spring,
 The fountain, of these melancholy thoughts,
 My heart would dance, spite of the sad occasion,
 And be a gay companion in my journey.

Enter CARLOS.

My good Carlos, why have you left my friends?

Car. They are departed home.
 They saw some sudden melancholy news
 Had stolen the lively colour from your cheek—
 You had withdrawn, the bride, alarm'd, had
 follow'd:

Mere ceremony had been constraint; and this
 Good-natur'd rudeness—

Vil. Was the more obliging.
 There, Carlos, is the cause. [*Gives the letter.*]

Car. Unlucky accident! [*ther!*—]
 Th' archbishop of Malines, your worthy bro—
 With him to-night! Sister, will you permit it?

Vil. It must be so.
Isa. You hear it must be so.
Vil. Oh, that it must!
Car. To leave your bride so soon!
Vil. But, having the possession of my love,

I am the better able to support
 My absence, in the hopes of my return.

Car. Your stay will be but short?
Vil. It will seem long!
 The longer that my Isabella sighs:
 I shall be jealous of this rival grief,
 It takes so full possession of thy heart,
 There is not room enough for mighty love.

[*Enter Servant, bows, and exit.*]
 My horses wait: farewell, my love! You, Carlos,
 Will act a brother's part, till I return,
 And be the guardian here. All, all I have,
 That's dear to me, I give up to your care.

Car. And I receive her as a friend and brother.
Vil. Nay, stir not, love! for the night air is
 cold,

And the dews fall—Here be our end of parting;
 Carlos will see me to my horse.

[*Exit with CARLOS.*]
Isa. Oh, may thy brother better all thy hopes!
 Adieu.

A sudden melancholy bakes my blood!
 Forgive me, Villeroi—I do not find
 That cheerful gratitude thy service asks:
 Yet, if I know my heart, and sure I do,
 'Tis not averse from honest obligation.
 I'll to my chamber, and to bed: my mind,
 My harass'd mind is weary. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Street.

Enter BIRON and BELFORD.

Bir. The longest day will have an end; we are
 got home at last

Bel. We have got our legs at liberty; and
 liberty is home, where'er we go; though mine
 lies most in England.

Bir. Pray let me call this yours: for what I can
 command in Brussels, you shall find your own.
 I have a father here who, perhaps, after seven
 years' absence, and costing him nothing in my
 travels, may be glad to see me. You know my
 story—How does my disguise become me?

Bel. Just as you would have it; 'tis natural,
 and will conceal you.

Bir. To-morrow you shall be sure to find me
 here, as early as you please. This is the house,
 you have observed the street.

Bel. I warrant you: your directions will carry
 me to my lodgings. [*Exit.*]

Bir. Good night, my friend.
 The long expected moment is arriv'd!
 And if all here is well, my past sorrows
 Will only heighten my excess of joy;
 And nothing will remain to wish or hope for!

[*Knocks.*]

Enter SAMPSON.

Samp. Who's there? What would you have?
Bir. Is your lady at home, friend?

Samp. Why, truly, friend, 'tis my employment
 to answer impertinent questions: but, for my
 lady's being at home, or no, that's just as my lady
 pleases.

Bir. But how shall I know whether it pleases
 her or no?

Samp. Why, if you'll take my word for it, you
 may carry your errand back again; she never
 pleases to see any body at this time of night, that
 she does not know; and by your dress and ap-
 pearance, I am sure, you must be a stranger to
 her.

Bir. But I have business; and you don't know
 how that may please her.

Samp. Nay, if you have business, she is the
 best judge whether your business will please her
 or no: therefore I will proceed in my office, and
 know of my lady whether or no she is pleased to
 be at home or no— [*Going.*]

Enter NURSE.

Nurse. Who's that you are so busy withal?
 Methinks you might have found an answer in
 fewer words; but, Sampson, you love to hear
 yourself prate sometimes, as well as your betters,
 that I must say for you. Let me come to him.
 Who would you speak with, stranger?

Bir. With you, mistress, if you could help me
 to speak to your lady.

Nurse. Yes, Sir, I can help you in a civil way;
 but can nobody do your business but my lady?

Bir. Not so well; but, if you carry her this
 ring, she'll know my business better.

Nurse. There's no love-letter in it, I hope,
 you look like a civil gentleman. In an honest
 way, I may bring you an answer. [*Exit.*]

Bir. My old nurse, only a little older! They
 say the tongue grows always: mercy on me! then
 hers is seven years longer, since I left her. Yet
 there is something in these servants' folly pleases
 me: the cautious conduct of the family appears,
 and speaks in their impertinence. Well, mis-
 tress—

NURSE returns.

Nurse. I have delivered your ring, Sir; pray
 Heaven, you bring no bad news along with you!

Bir. Quite contrary, I hope.

Nurse. Nay, I hope so too; but my lady was
 very much surprised when I gave it her. Sir, I
 am but a servant, as a body may say; but if you'll
 walk in, that I may shut the doors, for we keep
 very orderly hours, I can show you into the par-
 lour, and help you to an answer, perhaps, as soon
 as those that are wiser. [*Exit.*]

Bir. I'll follow you—
Now all my spirits hurry to my heart,
And every sense has taken the alarm
At this approaching interview;
Heavens! how I tremble!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. I've heard of witches, magic spells, and charms,
That have made nature start from her old course:
The sun has been eclips'd, the moon brought down
From her career, still paler, and subdu'd
To the abuses of this under world;
Now I believe all possible. This ring,
This little ring, with necromantic force,
Has rais'd the ghost of pleasure to my fears,
Conjur'd the sense of honour and of love
Into such shapes, they fright me from myself;
I dare not think of them—

*Enter NURSE.**Nurse.* Madam, the gentleman's below.*Isa.* I had forgot, pray let me speak with him.[*Exit NURSE.*]

This ring was the first present of my love
To Biron, my first husband: I must blush
To think I have a second. Biron died
(Still to my loss) at Candy; there's my hope.
Oh, do I live to hope, that he died there?
It must be so; he's dead, and this ring left,
By his last breath, to some known faithful friend,
To bring me back again;
That's all I have to trust to—

Enter BIRON. [ISABELLA looking at him.]

My fears were woman's—I have view'd him
And let me, let me say it to myself, [all;
I live again, and rise but from his tomb.

Bir. Have you forgot me quite?*Isa.* Forgot you!*Bir.* Then farewell my disguise, and my misfortunes.*My Isabella!*[*He goes to her; she shrieks, and faints.*]*Isa.* Ha!*Bir.* Oh! come again!

Thy Biron summons thee to life and love;
Thy once lov'd, ever loving husband calls—
Thy Biron speaks to thee.

Isa. My husband! Biron!

Bir. Excess of love and joy, for my return,
Has overpower'd her—I was to blame
To take thy sex's softness unprepar'd:
But sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,
This ecstasy has made my welcome more
Than words could say.

Isa. Where have I been? Why do you keep him from me?

I know his voice: my life, upon the wing,
Hears the soft lute that brings me back again;
'Tis he himself, my Biron!

If I must fall, death's welcome in these arms.

Bir. Live ever in these arms.

Isa. But pardon me,
Excuse the wild disorder of my soul;
The joy, the strange surprising joy, of seeing you,
Of seeing you again, distracted me—
What hand of Providence has brought you back
To your own home again?

O, tell me all,

For every thought confounds me.

Bir. My best life! at leisure, all.*Isa.* We thought you dead; kill'd at the siege of Candy.

Bir. There I fell among the dead;
But hopes of life reviving, from my wounds,
I was preserv'd, but to be made a slave;
I often writ to my hard father; but never had
An answer; I writ to thee too—

Isa. What a world of wo

Had been prevented but in hearing from you!

Bir. Alas! thou couldst not help me.*Isa.* You do not know how much I could have done;

At least, I'm sure I could have suffer'd all;

I would have sold myself to slavery,

Without redemption; given up my child;

The dearest part of me to basest wants—

Bir. My little boy!*Isa.* My life! but to have heard

You were alive—

Bir. No more, my love; complaining of the past,

We lose the present joy. 'Tis over price

Of all my pains, that thus we meet again;

I have a thousand things to say to thee—

Isa. Would I were past the hearing! [*Aside.*]*Bir.* How does my child, my boy, my father too?

I hear he's living still.

Isa. Well, both; both well;

And may he prove a father to your hopes,

Though we have found him none.

Bir. Come, no more tears.*Isa.* Seven long years of sorrow for your loss

Have mourn'd with me—

Bir. And all my days behind

Shall be employ'd in a kind recompense

For thy afflictions—Can't I see my boy?

Isa. He's gone to-bed; I'll have him brought to you.*Bir.* To-morrow I shall see him; I want rest

Myself, after this weary pilgrimage.

Isa. Alas! what shall I get for you?*Bir.* Nothing but rest, my love! To-night I

would not

Be known, if possible, to your family:

I see my nurse is with you; her welcome

Would be tedious at this time;

To-morrow will do better.

Isa. I'll dispose of her, and order every thing

As you would have it.

[*Exit.*]*Bir.* Grant me but life, good Heaven! and

give the means

To make this wondrous goodness some amends;

And let me then forget her, if I can!

O! she deserves of me much more than I

Can lose for her, though I again could venture

A father, and his fortune, for her love!

You wretched fathers, blind as fortune all!

Not to perceive, that such a woman's worth

Weighs down the portions you provide your sons.

What is your trash, what all your heaps of gold,

Compar'd to this, my heart-felt happiness?

What has she, in my absence, undergone?

I must not think of that; it drives me back

Upon myself, the fatal cause of all.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. I have obey'd your pleasure;
Every thing is ready for you.

Bir. I can want nothing here : possessing thee,
All my desires are carried to their aim
Of happiness : there's no room for a wish,
But to continue still this blessing to me :
I know the way, my love. I shall sleep sound.

Isa. Shall I attend you ?

Bir. By no means :
I've been so long a slave to others' pride,
To learn, at least, to wait upon myself ;
You'll make haste after—

Isa. I'll but say my prayers, and follow you—
[*Exit BIRON.*]

My prayers ! no, I must never pray again.
Prayers have their blessings, to reward our hopes ;
But I have nothing left to hope for more.
Oh, Biron, hadst thou come but one day sooner !

[*Weeping.*]
—What's to be done—for something must be done.

Two husbands ! yet not one ! married to both,
And yet a wife to neither ! Hold, my brain—
Ha ! a lucky thought

Works the right way to rid me of them all ;
All the reproaches, infamies, and scorns,
That every tongue and finger will find for me.
Let the just horror of my apprehensions
But keep me warm—no matter what can come.
'Tis but a blow—yet will I see him first—
Have a last look, to heighten my despair,
And then to rest for ever.—

BIRON meets her.

Bir. Despair and rest for ever ! Isabella !
These words are far from thy condition ;
And be they ever so. I heard thy voice,
And could not bear thy absence ; come, my love !
You have stay'd long, there's nothing, nothing
sure,

Now to despair of in succeeding fate.

Isa. I am contented to be miserable,
But not this way : I've been too long abus'd,
And can believe no more.

Let me sleep on, to be deceiv'd no more.

Bir. Look up, my love, I never did deceive
thee,

Nor ever can ; believe thyself, thy eyes
That first inflam'd and lit me to my love,
Those stars, that still must guide me to my joys.

Isa. And me to my undoing : I look round,
And find no path but leading to the grave.

Bir. I cannot understand thee.

Isa. If marriages
Are made in Heaven, they should be happier :
Why was I made this wretch ?

Bir. Has marriage made thee wretched ?

Isa. Miserable, beyond the reach of comfort.

Bir. Do I live to hear thee say so ?

Isa. Why, what did I say ?

Bir. That I have made thee miserable.

Isa. No : you are my only earthly happiness :
And my false tongue belied my honest heart,
If it said otherwise.

Bir. And yet you said,
Your marriage made you miserable.

Isa. I know not what I said :
I've said too much, unless I could speak all.

Bir. Thy words are wild ; my eyes, my ears,
my heart,

Were all so full of thee, so much employ'd
In wonder of thy charms, I could not find it ;
Now I perceive it plain—

Isa. You'll tell no body—

Bir. Thou art not well.

Isa. Indeed I am not ; I knew that before ;
But where's the remedy ?

Bir. Rest will relieve thy cares : come, come
no more ;

I'll banish sorrow from thee.

Isa. Banish first the cause.

Bir. Heaven knows how willingly.

Isa. You are the only cause.

Bir. Am I the cause ? the cause of thy mis-
fortunes ?

Isa. The fatal innocent cause of all my woes.

Bir. Is this my welcome home ! This the re-
ward

Of all my miseries, long labours, pains,
And pining wants of wretched slavery,

Which I've outliv'd, only in hopes of thee ?

Am I thus paid at last for deathless love,

And call'd the cause of thy misfortune now ?

Isa. Inquire no more ; 'twill be explain'd too
soon. [*Going off.*]

Bir. What ! canst thou leave me too ?

Isa. Pray let me go :

For both our sakes, permit me—

Bir. Rack me not with imaginations
Of things impossible—Thou canst not mean
What thou hast said—Yet something she must
mean.

—'Twas madness all—Compose thyself, my love ;

The fit is past ; all may be well again :

Let us to bed.

Isa. To bed ! You've rais'd the storm

Will sever us for ever.

The rugged hand of fate has got between
Our meeting hearts, and thrusts them from their
joys.

Bir. Nothing shall ever part us.

Isa. Oh ! there's a fatal story to be told ;
Be deaf to that, as Heaven has been to me !
When thou shalt hear how much thou hast been
wrong'd,

How wilt thou curse thy fond believing heart,

Tear me from the warm bosom of thy love,

And throw me like a poisonous weed away !

When I am dead, forgive and pity me. [*Exit.*]

Bir. What can she mean ? These doubtings
will distract me :

Some hidden mischief soon will burst to light ;

I cannot bear it—I must be satisfied—

'Tis she, my wife, must clear this darkness to me.

She shall—if the sad tale at last must come !

She is my fate, and best can speak my doom.

[*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter BIRON and NURSE.

Bir. I know enough : th' important question
Of life or death, fearful to be resolv'd,
Is clear'd to me : I see where it must end :
And need inquire no more—Pray let me have
Pen, ink, and paper ; I must write a while,
And then I'll try to rest—to rest for ever !

Exit NURSE.

Poor Isabella ! now I know the cause,
The cause of thy distress, and cannot wonder
That it has turn'd thy brain. If I look back
Upon thy loss, it will distract me too.
Oh, any curse but this might be remov'd !
But 'twas the rancorous malignity
Of all ill stars combin'd, of Heaven and fate—

Hold, hold my impious tongue—Alas! I rave:
 Why do I tax the stars, or Heaven, or fate?
 My father and my brother are my fates,
 That drive me to my ruin. They knew well
 I was alive. Too well they knew how dear
 My Isabella—Oh! my wife no more!
 How dear her love was to me—Yet they stood,
 With a malicious silent joy, stood by,
 And saw her give up all my happiness,
 The treasure of her beauty, to another;
 Stood by, and saw her married to another:
 Oh, cruel father, and unnatural brother!
 I have but to accuse you of my wrongs,
 And then to fall forgotten—Sleep or death
 Sits heavy on me, and benumbs my pains:
 Either is welcome; but the hand of death
 Works always sure, and best can close my eyes.

[Exit BIRON.]

Enter NURSE and SAMPSON.

Nurse. Here's strange things towards, Sampson: what will be the end of 'em, do you think?

Samp. Nay, marry, Nurse, I can't see so far; but the law, I believe, is on Biron, the first husband's side.

Nurse. Yes; no question, he has the law on his side.

Samp. For I have heard, the law says, a woman must be a widow, all out seven years, before she can marry again, according to law.

Nurse. Ay, so it does; and our lady has not been a widow altogether seven years.

Samp. Why, then, Nurse, mark my words, and say I told you so: the man must have his wife again, and all will do well.

Nurse. But if our master, Villeroi, comes back again—

Samp. Why, if he does, he is not the first man that has had his wife taken from him.

Nurse. For fear of the worst, will you go to the old Count, desire him to come as soon as he can; there may be mischief, and he is able to prevent it.

Samp. Now you say something; now I take you, Nurse; that will do well, indeed; mischief should be prevented; a little thing will make a quarrel, when there's a woman in the way. I'll about it instantly.—

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

BIRON asleep on a Couch.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Asleep so soon! Oh, happy, happy thou, Who thus can sleep! I never shall sleep more— If then to sleep be to be happy, he, Who sleeps the longest, is the happiest; Death is the longest sleep—Oh, have a care! Mischief will thrive apace. Never wake more.

[To BIRON.]

If ever thou didst love thy Isabel,
 To-morrow must be the doomsday to thy peace.
 —The sight of him disarms even death itself,
 And pleasure grows again
 With looking on him—Let me look my last—
 But is a look enough for parting love?
 Sure I may take a kiss—Where am I going?
 Help, help me, Villeroi!—Mountains and seas
 Divide your love, never to meet my shame.
 Hark!
 What noise was that! A knocking at the gate!
 It may be Villeroi—no matter who.

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Bir. Come, Isabella, come.—

Isa. Hark! I'm call'd!

Bir. You stay too long from me.

Isa. A man's voice! in my bed! How came he there?

Nothing but villany in this bad world.

Here's physic for your fever.

[Draws a dagger, and goes backward to the couch.]

If husbands go to heaven,

Where do they go that send them?—This to thy—

[Going to stab him, he rises, she shrieks.]

What do I see!

Bir. Isabella, arm'd!

Isa. Against my husband's life!

Bir. Thou didst not think it?

Isa. I cannot bear his sight; distraction, come, Possess me all.

Shake off my chains, and hasten to my aid—

Thou art my only cure—

[Running out.]

Bir. Poor Isabella, she's not in a condition

To give me any comfort, if she could;

Lost to herself—as quickly I shall be

To all the world—Horrors come fast around me;

My mind is overcast—the gath'ring clouds

Darken the prospect—I approach the brink,

And soon must leap the precipice! Oh! Heaven!

[Kneels.]

While yet my senses are my own, thus, kneeling,

Let me implore thy mercies on my wife:

Release her from her pangs; and if my reason,

O'erwhelm'd with miseries, sink before the tempest

Pardon those crimes despair may bring upon me.

[Rises]

Enter NURSE.

Nurse. Sir, there's somebody at the door must needs speak with you; he won't tell his name.

Bir. I come to him.

[Exit NURSE.]

'Tis Belford, I suppose; he little knows

Of what has happen'd here; I wanted him.

Must employ his friendship, and then—

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—The Street.

Enter CARLOS, PEDRO, and three Ruffians.

Car. A younger brother! I was one too long Not to prevent my being so again.

We must be sudden. Younger brothers are

But lawful bastards of another name,

Thrust out of their nobility of birth

And family, tainted into trades.

Shall I be one of them?—Bow, and retire,

To make more room for the unwieldy heir

To play the fool in? No—

But how shall I prevent it?—Biron comes

To take possession of my father's love—

'Would that were all! there is a birth-right too

That he will seize. Besides, if Biron lives,

He will unfold some practices, which I

Cannot well answer—therefore he shall die;

This night must be disposed of: I have means

That will not fail my purpose.—Here he comes.

Enter BIRON.

Bir. Ha! am I beset? I live but to revenge me.

[They surround him, fighting: VILLEROY

enters with two Servants; they rescue

him; CARLOS and his party fly.]

Vil. How are you, Sir? Mortally hurt, I fear

Take care and lead him in.

Bir. I thank you for this goodness, Sir; though 'tis
Bestow'd upon a very wretch; and death,
Though from a villain's hand, had been to me
An act of kindness, and the height of mercy—
But I thank you, Sir. [*He is led in.*]

SCENE IV.—A Chamber.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Murder my husband! Oh! I must not dare
To think of living on; my desperate hand,
In a mad rage, may offer it again;
Stab me any where but there. Here's room
In my own breast, to act the fury in, [enough
The proper scene of mischief.

[*Going to stab herself; VILLEROY runs in and prevents her, by taking the dagger from her.*]

Vil. Angels defend and save thee!
Attempt thy precious life!
Lay violent hands upon thy innocent self!

Isa. Swear I am innocent, and I'll believe you.
What would you have with me? Pray, let me go.
—Are you there, Sir? You are the very man
Have done all this.—You would have made
Me believe you married me; but the fool
Was wiser.

Vil. Dost thou not know me, love?
'Tis Villeroy, thy husband.

Isa. I have none; no husband— [*Weeping.*]
Never had but one, and he died at Candy.
Speak, did he not die there?

Vil. He did, my life.

Isa. But swear it, quickly swear,

Enter BIRON, bloody, leaning upon his sword.

Before that screaming evidence appears,
In bloody proof against me—

[*She, seeing BIRON, swoons; VILLEROY helps her.*]

Vil. Help there! Nurse, where are you?
Ha! I am distracted too! [*Sees BIRON.*]
Biron alive?

Bir. The only wretch on earth that must not live.

Vil. Biron or Villeroy must not, that's decreed.

Bir. You've sav'd me from the hands of murderers: [*plague—*]

'Would you had not, for life's my greatest
And then, of all the world, you are the man
I would not be oblig'd to—Isabella!
I came to fall before thee: I had died
Happy, not to have found your Villeroy here:
A long farewell, and a last parting kiss.

[*Kisses her.*]

Vil. A kiss! confusion! it must be your last.

Bir. I know it must—Here I give up that death

You but delay'd: since what is past has been
The work of fate, thus we must finish it.

Thrust home, be sure. [*Falls.*]

Vil. Alas! he faints! some help there.

Bir. 'Tis all in vain, my sorrows soon will end—

Oh, Villeroy! let a dying wretch intreat you
To take this letter to my father. My Isabella!
Couldst thou but hear me, my last words should
bless thee.

I cannot, though in death, bequeath her to thee.

[*To VILLEROY.*]

But could I hope my boy, my little one,
Might find a father in thee—Oh, I faint—
I can no more—Hear me, Heaven! Oh! support
My wife, my Isabella—Bless my child!
And take a poor unhappy— [*Dies.*]

Vil. He's gone—Let what will be the consequence,
I'll give it him. I have involv'd myself,
And would be clear'd; that must be thought on now.

My care of her is lost in wild amaze. [*Exit.*]

Isa. [*Recovering.*] Where have I been?—
Methinks, I stand upon

The brink of life,
But, still detain'd, I cannot pass the strait;
Denied to live, and yet I must not die:
Doom'd to come back, like a complaining ghost,
To my unburied body.—Here it lies—

[*Throws herself by BIRON's body.*]
My body, soul, and life! A little dust!
To cover our cold limbs in the dark grave—
There, there, we shall sleep safe and sound together.

Enter VILLEROY, with Servants.

Vil. Poor wretch! upon the ground! She's not herself!

Remove her from the body.

[*Servants going to raise her.*]

Isa. Never, never—
You have divorc'd us once, but shall no more—
Help, help me, Biron!—Ha!—bloody and dead!
Oh, murder! murder! you have done this deed—
Vengeance and murder!—bury us together—
Do any thing but part us.

Vil. Gently, gently raise her.
She must be forc'd away. [*They carry her off.*]

Isa. Oh! they tear me! Cut off my hands—
Let me leave something with him—
They'll clasp him fast—

Oh, cruel, cruel men! [*Nurse follows her.*]
Vil. Send for all helps: all, all that I am worth,
Shall cheaply buy her peace of mind again.

[*To a Servant.*]
The storm grows loud— [*Knocking at the door*]
I am prepar'd for it. Now let them in.

Enter COUNT BALDWIN, CARLOS, BELFORD,
EGMONT, with Servants.

C. Bald. O, do I live to this unhappy day!
Where is my wretched son?

Car. Where is my brother?

[*They see him, and gather about the body.*]

Vil. I hope, in heaven.

Car. Canst thou pity him!

Wish him in heaven, when thou hast done a deed
That must for ever cut thee from the hopes
Of ever coming there?

Vil. I do not blame you—

You have a brother's right to be concern'd
For his untimely death.

Car. Untimely death, indeed!

Vil. But yet you must not say I was the cause
Car. Not you the cause! Why, who should murder him?

We do not ask you to accuse yourself;
But I must say, that you have murder'd him;
And will say nothing else, till justice draws
Upon our side, at the loud call of blood,
To execute so foul a murderer.

Bel. Poor Biron! is this thy welcome home?

Egm. Rise, Sir; there is a comfort in revenge,
Which is left you. [To C. BALDWIN]

Car. Take the body hence.

[BIRON is carried off.]

C. Bald. What could provoke you?

Vil. Nothing could provoke me

To a base murder, which, I find, you think
Me guilty of. I know my innocence;
My servants too can witness that I drew
My sword in his defence, to rescue him.

Bel. Let the servants be called.

Egm. Let's hear what they can say.

Car. What they can say! why, what should
servants say?

They are his accomplices, his instruments,
And will not charge themselves.

No, no, he came

Unseasonably, (that was all his crime)

Unluckily, to interrupt your sport:

You were new married—married to his wife;

And therefore you, and she, and all of you,

(For all of you I must believe concern'd)

Combin'd to murder him out of the way.

Bel. If it be so—

Car. It can be only so.

Egm. Indeed it has a face—

Car. As black as hell.

C. Bald. The law will do me justice: send for
the magistrate.

Car. I'll go myself for him—

[Exit.]

Vil. These strong presumptions I must own,
Are violent against me; but I have [indeed,
A witness, and on this side heaven too.

—Open that door.

[Door opens; and PEDRO is brought forward by VILLEROY's Servants.

Here's one can tell you all.

Ped. All, all; save me but from the rack, I'll
confess all.

Vil. You and your accomplices design'd
To murder Biron?—Speak.

Ped. We did.

Vil. Did you engage upon your private wrongs,
Or were employ'd?

Ped. He never did us wrong.

Vil. You were set on then?

Ped. We were set on.

Vil. What do you know of me?

Ped. Nothing, nothing:

You sav'd his life, and have discover'd me.

Vil. He has acquitted me.

If you would be resolved of any thing,
He stands upon his answer.

Bel. Who set you on to act this horrid deed?

C. Bald. I'll know the villain; give me quick
his name,

Or I will tear it from thy bleeding heart.

Ped. I will confess.

C. Bald. Do then.

Ped. It was my master, Carlos, your own son.

C. Bald. Oh, monstrous! monstrous! most
unnatural!

Bel. Did he employ you to murder his own
brother?

Ped. He did; and he was with us when 'twas
done.

C. Bald. If this be true, this horrid, horrid tale,
It is but just upon me; Biron's wrongs
Must be reveng'd; and I the cause of all!

Egm. What will you do with him?

C. Bald. Take him apart—

I know too much. [Exit PEDRO, guarded.]

Vil. I had forgot—your wretched, dying son,
Gave me this letter for you.

[Gives it to C. BALDWIN.]

I dare deliver it. It speaks of me,
I pray to have it read.

C. Bald. You know the hand?

Bel. I know 'tis Biron's hand.

C. Bald. Pray read it.

[BELFORD reads the Letter

Sir,

*I find I am come only to lay my death
at your door. I am now going out of the world,
but cannot forgive you, nor my brother Carlos,
for not hindering my poor wife Isabella from
marrying with Villeroy, when you both knein,
from so many letters, that I was alive. BIRON.*

Vil. How! Did you know it then?

C. Bald. Amazement all!

Enter CARLOS, with Officers.

Oh, Carlos! are you come? Your brother here,

Here, in a wretched letter, lays his death

To you and me.—Have you done any thing

To hasten his sad end?

Car. Bless me, Sir, I do any thing! who, I!

C. Bald. He talks of letters that were sent
to us.

I never heard of any—Did you know

He was alive?

Car. Alive! Heaven knows, not I.

C. Bald. Had you news of him, from a report,
Or letter, never?

Car. Never, never, I.

Bel. That's strange, indeed: I know he often
writ [To C. BALDWIN.]

To lay before you the condition

Of his hard slavery: and more I know,

That he had several answers to his letters.

He said, they came from you, you are his brother?

Car. Never from me.

Bel. That will appear.

The letters, I believe, are still about him;

For some of them I saw but yesterday.

C. Bald. What did those answers say?

Bel. I cannot speak to the particulars;

But I remember well, the sum of them

Was much the same, and all agreed,

That there was nothing to be hop'd from you:

That 'twas your barbarous resolution

To let him perish there.—

C. Bald. Oh, Carlos! Carlos! hadst thou been
a brother—

Car. This is a plot upon me. I never knew

He was in slavery, or was alive,

Or heard of him, before this fatal hour.

Bel. There, Sir, I must confront you.

He sent you a letter, to my knowledge, last night;

And you sent him word you would come to him—

I fear you came too soon.

C. Bald. 'Tis all too plain.—

Bring out that wretch before him.

[PEDRO produced.]

Car. Ha! Pedro there!—Then I am caught,
indeed.

Bel. You start at sight of him;

He has confess'd the bloody deed.

Car. Well then, he has confess'd,

And I must answer it.

Bel. Is there no more?

Car. Why!—what would you have more? I
know the worst,

And I expect it.

C. Bald. Why hast thou done all this?

Car. Why, that which damns most men has ruin'd me;

The making of my fortune. Biron stood
Between me and your favour; while he liv'd,
I had not that; hardly was thought a son,
And not at all akin to your estate.
I could not bear a younger brother's lot,
To live depending upon courtesy—
Had you provided for me like a father,
I had been still a brother.

C. Bald. 'Tis too true;
I never lov'd thee as I should have done;
It was my sin, and I am punish'd for't.
Oh! never may distinction rise again
In families: let parents be the same
To all their children; common in their care,
And in their love of them.—I am unhappy,
For loving one too well.

Vil. You knew your brother liv'd; why did you take

Such pains to marry me to Isabella?

Car. I had my reasons for't.—

Vil. More than I thought you had.

Car. But one was this—

I knew my brother lov'd his wife so well,
That, if he ever should come home again,
He could not long outlive the loss of her.

Bel. If you relied on that, why did you kill him?

Car. To make all sure. Now you are answer'd all.

Where must I go? I'm tired of your questions.

C. Bald. I leave the judge to tell thee what thou art;

A father cannot find a name for thee.

Take him away— [*CARLOS is led off.*]

Grant me, sweet Heaven! the patience to go through

The torment of my cure—Here, here begins
The operation.—Alas! she's mad.

Enter ISABELLA, distracted; and her Child running from her; Women following her.

Vil. My Isabella, poor unhappy wretch!
What can I say to her?

Isa. Nothing, nothing; 'tis a babbling world—
I'll hear no more on't. When does the court sit?
I have a cause to try.

Will you not hear it? Then I must appeal
To the bright throne—Call down the heavens
To witness how you use me. [*powers*]

C. Bald. Pray, give her way.

Isa. What have you done with him? He was here but now;

I saw him here. Oh, Biron, Biron! where,
Where have they hid thee from me? He is gone—

But here's a little flaming cherubim—

Child. Oh, save me, save me!

[*Running to C. BALDWIN.*]

I fear she'll kill me.

C. Bald. She will not hurt thee.

Isa. Will nothing do? I did not hope to find
Justice on earth; 'tis not in heaven neither.

Biron has watch'd his opportunity—

Softly! he steals it from the sleeping gods,

And sends it thus— [*Stabs herself.*]

Now, now, I laugh at you, I defy you all,

You tyrant murderers!

Vil. Call, call for help—Oh, Heaven! this is too much.

C. Bald. Oh, thou most injur'd innocence! yet live,

Live but to witness for me to the world,
How much I do repent me of the wrongs,
Th' unnatural wrongs, which I have heap'd on thee,

And have pull'd down this judgment on us all.

Vil. Oh, speak, speak but a word of comfort to me!

C. Bald. If the most tender father's care and love

Of thee, and thy poor child, can make amends—
Oh, yet look up and live.

Isa. Where is that little wretch?

[*They raise her.*]

I die in peace, to leave him to your care.

I have a wretched mother's legacy,

A dying kiss—pray, let me give it him,

My blessing; that, that's all I have to leave thee.

Oh, may thy father's virtues live in thee,

And all his wrongs be buried in my grave!

[*Fies*]

Vil. She's gone, and all my joys of life with her. [*Exeunt.*]

THE QUAKER:

A COMIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY CHARLES DIBDIN.

REMARKS.

The characters and songs of this agreeable melange are natural, the fable is consistent, and the incidents well arranged. The music has been always admired.

Mr. Charles Dibdin was both author and composer of this, and a multitude of successful productions. Perhaps, no similar instance can be produced, wherein individual powers have so eminently contributed to the welfare and amusement of the British public; the army, the navy, the community in general, were highly indebted to this gentleman for those multifarious and excellent vocal compositions, calculated to promote love of our country and zeal to protect it. From the early age of seventeen, when our author composed his first opera, he was before the public in every branch of his profession: and for twenty years, he was the sole writer, composer, and performer of an entertainment, at his *Sans Souci*, which never failed in its influence over a delighted audience.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at DRURY LANE, 1777.		COVENT GARDEN, 1809.	DRURY LANE, 1813.
STEADY,.....	Mr. Bannister.....	Mr. Incedon.....	Mr. Bellamy.
EASY,.....	Mr. Wroughten.....	Mr. Davenport.....	Mr. Maddocks.
LUBIN,.....	Mr. Vernon.....	Mr. Taylor.....	Mr. Horne.
SOLOMON,.....	Mr. Parsons.....	Mr. Liston.....	Mr. Lovegrove.
CICELY,.....	Mrs. Love.....	Miss Leserve.....	Mrs. Maddocks.
FLORETTA,.....	Miss Walpole.....	Mrs. Liston.....	Miss Kelly.
GILLIAN,.....	Mrs. Wroughten....	Miss Bolton.....	Mrs. Mountain.

Countrymen, &c.

ACT I. SCENE I.

An irregular Hill, carried quite to the back of the Stage, so situated, that LUBIN, who comes from it during the symphony of the Air, is sometimes seen and sometimes concealed by the Trees: a Cottage on one side near the front.

AIR.—LUBIN.

'Midst thrushes, blackbirds, nightingales,
Whose songs are echo'd from the vales,
Trudging along through thick and thin,
Thank fate, at last I've reach'd the door.
How pleas'd they'll be to let me in!
I've walk'd amain,

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And yet, ne'er leaving her before.
Hast'ning to see my love again,
I thought each furlong half a score.
They're long, methinks—

DUET.—CICELY and LUBIN.

Cic. [*At the window.*] Who's there, I trow?
Lub. Look out, good mother, don't you know?
'Tis Lubin. How does Gillian do?
And Hodge, and Margery, and Sue?
Cic. Not a whit better, Sir, for you.
Lub. Why, what's the matter? Why d'ye frown?
Cic. You shall know all, when I come down.
Lub. What is the meaning of all this?
Oh, here she comes.

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Enter CICELY.

Cic. — Well, what's amiss?
Who are you, making all this stir?
If to come in you mean,
You may as well be jogging, Sir,
While yet your boots are green.
Lub. I'm perfectly like one astound,
I know not, I declare,
Whether I'm walking on the ground,
Or flying in the air.
This usage is enough to quite
Bereave one of one's wits.
Cic. Good-lack-a-day! and do you bite,
Pray, ever, in these fits?
Lub. But you are a jesting.
Cic. Think so still.
Lub. Where's Gillian?
Cic. She's not here:
She's gone abroad, Sir, she is ill;
She's dead, you cannot see her.
She knows you not, did never see
Your face in all her life:
In short, to-morrow she's to be
Another person's wife.
Lub. Another person's wife?
Cic. Another person's wife.

I tell you we know nothing at all about you.

Lub. You don't! Why then may happen my name 'en't Lubin Blackthorn, and 'tis likely I did not set out six months ago to see my father down in the west, and ask his consent to my marriage with your daughter Gillian; and I warrant you I did not stay till my father died, to take possession of his farm and every thing that belonged to him; nay, you'll want to make me believe presently that I 'en't come now to settle affairs, and take her back into the country with me.

Cic. Don't make a fool of yourself, young man: get back to your farm, and graze your oxen. You won't get a lamb out of our fold, I promise you.

Lub. Well, but in sober sadness, you 'en't serious, are you?

Cic. Serious! Why don't I tell you, Gillian's to be married to another to-morrow?

Lub. Where is she? I'll hear it from her own mouth.

Cic. I believe about this time she is trying on her wedding suit.

Lub. And who is this she is going to be married to? I'll see him, and know what he has done to deserve her more than I have.

Cic. Done to deserve her!

Lub. Yes, done to deserve her. You forget, I suppose, when I've carried her milk-pail for her, or taken her share of work in the hay-field, how you used to say, that I was a true lover indeed; but I don't desire to have any thing to say to you—you'll repent first.

Cic. Poor young man!

Lub. Nay, but don't you think you have used me very ill, now?

Cic. I thought you said you would not speak a word to me?

Lub. Nay, but dame Cicely—

Cic. Your servant. If you have a mind to be a bridegroom, we shall be glad to see you. [*Exit.*]

Lub. A very pretty spot of work this! And so I have come a hundred miles to make a fool of myself, and to be laughed at by the whole village.

I lock'd up all my treasure,
I journey'd many a mile,
And by my grief did measure
The passing time the while.

My business done and over,
I hasten'd back again,
Like an expecting lover,
To view it once again.

But this delight was stifled,
As it began to dawn,
I found the casket rifled,
And all my treasure gone.

Enter EASY.

Lub. Here comes her father. I don't suppose he had much hand in it; for so he had his afternoon's nap in quiet, he was always for letting things go as they would. [*Aside.*] So, Master Easy, you have consented, I find, to marry your daughter to another, after promising me over and over that nobody should have her but me.

Easy. My wife desired me.

Lub. Your mind is strangely altered, farmer Easy. But do me one piece of justice, however—tell me who is it you intend for your son-in-law?

Easy. 'Tis a rich one, I assure you.

Lub. And so you have broke your word, and all for the lucre of gain. And, pray now, don't you expect to be hooted out of the village?

Easy. I can't say I do.

Lub. Then they're a vile pack of wretches, and I'll get away from them as soon as I can. Go on, go on—let me know all.

Easy. You are in a passion, child, so I don't regard what you say; but I think I should have been out of my wits to have refused Mr. Steady, the rich quaker.

Lub. What, is it he then?

Easy. It is.

Lub. What, he that you are steward to; he that does so much good all about; and he that gives a portion every May-day to a damsel, as a reward for her sweetheart's ingenuity?

Easy. The same—you have seen the nature of it—that villager who can boast of having done the most ingenious thing, claims a right to demand a farm, containing sixty acres, rent-free for seven years, and a hundred pounds to stock it, together with whatever maiden he chooses, provided he gains her consent: and it is a good custom; for the young men, who formerly used to vie with one another in the feats of strength, now, as I may say, vie with one another in feats of understanding.

Lub. And so he is to marry your daughter?

Easy. Things are as I tell you. And for that purpose he has taken Gillian into his own house, had her taught music, and, to say the truth, she is a different thing to what she was when you saw her last.

Lub. She is, indeed! for, when I saw her last, she told me that all the riches in the world should never make her forget me.

Easy. But since she has changed her mind; and it so falls out that to-morrow is May-day: you would do well to study some ingenious thing, and get this portion for a more deserving damsel.

Lub. No, farmer Easy; her using me ill is no reason why I should do any thing to make me angry with myself; I swore to love her for ever, and I'll keep my word, though I see she has broke hers.

Easy. Do what you please; I must be gone.

Lub. Nay, but tell me one thing—did Gillian herself consent to this?

Easy. You'll know all in good time. [*Exit.*

Women are Wills-o'-the-wisp, 'tis plain,
The closer they seem still the more they retire;
They tease you, and jade you,
And round about lead you,
Without hopes of shelter,
Ding-dong, helter-skelter,
Through water and fire:

And when you believe every danger and pain
From your heart you may banish,
And you're near the possession of what you de-
That instant they vanish, [sire,
And the devil a bit can you catch them again.

By some they're not badly compar'd to the sea,
Which is calm and tempestuous within the
same hour;

Some say they are sirens, but take it from me,
They're a sweet race of angels, o'er man that
have power,

His person, his heart, nay his reason to seize,
And lead the poor creature wherever they please.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A Room in STEADY'S House, with
glass doors in the back.

Enter FLORETTA and GILLIAN.

Flor. Pooh, pooh, you must forget Lubin.

Gil. How can you talk so, Floretta? I won't
though, and none of them shall make me: they
all frightened me, by saying it was a bad thing
not to obey my parents, and so I consented to
marry this quaker-man; but there's a wide dif-
ference between marrying him and forgetting
Lubin.

Flor. And so you would be silly enough to
prefer being the homely wife of a clown, to rolling
about in your own coach, having your own ser-
vants to wait on you, and in short leading the life
of a fine lady?

Gil. Oh, Lord! I am sick with the thoughts of
being a fine lady! But what's the reason, Flo-
retta, that my friends want to make me so un-
happy? I am sure I'd do any thing rather than
vex them.

Flor. Why, you know that Mr. Steady's will
is a law to us all; and as he had desired your
friends to consent to this marriage, how could
they refuse?

Gil. Well, but you know he is a very good-
natured man; and I dare say if I was to tell him
how disagreeable he is, and that I can't bear the
sight of him, he'd let me marry Lubin.

Flor. Suppose you try.

Gil. So I will.

Flor. But how are you sure this Lubin you
are so fond of, is as fond of you?

Gil. I've tried a thousand ways.

A kernal from an apple core,
One day on either cheek I wore;
Lubin was plac'd on my right cheek,
That on my left did Hodge bespeak:
Hodge in an instant dropp'd to ground,
Sure token that his love's unsound;
But Lubin nothing could remove,
Sure token his is constant love.

Last May I sought to find a snail,
That might my lover's name reveal;
Which finding, home I quickly sped,
And on the earth the embers spread:
When, if my letters I can tell,
I saw it mark a curious L.
Oh, may this omen lucky prove,
For L's for Lubin, and for love.

Enter STEADY.

Steady. Verily, thou rejoicest me to find thee
singing, and in such spirits.

Gil. I was singing to be sure; but I cannot say
much about being in spirits.

Steady. No! Why do not thy approaching
nuptials lift up, and, as it were, exhilarate thee?
Flor. Lord, Sir! there's no persuading her;
nothing will get this Lubin out of her head.

Steady. And why, young maiden, wilt thou
not listen unto me? Have I not, for thy plea-
sure, given in to all the vanities in which youth
delights? I tell thee, that although my com-
plexion be saturnine, my manners are not austere;
why, therefore, likest thou not me?

Gil. I should like you very well if you were
my father, but I don't like you at all for a hus-
band.

Steady. And wherefore, I pray thee?

Gil. Oh, there are reasons enough.

Steady. Which be they?

Gil. Why, in the first place, I should want you
to change your clothes, and to have you as spruce
as I am.

Steady. Rather do thou change those thou
wearest unto the likeness of mine. The dove
regardeth not the gay plumage of the gaudy
mackaw; and the painted rainbow delighteth our
sight, but it vanishes away, yea, even as a vapour.
What more?

Gil. Why, in the next place, I should want
you to change your age, and have you as young
as I am.

Steady. She speaketh her mind, and I esteem
her. [*Aside.*] Therefore, why then, since it is
necessary unto my peace, that thou shouldst be-
come bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and
thou canst not fashion thy disposition unto the
likeness of mine, I will make it my study to double
thy pleasure, until that which is now gratitude,
shall at last become love.

Gil. Ah! you'll never see that day, so you had
better take no trouble about it.

Steady. Thou art mistaken; and when thou
beholdest the gambols to-morrow on the green—

Gil. I shall long most monstrously to make one
amongst them.

Steady. And so thou shalt. Goodness forbid
that I should withhold from thee those pleasures
that are innocent.

While the lads of the village shall merrily, ah!

Sound the tabors, I'll hand thee along,

And say unto thee, that verily, ah!

Thou and I will be first in the throng.

While the lads, &c.

Just then, when the swain who last year won the
dower,

With his mates shall the sports have begun,

When the gay voice of gladness resounds from
each bower,

And thou long'st in thy heart to make one.

While the lads, &c.

Those joys which are harmless, what mortal can blame?

'Tis my maxim that youth should be free;
And to prove that my words and my deeds are the same,

Believe me, thou'lt presently see.

While the lads, &c. [Exit.

Gil. What an unfortunate girl am I, Floretta!
Flor. What makes you think so?

Gil. Why, what would make you think so too, if you was in my place?

Flor. Well then, I own I do think so; and if you promise not to betray me, I'll stand your friend in this affair.

Gil. Will you? Oh, la! And what must be done, Floretta?

Flor. Why—but see yonder's a lover of mine: I'll make him of use to us.

Gil. Lord! what's Solomon your lover? I hate him with his proverbs and his formality. What the deuce do you intend to do with him?

Flor. What women generally do with their lovers, my dear, make a fool of him.—Mr. Solomon.

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. I listened, when lo! thou calledst me; and as the voice of the shepherd is delightful unto the sheep in his fold, so even is thy voice delightful unto me.

Flor. There's a lover for you! Why, the spirit moves you, Mr. Solomon, to say abundance of fine things.

Sol. According unto the proverb, love maketh a wit of the fool.

Flor. Yes, and a fool of the wit. But do you love me?

Sol. When thou seest one of our speakers dancing a jig at a country wake; when thou beholdest the brethren take off their beavers, and bow their bodies, or hearest them swear, then believe I love thee not.

Flor. A very pompous speech, upon my word.

Sol. An ill phrase may come from a good heart: but all men cannot do all things; one getteth an estate by what another getteth a halter; a foolish man—

Flor. Talks just as you do now. But will you do a little favour I have to beg of you?

Sol. Slaves obey the will of them who command them.

Flor. There is a young man who has been used ill—

Sol. 'Tis very like; kind words are easier met with than good actions; charity seldom goeth out of the house, while ill nature is always rambling abroad.

Flor. His name is Lubin; and I want you to inquire him out, and appoint him to meet me to-morrow morning, very early, in the row of elms at the bottom of the garden.

Sol. But shall I not in this offend my master?

Gil. Never mind him; suppose if he should find us out, and scold us a little—

Sol. True—high words break no bones. But, wilt thou give me a smile if I do this for thee?

Gil. Ay, that she shall, Mr. Solomon, and I'll give you another.

Sol. But, wilt thou appoint the spousal day?

Flor. You are so hasty, Mr. Solomon—

Sol. And with reason; a man may catch

cold while his coat is making. Shall it be to-morrow?

Flor. Must I promise?

Sol. Yea, and perform too; 'tis not plums only that maketh the pudding.

Flor. Well, well, we'll talk about it another time.

Sol. No time like the time present.

Flor. Nay now, but go, Solomon.

Sol. An egg to-day is better than a chicken to-morrow; many things happen between the cup and the lip.

Flor. Pray now, go.

Sol. Yea, I will. A bird in the hand is better than two in the bush. [Exit.

Gil. What a fright of a creature it is! How good you are, Floretta.

Flor. I could not bear to see you used in such a manner; and when I reflected on it, it went to my heart.

I said to myself, now, Floretta, says I, Supposing the case was your own:

Would you not be the first every method to try, To get rid of this canting old drone.

You well know you would, and you're worse than a Turk,

If one minute you hesitate whether In justice you should not your wits set to work, To bring Lubin and Gillian together.

To be certain, old Formal will frown and look blue,

Call you baggage, deceitful, bold face, [to, With all manner of names he can lay his tongue

And perhaps turn you out of your place. What of that? let him frown, let him spit all his

spite, Your heart still as light as a feather,

With truth shall assure you 'tis but doing right, To bring Gillian and Lubin together. [Exit.

Gil. I wonder what they plague us poor girls so for? Fathers and mothers, in this case, are comical folks; they are for ever telling one what they'll do to please one; and yet, when they take it into their heads, they make nothing of desiring us to be miserable as long as one lives. I wish I could be dutiful and happy too. May be, Floretta will bring matters about for me to marry Lubin with their consent: if she does, Lord, how I shall love her!

The captive linnet, newly taken,

Vainly strives and vents its rage;

With struggling pants, by hopes forsaken,

And flutters in its golden cage:

But, once releas'd, to freedom soaring

Quickly on some neighbouring tree,

It sings, as if its thanks 'twere pouring,

To bless the hand that set it free. [Exit

SCENE III. A Wall at the back of STEADY'S Garden.

Enter LUBIN.

Lub. 'Tis all true, 'tis all true; there's not a soul in the whole village that has not had something to say to me about it. Some pity me, others laugh at me, and all blame me for making myself uneasy. I know, if I did as I ought to do, I should get me back, and think no more concerning of them; but, instead of that, here am I come creeping to the garden-gate, to see if I can get a

sight of her. Who comes yonder? Oh, 'tis her father and the old quaker. I'll listen, and hear what they are talking about.

Enter STEADY and EASY.

Steady. Friend Easy, hie thee home to thy wife, tell her to hold herself ready for to-morrow; and say unto her, that when the youth who gains the customary dower, shall receive from me the hand of his bride, I will from thee receive the hand of thy daughter.

Lub. Why, I must be turned fool to hear all this, and not say a word.

Steady. Get thee gone, friend. [*Exit EASY.*]

Enter SOLOMON.

Where art thou going?

Sol. The truth is not to be spoken at all times. Into the village, about a little business for Mistress Floretta.

Steady. Verily, I do suspect thee to be in a plot against me. I will not have thee therefore to do this business: stay here by me.

FLORETTA and GILLIAN look over the Garden Wall.

Flor. I wonder whether Solomon is gone?

Gil. Oh, dear Floretta, as sure as you're alive, yonder's Lubin!

Flor. So there is. And see on the other side the old fellow talking to Solomon.

FINALE.

Steady. Regard the instructions, I say, Which I am now giving thee.

Sol. Yea.

Steady. Speed by times to friend Easy, and bid him take care, The minstrels, the feasting, and sports to prepare.

He must keep away Lubin too.

Lub. Can I bear this? [*scently?*]

Gil. Won't you call out to Solomon pre-

Flor. Yes.

Steady. And do thou attend with thy dobbins of beer,

And see that our neighbours and friends have good cheer;

Make the whole village welcome, and—

Flor. Solomon!

Steady. Stay.

Flor. You blockhead, come here.

Steady. Dost thou notice me?

Sol. Yea.

[*Here as often as SOLOMON tries to speak to FLORETTA and GILLIAN, he is prevented by STEADY.*]

Steady. Stand still then.

Flor. Friend Solomon!

Lub. Is it not she?

Flor. Mind the oaf.

Gil. Ha, ha, ha!

Lub. They're laughing at me.

Steady. See that garlands are ready.

Gil. & Flor. Ha, ha, ha!

Lub. Again.

Oh, Gillian! thou falsest of women,

since when

Have I merited this?

Steady. So that when on the lawn—

Lub. But I'll speak to her.

Gil. Look, look, he sees us!

Steady. Be gone.

But, hark thee—

Lub. Oh, Gillian! how wicked thou art! Thou hast fool'd me, betray'd me, and broke my poor heart. [*reigr,* But henceforth with safety in infamy For I never, no, never, will see you again. [*Exit*]

Gil. He's gone! Now, Lord, Lord! I'm so mad I could cry!

Flor. Here, Solomon!

Steady. Go where I told thee.

Sol. I fly. [*the way.*]

Steady. Well, do then, and tarry no where by

Flor. Quickly run after Lubin.

Gil. Do, Solomon.

Sol. Yea.

Steady. What, Gillian, art there?

Gil. Yes, I am!

Steady. Why dost sigh? [*eth so nigh.*]

When the hour of thy happiness wax-

Gil. Why, you know well enough.

Steady. Come, come, do not sorrow.

Gil. Go along! get away!

Steady. By yea and by nay, Thy mind shall be easy, believe me, to-morrow. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

Enter LUBIN.

Lub. What a plague have they brought me here for? I am in a rare humour—they'd better not provoke me—they would not have set eyes on me again, if it had not been that I want to see how she can look me in the face after all this.

Enter FLORETTA.

Flor. There he is.

Lub. She shall find that I am not to be persuaded into any thing.

Flor. We shall try.

Lub. And if her father and all of them were at this minute begging and praying me to marry her, they should see—

Flor. That you would consent to it with all your heart.

Lub. I'll just abuse her heartily; tell the quaker what an old fool he is; call her father and mother all to pieces for persuading her to marry him: then get me down to my farm, and be as careful to keep myself out of love, as I would to keep my wheat free from tares, a fox from my poultry, or the murrain from my cattle.

Flor. If I should make you alter your tone now!

Lub. I remember the time when 'twas who should love most: but what a fool am I to think of that now—No, no; she shall find I can forget her as easily as she can forget me.

Flor. That I firmly believe.

[*Taps his shoulder.*] How! Lubin sad! this is not what do ye sigh for? [*common;*]

Lub. A woman.

Flor. How fair is she who on your brow

Prints care?

Lub. Just such a toy as thou.

Flor. What has she done?

Lub. For ever lost my love. [*move?*]

Flor. That's sad, indeed! And can no prayers

Lub. None: 'tis too late, that folly is o'er;
My love's turn'd to hate, and I'll see
her no more.

The time has been when all our boast
Was who should love the other most;
How did I count without my host!
I thought her mine for ever.
But now I know her all deceit;
Will tell her so when'er we meet:
And was she sighing at my feet—

Flor. You would forgive her:

Lub. Never.

Flor. Then I may e'en go back, I find:
To serve you, Sir, I was inclin'd;
But to your own advantage blind,
'T would be a vain endeavour.
'Tis certain she does all she can,
And we had form'd a charming plan
To take her from the quaker-man.

Lub. Nay, pr'ythee, tell it.

Flor. Never.

Enter GILLIAN.

Here she is; now let her speak for herself.

Gil. Oh, Lubin! why would you not hear me
speak to you yesterday? I did not sleep a wink
all night for thinking on't.

Lub. Why, had I not reason, Gillian, to be
angry, when every one I met told me what a fool
you had made of me?

Gil. Why, what could I do? Floretta here,
knows that I have done nothing but abuse old
Steady from morning till night about it.

Flor. Come, come, don't let us dispute about
what's past, but make use of the present oppor-
tunity; we have not a moment to lose. Get you
to my master, make up a plausible story how ill
you have been used by an old fellow, who has run
away with your sweetheart; and tell him, that you
come to complain to him, as you know 'tis a cus-
tom for every body to do when they are used ill.

Gil. What a rare girl you are, Floretta. But
are you sure he won't know him?

Flor. No; I heard your father say he never
saw him in all his life.

Lub. That's lucky; leave me alone for a plausi-
ble story. *[Exit.]*

Enter SOLOMON.

Flor. Here comes my formal messenger. Well,
Solomon, where's your master?

Sol. In the great hall, waiting your approach.

Gil. I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Solo-
mon.

Sol. Words cost us nothing. If I have done
thee service, thank me by deeds.

Gil. Oh, what you want me to coax Floretta to
marry you?

Sol. I do.

Flor. Solomon has it very much in his power
to make me love him.

Sol. How, I pray thee?

Flor. Why, I have said a hundred times, that
I never would marry a man who had always a
proverb in his mouth.

Gil. So you have, Floretta; I have heard
you.

Sol. And thou wouldst have me leave off mine
—a word to the wise—thou shalt hear them no
more.

Flor. Why that sounded something like one.

Sol. It must be done by degrees. Word by
word great books are written.

Flor. Again!

Sol. I pray thee to pardon me; I shall soon con-
quer them: but Rome was not built in a day.

Flor. Oh! this making game of one.

Sol. I protest I meant no ill. I shall forget them,
I say. 'Tis a long lane that hath no turning.

Gil. Poor Solomon! He can't help it.

Flor. Have you any desire to marry me?

Sol. Ask the vintner if the wine be good.

Flor. Because I will have my way in this; and I
think it very hard you won't strive to oblige me.

Sol. I protest, I strive all I can; but custom is
second nature; and what is bred in the bone—
Verily, I had like to have displeased thee again.

Flor. Oh! what you found yourself out, did
you? Then there's some hopes of amendment.

Sol. It shall be amended. A thing resolved
upon is half done; and 'tis an old saying—but
what have I to do with old sayings.

Flor. Very true.

Sol. But I must attend on the green.

Flor. Well, go; and by the time I see you next,
take care that you get rid of all your musty old
sayings. I wonder how so sensible a man as you
could give in to such nonsense.

Sol. Evil communications corrupt good man-
ners; and a dog—Pies on the dog! Well, thou
shalt be obeyed, believe me—Pies on the dog!

[Exit.]

Gil. For goodness' sake, what excuse do you
intend to make to him when he has left off his
proverbs?

Flor. Why desire him to leave off something
else; and at the rate of one in a month, he won't
have parted with all his particularities in seven
years.

Gil. Well, how we do use men in love with us,
when we take it into our heads!

Flor. And yet they are fools to be used so by
us. But I am sure you will never use Lubin ill—
he will make you the happiest girl in the world.

AIR.*

The face which frequently displays
An index of the mind,
Dame Nature has her various ways
To stamp on human-kind.

Purs'd brows denote the purse-proud man,
Intent on some new scheme;
Clos'd eyes the politician,
For ever in a dream.

But features of ingenuous kind,
Which semblance bear of truth,
Display, methinks, in face and mind,
The portrait of this youth. *[Exeunt]*

SCENE II.—A Hall.

Enter STEADY and LUBIN.

Lub. Your servant, Sir.

Steady. Thine, friend.

Lub. I hope, Sir, you'll excuse my rudeness?

Steady. I don't perceive thee guilty of any.

Lub. May be not; but I made bold to ask, if
I might not trouble your worship about a little
affair concerning my being sadly used.

Steady. Speak freely.

Lub. Why, there's a covetous old hunk, an

* This air is omitted in representation.

like your worship, that, because he is rich, would fain take away a young woman that I was to be married to, without her consent or mine.

Steady. Has the old hunks, thou speakest of, the consent of her friends?

Lub. They have no consent to give, an please you.

Steady. And why, I pray thee?

Lub. Because, as I take it, if any body gives a thing, 'tis not theirs any longer: and they gave me their consent long ago.

Steady. Thou speakest the truth. But what wouldst thou have me do in this business?

Lub. Why please you, Sir, I have often heard it said of your worship, that there were three things you'd never suffer in our village if you could help it—The maidens to go without sweet-hearts—the industrious without reward—and the injured without redress—and to be sure it made me think, that if you were once acquainted with the rights of this affair, you would not suffer it to go on: "For," says I, "set in case it was his worship's own concern, how would he like to have the young woman taken away from him, that he is going to marry?"

Steady. There thou saidst it.

Lub. Why yes, I thought that was bringing the case home.

Steady. Well, attend on the lawn; make thy claim known, and if the parties concerned are present, deliver to them what I now write thee for that purpose. [*Goes to the Table.*]

Lub. This is better and better still.—How they'll all be laughed at.—He little thinks he is signing his consent to part with Gillian.

Steady. Do thou direct it; thou knowest to whom it is to be given.

Lub. Yes, I am sure the person will be upon the lawn.

Steady. And fear not to tell him thy mind.

Lub. I sha'n't be sparing of that, I warrant you.

Steady. Urge thy ill usage.

Lub. Never fear me.

Steady. And tell him, that by endeavouring to prevent thy happiness, he hath done thee an injury he can never repair; for that riches are given us to comfort and not to distress those beneath us.

Lub. With respect, Sir, to you be it spoken,
So well do I like your advice,
He shall have it, and by the same token,
I don't much intend to be nice.

There's something so comical in it,
I ne'er was so tickled by half;
And was I to die the next minute,
I verily believe I should laugh.

Affairs happen better and better,
Your worship; but mind the old put,
When first he looks over the letter,
I say, what a figure he'll cut. [*Exit.*]

Enter GILLIAN and FLORETTA.

Flor. Yonder he goes—I wonder how he succeeded.

Steady. Come, Gillian, I was anxious to see thee—the time draweth near, and the sports will shortly begin upon the lawn.

Gil. I long to be there as much as you do.

Steady. I doubt it not.—And when thou seest thyself the queen of such a set of happy mortals, I

know thou wilt consent that this shall be thy bridal-day.

Flor. Yes, Sir, if you'll consent to her having Lubin.

Gil. And I can tell you he's to be there.

Steady. Lubin, I'm sure, will not oppose what I decree.

Gil. I'm sure he won't part with me quietly.

Steady. Thou shalt see that he will not dare to murmur at my will and pleasure. But come, we are expected. Verily, I find myself exalted even to transport, in that I am going this day to make thee a bride.

In verity, damsel, thou surely will find,

That my manners are simple and plain;

That my words and my actions, my lips ar
my mind,

By my own good-will never are twain.

I love thee—umph!

Would move thee—umph!

Of love to be partaker.

Relent then—umph!

Consent then—umph!

And take thy upright quaker.

Though vain I am not, nor of fopp'ry possess'd,

Wouldst thou yield to be wedded to me,

Thou shouldst find, gentle damsel, a heart in
my breast

As joyful as joyful can be.

I love thee, &c.

[*Exit*]

Gil. Why, I don't see but that I am as bad off as ever, Floretta.

Flor. I don't know what to make of it myself but however, if the worst comes to the worst, you must downright give them the slip, and run away.

Gil. I'ood, and so I will! Lubin has got enough for us both.

Re-enter LUBIN.

Lub. Gillian, I had just watched the old quaker out, and slipped back to tell you that every thing goes well. I have got his consent, under his hand, to marry the young woman.

Gil. And does he know 'tis me?

Lub. Not a bit; but you know he never forfeits his word, so that we have him safe enough. But don't let us be seen together. I am going to the lawn—we shall have fine sport, I warrant you.

[*Exit.*]

Gil. Again I feel my bosom bound,

My heart sits lightly on its seat;

My cares are all in rapture drown'd,

In every pulse new pleasures beat.

Upon my troubled mind at last,

Kind fate has pour'd a friendly balm;

So, after dreadful perils past,

At length succeeds a smiling calm.

SCENE III.—A Lawn with a May-pole.

Enter STEADY, EASY, LUBIN, SOLOMON, GILLIAN, FLORETTA, CICELY, Country Lads and Lasses.

Steady. Friends and neighbours, it hath been my study, since I first came among you, to do whatever might procure me your love and esteem. I have instituted a custom, the salutary effects of which I view with great gladness; and each is well entitled to the reward he has received. I will now propose to you a question, to see which of you can make the most ready reply. What of all things in the world is the longest and the shortest, the swiftest and the slowest, the most precious, the

most neglected, and without which nothing can be done?

1 *Coun.* The earth.

Steady. No.

2 *Coun.* Ah, I knew you would not guess it, Light, an please your worship.

Steady. Thou art as much mistaken as he, friend.

Lub. 'Tis my belief, 'tis time. Nothing can be longer, because it will last for ever—nothing can be shorter, because 'tis gone in a moment—nothing can go slower than it does, when one's away from her one loves, and nothing swifter when one's with her. 'Tis an old saying—

Sol. Friend, I hate old sayings.

Lub. 'Tis an old saying, that 'tis as precious as gold; and yet we are always throwing it away. And, your worship, as a proof that nothing can be done without it, if the old gentleman we were a talking about to-day, had not had the opportunity of my absence, he could not have run away with a certain young damsel.

Steady. Thou hast solved my question aright, and art indeed an ingenious youth. If thou goest on as thou hast begun, I foresee that thou wilt win the dower. Give me now your several claims, sealed up as usual, and go on with the sports while I peruse them.

[A dance.]

Steady. Hast thou nothing to give, young man?

[To LUBIN.]

Lub. Why, yes, please your worship, I have.

Steady. This is addressed unto me! Let me view the contents—How! my own hand! Thou expectest, I find, to receive this damsel for thy wife; and thy plot, which thou didst so artfully carry on, was contrived to make my neighbours laugh at me.

Lub. No, with respect to your worship, 'twas to keep them from laughing at you.

Steady. How is this?

Lub. Why, you know, you advised me to tell the old gentleman a piece of my mind.

Steady. Thou shalt see the revenge I will take upon thee for this. I will comply with the contents of this paper to the utmost. Here, read this aloud.

[To a COUNTRYMAN.]

Coun. [Reads.] "If the youth, Lubin,"—

Steady. Thou seest I knew thee then.

Lub. I am afraid I have been too cunning for myself.

Steady. You see, neighbours, how I am treated; and I request of you to be witness how much it behoveth us to resent such injuries. Go on.

Coun. [Reads.] "If the youth, Lubin, will faithfully love and cherish the maiden, called Gillian, and make her a good help-mate, I do freely give my consent to her becoming his wife, and request her friends to do the same."

Lub. How is this?

Steady. This is my revenge. By thy ingenuity thou hast won the dower; and by thy truth and integrity, my friendship.

Lub. Was ever the like?

Gil. I never could abide you before, but now I shall love you as long as I live.

Steady. Verily, my heart warmeth unto you both; your innocence and love are equally respectable. And would the voluptuous man taste a more exquisite sensation than the gratifying his passions, let him prevail upon himself to do a benevolent action.

Let nimble dancers beat the ground;

Let tabor, flagelet, and fife,

Be heard from every bower;

Let the can go round.

What's the health?—Long life

To the donor of the dower. [Exeunt.]

ROSINA:

AN OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY MRS. BROOKE.

REMARKS.

This pleasing and well-arranged petite piece has been a constant favourite since its original performance at Covent Garden in 1783.—The dialogue is natural and easy, and the morality unexceptionable; the airs, compiled by Shield, are happily adapted; and a more agreeable or effective afterpiece can scarcely be named in the varied productions of our modern writers.

Mrs. Brooke, the amiable authoress, has thus explained her intentions, in her preface to the first edition:—

“The fable of this piece taken from the Book of Ruth, (a fable equally simple, moral, and interesting,) has already furnished a subject for the beautiful episode of Palemon and Lavinia, in Thomson’s Seasons, and a pleasing opera of Mons. Favart: of both I have availed myself as far as the difference of my plan would allow; but as we are not, however extraordinary it may appear, so easily satisfied with mere sentiments as our more sprightly neighbours, the French, I found it necessary to diversify the story, by adding the comic characters of William and Phebe, which I hoped might at once relieve and heighten the sentimental cast of the other personages of the drama ”

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As acted at COVENT GARDEN, 1783.

COVENT GARDEN, 1814.

MR. BELVILLE.....	Mr. Bannister.....	Mr. Incedon.
CAPTAIN BELVILLE.....	Mr. Cubit.....	Mr. Slader.
WILLIAM.....	Mrs. Kennedy.....	Mr. Durusset.
RUSTIC.....	Mr. Davis.....	Mr. Treby.
1ST IRISHMAN.....	Mr. Mahon.....	Mr. Hamerton.
2D IRISHMAN.....	Mr. Egan.....	Mr. Williams.
ROSINA.....	Mrs. Bannister.....	Miss Matthews.
DORCAS.....	Mrs. Pitt.....	Mrs. Emery.
PHEBE.....	Mrs. Martyr.....	Miss Stephens.

Reapers, Gleaners, Servants, &c.

SCENE.—A Village in the North.

The scene opens and discovers a rural prospect: on the left side a little hill with trees at the top; a spring of water rushes from the side, and falls into a natural basin below: on the right side a cottage, at the door of which is a bench of stone. At a distance a chain of mountains. The manor-house in view. A field of corn fills up the scene. In the first act the sky clears by degrees, the morning vapour disperses, the sun rises, and at the end of the act is above the horizon: at the beginning of the second he is past the height, and declines till the end of the day. This progressive motion should be made imperceptibly, but its effect should be visible through the two acts.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

After the trio, the sun is seen to rise: the door of the cottage is open, a lamp burning just within;

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DORCAS, seated on a bench, is spinning; ROSINA and PHEBE, just within the door, are measuring corn; WILLIAM comes from the top of the stage; they sing the following trio.

When the rosy morn, appearing,
Paints with gold the verdant lawn,
Bees, on banks of thyme disporting,
Sip the sweets, and hail the dawn.

Warbling birds the day proclaiming,
Carol sweet the lively strain;
They forsake their leafy dwelling,
To secure the golden grain.

See, content, the humble gleaner,
Take the scatter'd ears that 'all'
Nature, all her children viewing,
Kindly bounteous, cares for all.

[WILLIAM retires.

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Ros. See! my dear Dorcas, what we gleaned yesterday in Mr. Belville's field!

[*Coming forward, and showing the corn at the door.*]

Dor. Lord love thee! but take care of thyself; thou art but tender.

Ros. Indeed it does not hurt me. Shall I put out the lamp?

Dor. Do, dear; the poor must be sparing.

[*ROSINA going to put out the lamp, DORCAS looks after her, and sighs; she returns hastily.*]

Ros. Why do you sigh, Dorcas?

Dor. I cannot bear it: it's nothing to Phebe and me, but thou wast not born to labour.

[*Rising, and pushing away the wheel.*]

Ros. Why should I repine? Heaven, which deprived me of my parents, and my fortune, left me health, content, and innocence. Nor is it certain that riches lead to happiness. Do you think the nightingale sings the sweeter for being in a gilded cage?

Dor. Sweeter, I'll maintain it, than the poor little linnet that thou pick'dst up half-starved under the hedge yesterday, after its mother had been shot, and brought'st to life in thy bosom. Let me speak to his honour, he's main kind to the poor.

Ros. Not for the world, Dorcas; I want nothing; you have been a mother to me.

Dor. Would I could! would I could! I have worked hard and earn'd money in my time: but now I am old and feeble, and am pushed about by every body.—More's the pity, I say: it was not so in my young time; but the world grows wicked every day.

Ros. Your age, my good Dorcas, requires rest; go into the cottage, whilst Phebe and I join the gleaners, who are assembling from every part of the village.

Dor. Many a time have I carried thy dear mother, an infant, in these arms; little did I think a child of hers would live to share my poor pittance.—But I wo' not grieve thee.

[*DORCAS enters the Cottage, looking back affectionately at ROSINA.*]

Phe. What makes you so melancholy, Rosina? Mayhap it's because you have not a sweetheart? But you are so proud, you won't let our young men come a near you. You may live to repent being so scornful.

When William at eve meets me down at the stile,

How sweet is the nightingale's song;

Of the day I forget all the labour and toil,

Whilst the moon plays yon branches among.

By her beams, without blushing, I hear him complain,

And believe every word of his song;

You know not how sweet 'tis to love the dear swain,

Whilst the moon plays yon branches among.

[*During the last stanza, WILLIAM appears at the end of the scene, and makes signs to PHEBE; who, when it is finished, steals softly to him, and they disappear.*]

Ros. How small a part of my evils is poverty! And how little does Phebe know the heart she thinks insensible! the heart which nourishes a hopeless passion. I blessed, like others, Belville's gentle virtues, and knew not that 'twas love. Unhappy, lost Rosina!

The morn returns in saffron dress'd,
But not to sad Rosina rest.

The blushing morn awakes the strain,

Awakes the tuneful choir;

But sad Rosina ne'er again

Shall strike the sprightly lyre.

Rust. [*Without.*] To work, my hearts of oak, to work; here the sun is half an hour high, and not a stroke struck yet.

Enter RUSTIC, singing, followed by Reapers.

Rust. See, ye swains, yon streaks of red,
Call you from your slothful bed;
Late you till'd the fruitful soil;
See! where harvest crowns your toil.

Cho. Late you till'd the fruitful soil;
See! where harvest crowns your toil.

Rust. As we reap the golden corn,
Laughing Plenty fills her horn.
What would gilded pomp avail
Should the peasant's labour fail?

Cho. What would gilded pomp avail
Should the peasant's labour fail?

Rust. Ripen'd fields your cares repay,
Sons of labour, haste away;
Bending, see the waving grain
Crown the year, and cheer the swain.

Cho. Bending, see the waving grain
Crown the year, and cheer the swain.

Rust. Hist! there's his honour. Where are all the lazy Irishmen I hired yesterday at market?

Enter BELVILLE, followed by two IRISHMEN and Servants.

1 Irish. Is it us he's talking of, Paddy? Then the devil may thank him for his good commendations.

Bel. You are too severe, Rustic; the poor fellows came three miles this morning; therefore I made them stop at the manor-house to take a little refreshment.

1 Irish. Bless your sweet face, my jewel, and all those who take your part. Bad luck to myself, if I would not, with all the veins of my heart, split the dew before your feet in a morning.

[*To BELVILLE.*]
Rust. If I do speak a little cross, it is for your honour's good.

[*The Reapers cut the corn, and make it into sheaves. ROSINA follows, and gleanes.*]

Rust. [*Seeing ROSINA.*] What a dickens does this girl do here? Keep back; wait till the reapers are off the field; do like the other gleaners.

Ros. [*Timidly.*] If I have done wrong, Sir, I will put what I have gleaned down again.

[*She lets fall the ears she had gleaned.*]
Bel. How can you be so unfeeling, Rustic? She is lovely, virtuous, and in want. Let fall some ears, that she may glean the more.

Rust. Your honour is too good by half.

Bel. No more: gather up the corn she has let fall. Do as I command you.

Rust. There, take the whole field, since his honour chooses it.

[*Putting the corn into her apron.*]

Ros. I will not abuse his goodness.

[*Retires, gleanings.*]

2 Irish. Upon my soul now, his honour's no

churl of the wheat, whate'er he may be of the barley.

Bel. [*Looking after ROSINA.*] What bewitching softness! There is a blushing, bashful gentleness, an almost infantine innocence, in that lovely countenance, which it is impossible to behold without emotion! She turns this way: what bloom on that cheek! 'Tis the blushing down of the peach.

Her mouth, which a smile,
Devoid of all guile,
Half opens to view,
Is the bud of the rose,
In the morning that blows,
Impearl'd with the dew.
More fragrant her breath
Than the flower-scented heath
At the dawning of day;
The hawthorn in bloom,
The lily's perfume,
Or the blossoms of May.

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE in a riding dress.

Capt. B. Good morrow, brother; you are early abroad.

Bel. My dear Charles, I am happy to see you. True, I find, to the first of September.

Capt. B. I meant to have been here last night, but one of my wheels broke, and I was obliged to sleep at a village six miles distant, where I left my chaise, and took a boat down the river at day-break. But your corn is not off the ground.

Bel. You know our harvest is late in the north; but you will find all the lands cleared on the other side the mountain.

Capt. B. And pray, brother, how are the partridges this season?

Bel. There are twenty covies within sight of my house, and the dogs are in fine order.

Capt. B. The gamekeeper is this moment leading them round. I am fired at the sight.

By dawn to the downs we repair,
With bosoms right jocund and gay,
And gam more than pheasant or hare—
Gain health by the sports of the day.

Mark! mark! to the right hand, prepare—
See Diana!—she points!—see, they rise—
See, they float on the bosom of air!

Fire away! whilst loud echo replies
Fire away!

Hark! the volley resounds to the skies!
Whilst echo in thunder replies!

In thunder replies,

And resounds to the skies,
Fire away! Fire away!

But where is my little rustic charmer? O! there she is: I am transported. [*Aside.*] Pray, brother, is not that the little girl, whose dawning beauty we admired so much last year?

Bel. It is, and more lovely than ever. I shall dine in the field with my reapers to-day, brother: will you share our rural repast, or have a dinner prepared at the manor-house?

Capt. B. By no means: pray let me be of your party: your plan is an admirable one, especially if your girls are handsome. I'll walk round the field, and meet you at dinner time.

[*Exit* BELVILLE and RUSTIC. CAPTAIN BELVILLE goes up to ROSINA, gleanes a few

ears, and presents them to her; she refuses them, and runs out; he follows her.

Enter WILLIAM, speaking at the Side-scene.

Will. Lead the dogs back, James; the captain won't shoot to-day. [*Seeing RUSTIC and PHEBE behind.*] Indeed, so close! I don't half like it.

Enter RUSTIC and PHEBE.

Rust. That's a good girl! do as I bid you, and you sha'n't want encouragement.

[*He goes up to the Reapers, and WILLIAM comes forward.*]

Will. O no, I dare say she won't. So, Mrs. Phebe!

Phe. And so, Mr. William, if you go to that?

Will. A new sweetheart, I'll be sworn; and a pretty comely lad he is; but he's rich, and that's enough to win a woman.

Phe. I don't deserve this of you, William; but I'm rightly sarved for being such an easy fool. You think, mayhap, I'm at my last prayers; but you may find yourself mistaken.

Will. You do right to cry out first; you think belike that I did not see you take that posy from Harry.

Phe. And you, belike, that I did not catch you tying up one, of corn-flowers and wild roses, for the miller's maid; but I'll be fooled no longer; I have done with you, Mr. William.

Will. I sha'n't break my heart, Mrs. Phebe. The miller's maid loves the ground I walk on.

Will. I've kiss'd and I've prattled to fifty fair maids,
And chang'd them as oft, d'y'e see;
But of all the fair maidens that dance on the green,
The maid of the mill for me.

Phe. There's fifty young men have told me fine tales,
And called me the fairest she;
But of all the gay wrestlers that sport on the green,
Young Harry's the lad for me.

Will. Her eyes are as black as the sloe in the hedge,
Her face like the blossoms in May.
Her teeth are as white as the new-shorn flock.
Her breath like the new-made hay.

Phe. He's tall and he's straight as the poplar tree,
His cheeks are as fresh as the rose;
He looks like a squire of high degree
When dress'd in his Sunday clothes.

Will. I've kiss'd and I've prattled, &c.

Phe. There's fifty young men, &c.
[*Exit* on different sides of the stage.

ROSINA runs across the Stage; CAPTAIN BELVILLE following her.

Capt. B. Stay and hear me, Rosina. Why will you fatigue yourself thus? Only homely girls are born to work.—Your obstinacy is vain, you shall hear me.

Ros. Why do you stop me, Sir? My time is precious. When the gleaming season is over, will you make up my loss?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. Will it be any advantage to you to make me lose my day's work?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. Would it give you pleasure to see me pass all my days in idleness?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. We differ greatly then, Sir. I only wish for so much leisure as makes me return to my work with fresh spirit. We labour all the week, 'tis true; but then how sweet is our rest on Sunday.

Whilst with village maids I stray,
Sweetly wears the joyous day;
Cheerful glows my artless breast,
Mild content the constant guest.

Capt. B. Mere prejudice, child; you will know better. I pity you, and will make your fortune.

Ros. Let me call my mother, Sir; I am young, and can support myself by my labour; but she is old and helpless, and your charity will be well bestowed.—Please to transfer to her the bounty you intended for me.

Capt. B. Why—as to that—

Ros. I understand you, Sir; your compassion does not extend to old women.

Capt. B. Really—I believe not.

Enter DORCAS.

Ros. You are just come in time, mother. I have met with a generous gentleman, whose charity, inclined him to succour youth.

Dor. 'Tis very kind.—And old age—

Ros. He'll tell you that himself.

[*Goes into the Cottage.*]

Dor. I thought so.—Sure, sure, 'tis no sin to be old.

Capt. B. You must not judge of me by others, honest Dorcas.—I am sorry for your misfortunes, and wish to serve you.

Dor. And to what, your honour, may I owe this kindness?

Capt. B. You have a charming daughter—

Dor. I thought as much. A vile, wicked man!

[*Aside.*]

Capt. B. Beauty like hers might find a thousand resources in London; the moment she appears there, she will turn every head.

Dor. And is your honour sure her own won't turn at the same time?

Capt. B. She shall live in affluence, and take care of you too, Dorcas.

Dor. I guess your honour's meaning; but you are mistaken, Sir. If I must be a trouble to the dear child, I had rather owe my bread to her labour than to her shame.

[*Goes into the Cottage, and shuts the door.*]

Capt. B. These women astonish me; but I won't give it up so.

Enter RUSTIC, crossing the stage.

A word with you, Rustic.

Rust. I am in a great hurry, your honour; I am going to hasten dinner.

Capt. B. I sha'n't keep you a minute. Take these five guineas.

Rust. For whom, Sir?

Capt. B. For yourself. And this purse.

Rust. For whom, Sir?

Capt. B. For Rosina; they say she is in distress, and wants assistance.

Rust. What pleasure it gives me to see you so charitable! You are just like your brother.

Capt. B. Prodigiously.

Rust. But why give me money, Sir.

Capt. B. Only to—tell Rosina there is a person who is very much interested in her happiness.

Rust. How much you will please his honour by this. He takes mightily to Rosina, and prefers her to all the young women in the parish.

Capt. B. Prefers her! Ah! you sly rogue!

[*Laying his hand on RUSTIC's shoulder.*]

Rust. Your honour's a wag; but I'm sure I meant no harm.

Capt. B. Give her the money, and tell her she shall never want a friend; but not a word to my brother.

Rust. All's safe, your honour. [*Exit CAPTAIN BELVILLE.*] I don't vastly like this business. At the captain's age, this violent charity is a little dubious. I am his honour's servant, and it's my duty to hide nothing from him. I'll go seek his honour; O, here he comes.

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. Well, Rustic, have you any intelligence to communicate?

Rust. A vast deal, Sir. Your brother begins to make good use of his money; he has given me these five guineas for myself, and this purse for Rosina.

Bel. For Rosina! 'Tis plain he loves her. [*Aside.*] Obey him exactly; but, as distress renders the mind haughty, and Rosina's situation requires the utmost delicacy, contrive to execute your commission in such a manner that she may not even suspect from whence the money comes.

Rust. I understand your honour.

Bel. Have you gained any intelligence in respect to Rosina?

Rust. I endeavoured to get all I could from the old woman's grand-daughter; but all she knew was, that she was no kin to Dorcas, and that she had had a good bringing-up; but here are the labourers.

Enter DORCAS, ROSINA, and PHEBE.

Bel. But I don't see Rosina. Dorcas, you must come too, and Phebe.

Dor. We can't deny your honour.

Ros. I am ashamed; but you command, Sir.

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE, followed by the Reapers.

Bel. By this fountain's flowery side,
Dress'd in nature's blooming pride,
Where the poplar trembles high,
And the bees in clusters fly;
Whilst the herdsman on the hill
Listens to the falling rill:
Pride and cruel scorn, away!
Let us share the festive day.

Ros. & Bel. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
This is Nature's holiday.
Simple Nature ye who prize,
Life's fantastic forms despise.

Cho. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
This is Nature's holiday.

Capt. B. Blushing Bell, with downcast eyes,
Sighs, and knows not why she sighs—
Tom is near her—we shall know—
How he eyes her—Is't not so?

Cho. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
This is Nature's holiday.

Will. He is fond, and she is shy;
He would kiss her;—fie!—oh, fie!
Mind thy sickle, let her be;
By and by she 'll follow thee.

Cho. Busy censors, hence away;
This is Nature's holiday.

Rust. & Dor. Now we'll quaff the nut-brown ale,
Then we'll tell the sportive tale;
All is jest, and all is glee,
All is youthful jollity.

Cho. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
This is Nature's holiday.

Phe. { Lads and lasses all advance,
Irish Girl. { Carol blithe, and form the dance;
I Irish. { Trip it lightly while you may,
 { This is Nature's holiday.

Cho. Trip it lightly while you may,
This is Nature's holiday.

[*All rise; the Dancers come down the stage through the sheaves of corn, which are removed; the Dance begins and finishes the Act.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Same.

Enter RUSTIC.

Rust. This purse is the plague of my life; I hate money when it is not my own. I'll e'en put in the five guineas he gave me for myself: I don't want it, and they do. They certainly must find it there. But I hear the cottage door open.

[Retires a little.]

Enter DORCAS and ROSINA from the Cottage.
DORCAS with a great basket on her arm, filled with skeins of thread.

Dor. I am just going, Rosina, to carry this thread to the weaver's.

Ros. This basket is too heavy for you: pray let me carry it.

[*Takes the basket from DORCAS, and sets it down on the bench.*]

Dor. No, no. [*Peevishly.*]

Ros. If you love me, only take half; this evening, or to-morrow morning, I will carry the rest. — [*Takes part of the skeins out of the basket and lays them on the bench, looking affectionately on DORCAS.*] There, be angry with me, if you please.

Dor. No, my sweet lamb, I am not angry; but beware of men.

Ros. Have you any doubts of my conduct, Dorcas.

Dor. Indeed I have not, love, and yet I am uneasy.

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE, unperceived.

Go back to the reapers, whilst I carry this thread.

Ros. I'll go this moment.

Dor. But as I walk but slow, and 'tis a good way, you may chance to be at home before me; so take the key.

Ros. I will.

Capt. B. [*Aside, while DORCAS feels in her pockets for the key.*] Rosina to be at home before Dorcas! How lucky! I'll slip into the house, and wait her coming, if 'tis till midnight.

[*He goes unperceived by them into the Cottage.*]

Dor. Let nobody go into the house.

Ros. I'll take care; but first I'll double-lock the door.

[*While she is locking the door, DORCAS, going to take up the basket, sees the purse.*]

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Dor. Good lack! What is here! a purse, as I live!

Ros. How!

Dor. Come, and see; 'tis a purse indeed.

Ros. Heavens! 'tis full of gold.

Dor. We must put up a bill at the church-gate, and restore it to the owner. The best way is to carry the money to his honour, and get him to keep it till the owner is found. You shall go with it, love.

Ros. Pray excuse me, I always blush so.

Dor. 'Tis nothing but childishness; but his honour will like your bashfulness better than too much courage. [*Exit.*]

Ros. I cannot support his presence—my embarrassment—my confusion—a stronger sensation than that of gratitude agitates my heart.—Yet hope in my situation were madness.

Sweet transports, gentle wishes, go!

In vain his charms have gain'd my heart;

Since fortune, still to love a foe,

And cruel, duty bid us part.

Ah! why does duty claim the mind,

And part those souls which love has join'd?

Enter WILLIAM.

Pray, William, do you know of any body that has lost a purse?

Will. I know nothing about it.

Ros. Dorcas, however, has found one.

Will. So much the better for she.

Ros. You will oblige me very much if you will carry it to Mr. Belville, and beg him to keep it till the owner is found.

Will. Since you desire it, I'll go; it sha'n't be the lighter for my carrying.

Ros. That I am sure of, William. [*Exit.*]

Enter PHEBE.

Phe. There's William; but I'll pretend not to see him.

Henry cull'd the floweret's bloom,

Marian lov'd the soft perfume;

Had playful kiss'd, but prudence near

Whisper'd timely in her ear,

Simple Marian, ah! beware;

Touch them not, for love is there.

[*Throws away her nosegay. While she is singing, WILLIAM turns, looks at her, whistles, and plays with his stick.*]

Will. That's Harry's posy; the slut likes me still.

Phe. That's a copy of his countenance, I'm sartin; he can no more help following me nor he can be hang'd.

[*Aside; WILLIAM crosses again, singing.*]

Of all the fair maidens that dance on the green,

The maid of the mill for me.

Phe. I'm ready to choke wi' madness; but I'll not speak first, an I die for't.

[*WILLIAM sings, throwing up his stick and catching it.*]

Will. Her eyes are as black as the sloe in the hedge,

Her face like the blossoms in May.

Phe. I can't bear it no longer—you vile, ungrateful, perfidious—But it's no matter—I can't think what I could see in you—Harry loves me, and is a thousand times more handsomer.

[*Sings, sobbing at every word.*]

Of all the gay wrestlers that sport on the green,
Young Harry's the lad for me.

Will. He's yonder a reaping, shall I call him?

[*Offers to go.*]

Phe. My grandmother leads me the life of a dog; and it's all along of you.

Will. Well, then she'll be better tempered now.

Phe. I did not value her scolding a brass farthing, when I thought as how you were true to me.

Will. Wasn't I true to you? Look in my face, and say that.

When bidden to the wake or fair,
The joy of each free-hearted swain,
Till Phebe promis'd to be there,
I loiter'd, last of all the train.

If chance some fairing caught her eye,
The riband gay, or silken glove,
With eager haste I ran to buy;
For what is gold compar'd to love?

My posy on her bosom plac'd,
Could Harry's sweeter scents exhale?
Her auburn locks my riband grac'd,
And flutter'd in the wanton gale.

With scorn she hears me now complain,
Nor can my rustic presents move:
Her heart prefers a richer swain,
And gold, alas! has banish'd love.

[*Coming back.*] Let's part friendly, howsomever.
Bye, Phebe: I shall always wish you well.

Phe. Bye, William.

[*Cries, wiping her eyes with her apron.*]

Will. My heart begins to melt a little. [*Aside.*]
I lov'd you very well once, Phebe; but you are grown so cross, and have such vagaries—

Phe. I'm sure I never had no vagaries with you, William. But go; mayhap Kate may be angry.

Will. And who cares for she? I never minded her anger, nor her coaxing neither, till you were cross to me.

Phe. [*Holding up her hands.*] O the father! I cross to you, William?

Will. Did not you tell me this very morning, as how you had done wi' me?

Phe. One word's as good as a thousand. Do you love me, William?

Will. Do I love thee? Do I love dancing on the green better than thrashing in the barn? Do I love a wake, or a harvest-home?

Phe. Then I'll never speak to Harry again the longest day I have to live.

Will. I'll turn my back o' the miller's maid the first time I meet her.

Phe. Will you indeed, and indeed?

Will. Marry will I: and more nor that, I'll go speak to the parson this moment—I'm happier—zooks, I'm happier nor a lord or a 'squire of five hundred a year.

Phe. In gaudy courts, with aching hearts,
The great at fortune rail:
The hills may higher honours claim,
But peace is in the vale.

Will. See high-born dames, in rooms of state,
With midnight revels pale;
No youth admires their fading charms,
For beauty's in the vale.

Both. Amid the shades the virgin's sighs
Add fragrance to the gale:

So they that will may take the hill,
Since love is in the vale.

[*Exeunt, arm in arm.*]

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. I tremble at the impression this lovely girl has made on my heart. My cheerfulness has left me, and I am grown insensible even to the delicious pleasure of making those happy who depend on my protection.

Ere bright Rosina met my eyes,
How peaceful pass'd the joyous day!
In rural sports I gain'd the prize,
Each virgin listen'd to my lay.

But now no more I touch the lyre,
No more the rustic sports can please;
I live the slave of fond desire,
Lost to myself, to mirth, and ease.

The tree that, in a happier hour,
Its boughs extended o'er the plain,
When blasted by the lightning's power,
Nor charms the eye, nor shades the swain.

Since the sun rose, I have been in continual exercise; I feel exhausted, and will try to rest a quarter of an hour on this bank.

[*Lies down on a bank by the fountain.*]

[*Gleaners pass the Stage, with sheaves of Corn on their heads; last ROSINA, who comes forward singing.*]

Ros. Light as thistle-down moving, which floats on the air,

Sweet gratitude's debt to this cottage I bear;
Of autumn's rich store I bring home my part,
The weight on my head, but gay joy in my heart.

What do I see? Mr. Belville asleep? I'll steal softly—at this moment I may gaze on him without blushing. [*Lays down the corn, and walks softly up to him.*] The sun points full on this spot; let me fasten these branches together with this riband, and shade him from its beams—yes—that will do—But if he should wake—[*Takes the Riband from her bosom, and ties the branches together.*] How my heart beats! One look more—Ah! I have waked him.

[*She flies, and endeavours to hide herself against the door of the Cottage, turning her head every instant.*]

Bel. What noise was that?

[*Half raising himself.*]

Ros. He is angry—How unhappy I am!—How I tremble. [*Aside.*]

Bel. This riband I have seen before, and on the lovely Rosina's bosom—

[*He rises, and goes toward the Cottage.*]

Ros. I will hide myself in the house. [*ROSINA, opening the door, sees CAPTAIN BELVILLE, and starts back.*—Heavens! a man in the house!

Capt. B. Now, love, assist me!

[*Comes out, and seizes ROSINA; she breaks from him, and runs affrighted across the Stage; BELVILLE follows; CAPTAIN BELVILLE, who comes out to pursue her, sees his brother, and steals off at the other Scene; BELVILLE leads ROSINA back.*]

Bel. Why do you fly thus, Rosina? What can you fear? You are out of breath.

Ros. O, Sir!—my strength fails—[*Leans on BELVILLE, who supports her in his arms.*] Where is he?—A gentleman pursued me—

[*Looking round.*]

Bel. Don't be alarmed, 'twas my brother—he could not mean to offend you.

Ros. Your brother! Why, then does he not imitate your virtues? Why was he here?

Bel. Forget this: you are safe. But tell me, Rosina, for the question is to me of importance; have I not seen you wear this riband?

Ros. Forgive me, Sir; I did not mean to disturb you. I only meant to shade you from the too great heat of the sun.

Bel. To what motive do I owe this tender attention?

Ros. Ah, Sir! do not the whole village love you?

Bel. You tremble; why are you alarmed?

[Taking her hand.] For you, my sweet maid, nay, be not afraid, [ROSINA withdraws it. I feel an affection which yet wants a name.

Ros. When first—but in vain—I seek to explain, What heart but must love you? I blush, fear, and shame—

Bel. Why thus timid, Rosina? still safe by my side,

Let me be your guardian, protector, and guide,

Ros. My timid heart pants—still safe by your side, [guide.

Be you my protector, my guardian, my

Bel. Why thus timid, &c.

Ros. My timid heart pants, &c.

Bel. Unveil your mind to me, Rosina. The graces of your form, the native dignity of your mind, which breaks through the lovely simplicity of your deportment, a thousand circumstances concur to convince me you were not born a villager.

Ros. To you, Sir, I can have no reserve. A pride, I hope an honest one, made me wish to sigh in secret over my misfortunes.

Bel. [Eagerly.] They are at an end.

Ros. Dorcas approaches, Sir; she can best relate my melancholy story.

Enter DORCAS.

Dor. His honour here? Good luck! How sorry I am I happened to be from home. Troth, I'm sadly tired.

Bel. Will you let me speak with you a moment alone, Dorcas?

Dor. Rosina, take this basket.

[Exit ROSINA with the basket.

Bel. Rosina has referred me to you, Dorcas, for an account of her birth, which I have long suspected to be above her present situation.

Dor. To be sure, your honour, since the dear child gives me leave to speak, she's of as good a family as any in England. Her mother, sweet lady, was my bountiful old master's daughter, 'Squire Welford, of Lincolnshire. His estate was seized for a mortgage of not half its value, just after young madam was married, and she ne'er got a penny of her portion.

Bel. And her father?

Dor. Was a brave gentleman too, a colonel. His honour went to the Eastern Indies, to better his fortune, and madam would go with him. The ship was lost, and they, with all the little means they had, went to the bottom. Young Madam Rosina was their only child; they left her at school; but when this sad news came, the mistress did not care for keeping her, so the dear child has shared my poor morsel.

Bel. But her father's name?

Dor. Martin; Colonel Martin.

Bel. I am too happy; he was the friend of my father's heart: a thousand times have I heard him

lament his fate. Rosina's virtues shall not go unrewarded.

Dor. Yes I know'd it would be so. Heaven never forsakes the good man's children.

Bel. I have another question to ask you, Dorcas, and answer me sincerely; is her heart free?

Dor. To be sure, she never would let any of our young men come a near her; and yet—

Bel. Speak: I am on the rack.

Dor. I'm afraid—she mopes and she pines.—But your honour would be angry—I'm afraid the captain—

Bel. Then my foreboding heart was right.

[Aside.

Enter RUSTIC.

Rust. Help, for Heaven's sake, Sir! Rosina's lost—she's carried away—

Bel. Rosina!

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE.

Capt. B. [Confusedly.] Don't be alarmed—let me go—I'll fly to save her.

Bel. With me, Sir—I will not lose sight of you. Rustic, hasten instantly with our reapers. Dorcas, you will be our guide. [Exit.

Rust. Don't be frightened, Sir; the Irishmen have rescued her; she is just here. [Exit.

Enter the two IRISHMEN.

I Irish. [To DORCAS.] Dry your tears my jewel; we have done for them.

Dor. Have you saved her? I owe you more than life.

I Irish. Faith, good woman, you owe me nothing at all. I'll tell your honour how it was. My comrades and I were crossing the meadow, going home, when we saw them first; and hearing a woman cry, I looked up, and saw them putting her into a skiff against her will. Says I, "Paddy, is not that the clever little crater that was glancing in the field with us this morning?"—"Tis so, sure enough," says he.—"By St. Patrick," says I, "there's enough of us to rescue her." With that we ran for the bare life, waded up to the knees, laid about us bravely with our shillellys, knocked them out of the skiff, and brought her back safe: and here she comes, my jewel.

Re-enter RUSTIC, leading ROSINA, who throws herself into DORCAS' arms.

Dor. I canno' speak.—Art thou safe?

Bel. I dread to find the criminal.

Rust. Your honour need not go far a field, I believe; it must have been some friend of the captain's, for his French valet commanded the party.

Capt. B. I confess my crime; my passion for Rosina hurried me out of myself.

Bel. You have dishonoured me, dishonoured the glorious profession you have embraced.—But begone, I renounce you as my brother, and renounce my ill-placed friendship.

Capt. B. Your indignation is just; I have offended almost past forgiveness. Will the offer of my hand repair the injury?

Bel. If Rosina accepts it, I am satisfied.

Ros. [To BELVILLE.] Will you, Sir, suffer?—This hope is a second insult. Whoever offends the object of his love is unworthy of obtaining her.

Bel. This noble refusal paints your character. I know another, Rosina, who loves you with as

strong, though purer ardour:—but if allowed to hope—

Ros. Do not, Sir, envy me the calm delight of passing my independent days with Dorcas, in whom I have found a mother's tenderness.

Dor. Bless thee, my child; thy kindness melts my heart.

Bel. Do you refuse me too then, Rosina?

[*ROSINA raises her eyes tenderly on BELVILLE, lowers them again, and leans on DORCAS.*]

Dor. You, Sir? You?

Ros. My confusion—My blushes—

Bel. Then I am happy! My life! my Rosina!

Phe. Do you speak to his honour, William.

Will. No; do you speak, Phebe.

Phe. I am ashamed—William and I, your honour—William prayed me to let him keep me company—so he gained my good-will to have him, if so be my grandmother consents.

[*Courtesying, and playing with her apron.*]

Will. If your honour would be so good to speak to Dorcas.

Bel. Dorcas, you must not refuse me any thing to-day. I'll give William a farm.

Dor. Your honour is too kind—take her William, and make her a good husband.

Will. That I will, dame.

Will. & Phe. [*To BELVILLE.*] Thank your honour.

[*BELVILLE joins their hands, they bow and courtesy.*]

Will. What must I do with the purse, your honour? Dorcas would not take it.

Bel. I believe my brother has the best right.

Capt. B. 'Tis yours, William; dispose of it as you please.

Will. Then I'll give it to our honest Irishmen, who fought so bravely for our Rosina.

Bel. You have made good use of it, William; nor shall my gratitude stop here.

Capt. B. Allow me to retire, brother. When I am worthy of your esteem, I will return, and demand my rights in your affection.

Bel. You must not leave us, brother. Resume the race of honour; be indeed a soldier, and be more than my brother—be my friend.

FINALE.

Bel. & Capt. B. To bless, and to be blessed be ours,

'Whate'er our rank, whate'er our powers;

On some her gifts kind fortune showers,

Who reap, like us, in this rich scene.

Capt. B. Yet those who taste her bounty less
The sigh malevolent repress,

And loud the feeling bosom bless,
Which something leaves for want
to glean.

Ros. How bless'd am I, supremely bless'd
Since Belville all his soul express'd,
And fondly clasp'd me to his breast:
I now may reap—how chang'd the
scene!

But ne'er can I forget the day,
When, all to want and wo a prey,
Soft pity taught his soul to say,
"Unfeeling Rustic, let her glean!"

Rust. { The hearts you glad your own display,
The heavens such goodness must repay;
And bless'd through many a summer's
day,
Dor. Full crops you'll reap in this rich scene:

Will. { And O! when summer joys are o'er,
And autumn yields its fruits no more,
New blessings be there yet in store,
For winter's sober hours to glean.

Chorus. And O! when summer's joys, &c.

The following AIRS are omitted in the
representation.

Capt. Bel. From flower to flower gay roving,
The wanton butterfly
Does nature's charms descry.
From flower to flower gay roving,
The wanton butterfly.
On wavy wings high mounting,
If chance some child pursues,
Forsakes the balmy dews;
On wavy wings high mounting,
If chance some child pursues.
Thus wild, and ever changing,
A sportive butterfly,
I mock the whining sigh;
Still wild, and ever changing,
A sportive butterfly.

Bel. How bless'd, my fair, who on thy face
Unchec'd by fear, may fondly gaze?
Who, when he breathes the tender sigh,
Beholds no anger in thine eye?
Ah, then, what joys await the swain,
Who ardent pleads, nor pleads in vain;
Whose voice, with rapture all divine,
Secure may say, "This heart is mine!"

VENICE PRESERVED

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY THOMAS OTWAY.

REMARKS.

'This interesting tragedy owes its plot and plan to the Abbe de St. Real's "*Histoire de la Conjuracion de Marquis de Bedamar*," or Account of the Spanish Conspiracy at Venice, of which the Marquis de Bedamar, the ambassador from Spain, was a promoter. Nature and the passions are finely touched in this play; and it continues a favourite, deprived, as it now is in representation, of that mixture of vile comedy which originally diversified the tragic action. It has been remarked, that Belvidera is the only truly valuable character; and indeed the principal fault of this drama seems a want of sufficient and probable motive.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE, 1814.	COVENT GARDEN, 1817.
DUKE OF VENICE,	Mr. Carr.	Mr. Creswell.
PRIULI,	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Egerton.
BEDAMAR,	Mr. J. Wallack.	Mr. Connor.
JAFFIER,	Mr. Rae.	Mr. C. Kemble.
PIERRE,	Mr. Elliston.	Mr. Young.
RENAULT,	Mr. R. Phillips.	Mr. Chapman.
ELLIOTT,	Mr. Waldegrave.	Mr. Hamerton.
SPINOSA,	Mr. Elrington.	Mr. Claremont.
THEODORE,	Mr. J. West.	Mr. King.
DURAND,	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. Grant.
MEZZANA,	Mr. Buxton.	Mr. Norris.
OFFICERS,	{ Messrs. Ray and Cooke.	{ Messrs. Jeffrey and Tooley.
BELVIDERA,	Miss Smith.	Miss O'Neil.

Officers, Guards, Senators, Executioner, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street in Venice.

Enter PRIULI and JAFFIER.

Pri. No more! I'll hear no more! Be gone and leave me.

Jaf. Not hear me! By my suffering, but you shall!

My lord, my lord! I'm not that abject wretch

You think me. Patience! where's the distance
throws

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Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, though proud oppression will not hear
me?

Pri. Have you not wrong'd me?

Jaf. Could my nature e'er

Have brook'd injustice, or the doing wrongs,

I need not now thus low have bent myself

To gain a hearing from a cruel father.

Wrong'd you?

Pri. Yes, wrong'd me! In the nicest point,
The honour of my house, you've done me wrong.

You may remember (for I now will speak,

And urge its baseness) when you first came home
From travel, with such hopes as made you look'd
on,

By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation,
Pleas'd with your growing virtue, I receiv'd you;
Court'd, and sought to raise you to your merits:
My house, my table, nay, my fortune too,
My very self, was yours; you might have us'd me
To your best service; like an open friend
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine:
When, in requital of my best endeavours,
You treacherously practis'd to undo me;
Seduc'd the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom.
Oh, Belvidera!

Jaf. 'Tis to me you owe her:
Childless you had been else, and in the grave
Your name extinct: no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past,
Since in your brigantine you sail'd to see
The Adriatic wedded by our duke;
And I was with you: your unskilful pilot
Dash'd us upon a rock; when to your boat
You made for safety: enter'd first yourself;
Th' affrighted Belvidera following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel's side,
Was, by a wave, wash'd off into the deep;
When instantly I plung'd into the sea,
And, buffeting the billows to her rescue,
Reedem'd her life with half the loss of mine.
Like a rich conquest, in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dash'd the saucy waves,
That throng'd and press'd to rob me of my prize.
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms:
Indeed you thank'd me; but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul: for from that hour she lov'd me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.

Pri. You stole her from me; like a thief you
stole her,

At dead of night! that cursed hour you chose
To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false, like mine;
A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both; continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter and grievous; still
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress and grind you; till at last you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion. *

Jaf. Half of your curse you have bestowed in
vain:

Heaven has already crown'd our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty:
May he live to prove more gentle than his grand-
sire,

And happier than his father.

Pri. Rather live
To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries: whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jaf. You talk as if 'twould please you.

Pri. 'Twould, by heaven!

Jaf. Would I were in my grave!

Pri. And she too with thee.

For, living here, you're but my curs'd remem-
I once was happy. [brancers]

Jaf. You use me thus, because you know my
soul

Is fond of Belvidera. You perceive
My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.
Oh! could my soul ever have known satiety;
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me

But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder?

Pri. You dare not do't.

Jaf. Indeed, my lord, I dare not.

My heart, that awes me, is too much my master
Three years are past, since first our vows were
plighted,
During which time, the world must bear me
witness,

I've treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice:
Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded.
Out of my little fortune I've done this;
Because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see I lov'd her for herself;
Not as the heiress of the great Priuli.

Pri. No more.

Jaf. Yes, all, and then adieu for ever. [charity,
There's not a wretch, that lives on common
But 's happier than me: for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never wak'd but to a joyful morning;
Yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scap'd, yet 's withered in the
ripening.

Pri. Home, and be humble; study to retrench;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly:
Reduce the glitt'ring trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state:
Then, to some suburb cottage both retire;
Drudge to feed loathsome life; get brats and
starve—

Home, home, I say.

[Exit.

Jaf. Yes, if my heart would let me—
This proud, this swelling heart: home I would go,
But that my doors are baleful to my eyes,
Fill'd and damn'd up with gaping creditors,
Watchful as fowlers when their game will spring.
I've now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with ruin.
Oh! Belvidera! Oh! she is my wife—
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. My friend, good morrow;
How fares the honest partner of my heart?
What, melancholy! not a word to spare me?

Jaf. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damn'd
starving quality,
Call'd honesty, got footing in the world.

Pier. Why, powerful villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety. Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other; lawyers would want
practice,

Cut-throats rewards: each man would kill his
brother [der.

Himself; none would be paid or hang'd for mur-
Honesty! 'twas a cheat invented first

To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontrol'd above their betters.

Jaf. Then honesty is but a notion?

Pier. Nothing else;

Like wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd;
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't.
'Tis a ragged virtue: Honesty! no more on't.

Jaf. Sure thou art honest!

Pier. So, indeed, men think me:
But they're mistaken, Jaffier: I'm a rogue
As well as they;
A fine, gay, bold-fac'd villain as thou seest me.
'Tis true, I pay my debts, when they're contracted;
I steal from no man; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed; I'd not betray my friend
To get his place or fortune; I scorn to flatter
A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch
beneath me;

Yet, Jaffier, for all this I'm a villain.

Jaf. A villain!

Pier. Yes, a most notorious villain;
To see the sufferings of my fellow-creatures,
And own myself a man: to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a show
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.
They say, by them our hands are free from
fetters;

Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow;
Drive us, like wrecks, down the rough tide of
power,

Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction.
All that bear this are villains, and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
That make us slaves, and tell us, 'tis our charter.

Jaf. I think no safety can be here for virtue,
And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live
In such a wretched state as this of Venice,
Where all agree to spoil the public good;
And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.

Pier. We've neither safety, unity, nor peace,
For the foundation's lost of common good;
Justice is lame, as well as blind, amongst us;
The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
That every day starts up, t'enslave us deeper.
Now, could this glorious cause but find out friends
To do it right, oh Jaffier! then might'st thou
Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face;
The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
And learn to value such a son as thou art.
I dare not speak, but my heart bleeds this moment.

Jaf. Curs'd be the cause, though I thy friend
be part on't:

Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
For I am us'd to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.

Pier. Too soon 'twill reach thy knowledge—

Jaf. Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship,
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.

Pier. Then thou art ruin'd!

Jaf. That I long since knew;
I and ill fortune have been long acquainted.

Pier. I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains;
The sons of public rapine were destroying.
They told me, by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune:
Nay more, Priuli's cruel hand had sign'd it.
Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face,
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale;
There was another, making villainous jests
At thy undoing: he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient, most domestic, ornaments,

Rich hangings intermix'd and wrought with gold
The very bed, which on thy wedding-night
Receiv'd thee to the arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.

Jaf. Now, thank Heaven—

Pier. Thank Heaven! for what?

Jaf. That I am not worth a ducat.

Pier. Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate
of Venice;

Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false;
Where there's no truth, no trust; where inno-
cence

Stoops under vile oppression, and vice lords it.

Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last

Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch

That's doom'd to banishment, came weeping
forth, [showers,

Shining through tears, like April suns in
That labour to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em;

Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she
lean'd,

Kindly look'd up, and at her grief grew sad,

As if they catch'd the sorrows that fell from her.

Even the lewd rabble, that were gather'd round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld
her: [pity,

Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled
I could have hugg'd the greasy rogues: they
pleas'd me.

Jaf. I thank thee for this story; from my soul:
Since now I know the worst that can befall me,
Ah, Pierre! I have a heart that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done
me;

But when I think what Belvidera feels,
The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,
I own myself a coward! bear my weakness;
If, throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.
Oh! I shall drown thee with my sorrows.

Pier. Burn,

First burn and level Venice to thy ruin.

What! starve, like beggars' brats, in frosty
weather,

Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death!

Thou or thy cause shall never want assistance,
Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee;
Command my heart, thou'rt every way its master.

Jaf. No, there's a secret pride in bravely
dying.

Pier. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run
mad;

Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow:

Revenge, the attribute of gods; they stamp'd it,

With their great image, on our natures. Die!

Consider well the cause, that calls upon thee;

And, if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remem-
ber,

Thy Belvidera suffers; Belvidera!

Die—damn first—What! be decently interr'd

In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust

With stinking rogues, that rot in winding-sheets,
Surfeit slain fools, the common dung o'th' soil!

Jaf. Oh!

Pier. Well said, out with't, swear a little—

Jaf. Swear! By sea and air; by earth, by
heaven, and hell,

I will revenge my Belvidera's tears,

Hark thee, my friend—Priuli—is—a senator.

Pier. A dog.

Jaf. Agreed.

Pier. Shoot him.

Jaf. With all my heart.

No more; where shall we meet at night?

Pier. I'll tell thee;

On the Rialto, every night at twelve,
I take my evening's walk of meditation;
There we two will meet, and talk of precious
Mischief—

Jaf. Farewell.

Pier. At twelve.

Jaf. At any hour; my plagues
Will keep me waking. [Exit PIERRE.

Tell me why, good Heaven,
Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the spirit,
Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,
That fill the happiest man? Ah, rather, why
Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate,
Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burdens!
Why have I sense to know the curse that's on
me?

Is this just dealing, nature?—Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Poor Belvidera!

Bel. Lead me, lead me, my virgins,
To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my re-
fuge!

Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face!
My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
At sight of thee, and bound with sprightly joys.
Oh smile! as when our loves were in their spring,
And cheer my fainting soul.

Jaf. As when our loves
Were in their spring! Has then our fortune
chang'd?

Art thou not Belvidera, still the same,
Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found
thee?

If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour?
Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where com-
plain?

Bel. Does this appear like change, or love
decaying,

When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,
With all the resolution of strong truth?
Beats not my heart, as 'twould alarm thine
To a new charge of bliss?—I joy more in thee,
Than did thy mother, when she hugg'd thee first,
And bless'd the gods for all her travail past.

Jaf. Can there in woman be such glorious
faith?

Sure all ill stories of thy sex are false!
Oh woman! lovely woman! nature made thee
To temper man: we had been brutes without you!
Angels are painted fair, to look like you:
There's in you all that we believe of heaven;
Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love.

Bel. If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous
rich;

I have so much, my heart will surely break with't:
Vows can't express it. When I would declare
How great's my joy, I'm dumb with the big
thought;

I swell, and sigh, and labour with my longing.
O! lead me to some desert wide and wild,
Barrer as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent, where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens, and every list'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught;
Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,

Give loose to love, with kisses kindling joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart.

Jaf. Oh, Belvidera! doubly I'm a beggar:
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee.
Want, worldly want, that hungry, meagre fiend,
Is at my heels, and chases me in view:
Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these

limbs,
Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
When banish'd by our miseries abroad
(As suddenly we shall be) to seek out
In some far climate, where our names are strangers,
For charitable succour; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our
heads;

Wilt thou then talk thus to me? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?

Bel. Oh! I will love thee, even in madness love
thee,

Though my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart
Should swage itself, and be let loose to thine.
Though the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some cleft our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thine head;
And, as thou sighing liest, and swell'd with
sorrow,

Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the
morning.

Jaf. Hear this, ye heavens! and wonder how
you made her:

Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world,
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine!
Like gaudy ships th' obsequious billows fall,
And rise again to lift you in your pride;
They wait but for a storm, and then devour you.
I, in my private bark already wreck'd,
Like a poor merchant driven to unknown land,
That had by chance pack'd up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and sav'd only that;
Since I must wander farther on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store,
Resolv'd to scorn and trust my fate no more.

[Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Rialto.

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. I'm here; and thus, the shades of night
around me,

I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay, surely 'tis so with me!—
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids me not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches, like myself,
Have wander'd out at this dead time of night,
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk.
Sure I'm so curs'd that, though of heaven for-
saken,

No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell, hell! why sleep'st thou?

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Sure I've staid too long:
The clock has struck, and I may lose my pro-
Speak, who goes there? [selyte.

Jaf. A dog, that comes to howl [tion ?
At yonder moon. What's he that asks the ques-

Pier. A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures,

And ne'er betray their master: never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend:
Jaffier!

Jaf. The same.

Pier. Where's Belvidera?—

Jaf. For a day or two
I've lodg'd her privately, till I see further
What fortune will do for me. Pr'ythee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera—

Pier. Not of her!

Jaf. Oh, no!

Pier. Not name her! May be I wish her well.

Jaf. Whom well!

Pier. Thy wife; thy lovely Belvidera,
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done?

Jaf. Y' are merry, Pierre.

Pier. I am so:

Thou shalt smile too, and Belvidera smile:
We'll all rejoice. Here's something to buy pins;
Marriage is chargeable. [*Gives him a purse.*

Jaf. I but half wish'd
To see the devil, and he's here already. Well!
What must this buy? Rebellion, murder, treason?

Tell me which way I must be damn'd for this.

Pier. When last we parted, we'd no qualms like these,

But entertain'd each other's thoughts like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reform'd since our last meeting? What new miracles

Have happen'd? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?

Jaf. Kind Heaven, let heavy curses
Gall his old age: cramps, aches, rack his bones,
And bitterest disquiet wring his heart.
Oh! let him live, till life become his burden:
Let him groan under't long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease but late.

Pier. Nay, couldst thou not

As well, my friend, have stretch'd the curse to all
The senate round, as to one single villain?

Jaf. But curses stick not: could I kill with cursing,

By Heaven I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted. Senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills. Oh! for a curse
To kill with!

Pier. Daggers! daggers are much better.

Jaf. Ha!

Pier. Daggers.

Jaf. But where are they?

Pier. Oh! a thousand

May be dispos'd of, in honest hands, in Venice.

Jaf. Thou talk'st in clouds.

Pier. But yet a heart, half wrong'd
As thine has been, would find the meaning,
Jaffier.

Jaf. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands!
And have not I a friend will stick one here!

Pier. Yes, if I thought thou wert not cherish'd
T' a nobler purpose, I would be thy friend;
But thou hast better friends; friends whom thy wrongs

Have made thy friends; friends worthy to be call'd so.

I'll trust thee with a secret. There are spirits
This hour at work.—But as thou art a man,
Whom I have pick'd and chosen from the world,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter;
And when I've told thee that which only gods,
And men like gods, are privy to, then swear
No chance or change shall wrest it from thy bosom.

Jaf. When thou wouldst bind me, is their need of oaths? [see

For thou'rt so near my heart, that thou may'st
Its bottom, sound its strength and firmness to thee.

Is coward, fool, or villain, in my face?

If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou would'st not use me in a little cause,
For I am fit for honour's toughest task,
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province;
And for a villanous, inglorious enterprise,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.

Pier. Nay, 'tis a cause thou wilt be fond o'
Jaffier;

For it is founded on the noblest basis,
Our liberties, our natural inheritance.
There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't;
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't;
Openly act a deed the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

Jaf. For liberty!

Pier. For liberty, my friend.

Thou shalt be freed from base Priuli's tyranny,
And thy sequester'd fortunes heal'd again:
I shall be freed from those opprobrious wrongs
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward;

All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right; fools shall be pull'd
From wisdom's seat: those baleful, unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who, perch'd near fortune's top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledg'd virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.

Jaf. What can I do?

Pier. Canst thou not kill a senator?

Jaf. Were there one wise or honest, I could kill him,

For herding with that nest of fools and knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had; and the brave story warms me.

Pier. Swear then!

Jaf. I do, by all those glittering stars,
And yon great ruling planet of the night;
By all good powers above, and ill below;
By love and friendship, dearer than my life,
No power or death shall make me false to thee.

Pier. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.

A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching: there I'll lead thee.

But be a man! for thou'rt to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when it's wildest—

Jaf. I give thee thanks

For this kind warning. Yes, I'll be a man,
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou seest my fears

Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine

Out of my breast, and show it for a coward's.
Come, let's be gone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom. Vengeance shall have room:
Revenge!

Pier. And liberty!

Jaf. Revenge—revenge— [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—AQUILINA'S HOUSE.

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Why was my choice ambition? the
worst ground
A wretch can build on! It's indeed, at distance
A goodly prospect, tempting to the view;
The height delights us, and the mountain top
Looks beautiful, because it's nigh to heaven.
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake
Who's there? [us.]

Enter SPINOSA.

Spin. Renault, good-morrow, for by this time
I think the scale of night has turn'd the balance,
And weighs up morning! Has the clock struck
twelve?

Ren. Yes! clocks will go as they are set; but
man,
Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain:
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance: 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mix'd, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolv'd.

Spin. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can
frighten.

Ren. What's then the cause that I am here
Why are we not together? [alone?]

Enter ELLIOTT.

O, Sir, welcome! [ing,
You are an Englishman: when treason's hatch-
One might have thought you'd not have been
behindhand.

In what whore's lap have you been lolling?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef, and a sea-coal fire, he's yours for ever.

Ell. Frenchman, you are saucy.

Ren. How!

Enter BEDAMAR, the Ambassador; THEODORE,
BRAMVEIL, DURAND, BRABE, REVILLIDO,
MEZZANA, TERNON, and RETROSI, Conspira-
tors.

Bed. At difference; fie!
Is this a time for quarrels? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl: should men of your high
calling,

Men separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly as in one great jewel,
T' adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smil'd on;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

Ren. Boys!

Bed. Renault, thy hand.

Ren. I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

Bed. Elliott, thou once hadst virtue. I have
seen

Thy stubborn temper bend with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted. 'Tis thy nation's glory
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.

Once more embrace, my friends—we'll all em-
brace.

United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis.
Totters not it already?

Ell. Would 'twere tumbling.

Bed. Nay, it shall down; this night we seal
its ruin.

Enter PIERRE.

Oh, Pierre, thou art welcome.

Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovely dreadful, and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. Oh, my Mars!
The poets that first feign'd a god of war,
Sure prophesied of thee.

Pier. Friend, was not Brutus
(I mean that Brutus, who, in open senate
Stabb'd the first Cæsar that usurp'd the world,)
A gallant man?

Ren. Yes, and Catiline too;
Though story wrong his fame; for he conspir'd
To prop the reeling glory of his country:
His cause was good.

Bed. And ours as much above it,
As, Renault, thou'rt superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.

Pier. Then to what we aim at.
When do we start? or must we talk for ever?

Bed. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth; fate
seems to have set

The business up, and given it to our care;
I hope there's not a heart or hand amongst us,
But is firm and ready.

All. All.
We'll die with Bedamar.

Bed. O men
Matchless! as will your glory be hereafter:
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

Pier. Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world:
This wretched state has starv'd them in its ser-
vice; [solved]

And, by your bounty quicken'd, they're re-
To serve your glory, and revenge their own:
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for th' alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

Bed. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied
diligence

Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease;
After this night it is resolv'd we meet
No more, till Venice owns us for her lords.

Pier. How lovely the Adriatic whore,
Dress'd in her flames, will shine! Devouring
flames

Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.

Bed. Now if any
Amongst us, that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told! the general doom is seal'd;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

Pier. I must confess, you there have touch'd
my weakness.

I have a friend; hear it! such a friend,
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell
you;

He knows the very business of this hour;
But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it;

We've chang'd a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.

Ren. How! all betray'd!

Pier. No—I've nobly dealt with you;
I've brought my all into the public stock:
I've but one friend, and him I'll share among
you:

Receive and cherish him; or if, when seen
And search'd, you find him worthless,—as my
tongue

Has lodg'd this secret in his faithful breast,—
To ease your fears, I wear a dagger here
Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth, thou only good I'er could boast of.

Enter JAFFIER, with a dagger.

Bed. His presence bears the show of manly
virtue.

Jaf. I know you'll wonder all, that, thus, un-
call'd,

I dare approach this place of fatal councils;
But I'm amongst you, and by Heaven it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united.
To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast; but, if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the curs'd assembled senate:
It shrinks not, though I meet a father there.
Would you behold this city flaming? here's
A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To th' arsenal, and set its gates on fire.

Ren. You talk this well, Sir.

Jaf. Nay—by Heaven, I'll do this.

Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces;
You fear me, villain, and, indeed, it's odd
To hear a stranger talk thus, at first meeting,
Of matters that have been so well debated;
But I come ripe with wrongs, as you with
councils.

I hate this senate, am a foe to Venice;
A friend to none, but men resolv'd like me
To push on mischief. Oh! did you but know me,
I need not talk thus!

Bed. Pierre, I must embrace him.

My heart beats to this man, as if it knew him.

Ren. I never lov'd these huggers.

Jaf. Still I see

The cause delights ye not. Your friends survey
me

As I were dangerous—But I come arm'd
Against all doubts, and to your trust will give
A pledge worth more than all the world can pay
for.

My Belvidera. Hoa; my Belvidera!

Bed. What wonder's next?

Jaf. Let me entreat you,

As I have henceforth hopes to call you friends,
That all but the ambassador, and this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns
me,

Withdraw awhile, to spare a woman's blushes.

*[Exeunt all but BEDAMAR, RENAULT,
JAFFIER, and PIERRE.]*

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bed. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead
us?

Jaf. My Belvidera! Belvidera!

Bel. Who,

Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour?
That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,

And fill my ears with the soft breath of love.
Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art
thou?

Jaf. Indeed 'tis late.

Bel. Alas! where am I? whither is't you lead
me?

Methinks I read distraction in your face,
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me.
You shake and tremble too! your blood runs
cold!

Heavens guard my love, and bless his heart with
patience.

Jaf. That I have patience, let our fate bear
witness,

Who has ordain'd it so, that thou and I
(Thou, the divinest good man e'er possess'd,
And I the wretched'st of the race of man)
This very hour, without one tear, must part.

Bel. Part! must we part? Oh, am I then
forsaken?

Why drag you from me? whither are you going?
My dear! my life! my love!

Jaf. Oh, friends!

Bel. Speak to me.

Jaf. Take her from my heart.
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her, but with tender'st care
Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows.

Ren. Rise, Madam, and command amongst
your servants.

Jaf. To you, Sirs, and your honours, I be-
queath her;

And with her this when I prove unworthy—

[Gives a dagger.]

You know the rest—then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still increasing love,
Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.

Bel. Nay, take my life, since he has sold it
cheaply.

O! thou unkind one;
Never meet more! have I deserved this from you;
Look on me, tell me, speak, thou fair deceiver.
Why am I separated from thy love?
If I am false, accuse me; but, if true,
Don't, pry'thee don't, in poverty forsake me,
But pity the sad heart that's torn with parting.
Yet hear me, yet recall me—

[Exit REN. BED. and BEL.]

Jaf. Oh! my eyes,
Look not that way, but turn yourselves awhile
Into my heart, and be wean'd altogether.

My friend, where art thou?

Pier. Here, my honour's brother.

Jaf. Is Belvidera gone?

Pier. Renault has led her

Back to her own apartment; but, by Heaven,
Thou must not see her more, till our work's over.

Jaf. No!

Pier. Not for your life.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre, wert thou but she,
How I would pull thee down into my heart.
Gaze on thee, till my eye-strings crack'd with
love;

Then, swelling, sighing, raging to be bless'd,
Come like a panting turtle to my breast;
On thy soft bosom hovering, bill, and play.
Confess'd the cause why last I fled away.
Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er,
And never follow false ambition more.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. I'm sacrific'd! I'm sold! betray'd to shame!
Inevitable ruin has enclos'd me!
He that should guard my virtue has betray'd it!
Left me! undone me! Oh, that I could hate him!
Where shall I go? Oh, whither, whither wander?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Can Belvidera want a resting-place,
When these poor arms are ready to receive her?
There was a time——

Bel. Yes, yes, there was a time,
When Belvidera's tears, her cries, and sorrows,
Were not despis'd; when, if she chanc'd to sigh,
Or look'd but sad—there was indeed a time,
When Jaffier would have ta'en her in his arms,
Eas'd her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her till he found the cause.

Jaf. Oh, Portia, Portia! what a soul was
thine!

Bel. That Portia was a woman; and when
Brutus, [safety!]
Big with the fate of Rome, (Heaven guard thy
Conceal'd from her the labours of his mind;
She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flow'd from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles as his love.
Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower,
Thou gav'st last night in parting with me;
strike it

Here to my heart; and, as the blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure, as Cato's daughter's.

Jaf. Oh! Belvidera?

Bel. Why was I last night deliver'd to a villain?

Jaf. Ha! a villain!

Bel. Yes, to a villain! why at such an hour
Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches?
Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
Was I deliver'd with such dreadful ceremonies?
To you, Sirs, and to your honours, I bequeath
her,

And with her this: whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart.
Oh! why's that rest conceal'd from me? must I
Be made the hostage of a hellish trust?
For such I know I am; that's all my value.
But, by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the bondage of the slaves;
Straight to the senate, tell 'em all I know,
All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

Jaf. Is this the Roman virtue; this the blood
That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter?
Would she have e'er betray'd her Brutus?

Bel. No:
For Brutus trusted her. Wert thou so kind,
What would not Belvidera suffer for thee?

Jaf. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all.
Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further;
Think I've a tale to tell will shake thy nature,
Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of,
Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:
Then if thou shouldst betray me!—

Bel. Shall I swear?

Jaf. No, do not swear: I would not violate
Thy tender nature, with so rude a bond:
But as thou hop'st to see me live my days,
And love thee long, lock this within thy breast:
I've bound myself, by all the strictest sacraments
Divine and human——

Bel. Speak!

Jaf. To kill thy father——

Bel. My father!

Jaf. Nay, the throats of the whole senate
Shall bleed, my Belvidera. He amongst us,
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
Is damn'd.

Bel. Oh!

Jaf. Have a care, and shrink not even in
For if thou dost—— [thought.]

Bel. I know it; thou wilt kill me.

Do, strike thy sword into this bosom: lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
Murder my father! though his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing;
Driven me to basest wants; can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butcher'd in his age?
The sacred fountain of my life destroy'd?
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me be-
ing?

Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hir'd slaves, bravoos, and common stab-
bers,

Nose-slitters, alley-lurking villains! join
With such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

Jaf. Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've en-
gag'd

With men of souls; fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind: there's not a heart among them
But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashion.

Bel. What's he, to whose curs'd hands last
night thou gav'st me?

Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story,
Would rouse thy lion heart out of its den,
And make it rage with terrifying fury.

Jaf. Speak on, I charge thee.

Bel. O my love! If e'er
Thy Belvidera's peace deserv'd thy care,
Remove me from this place. Last night, last
night!

Jaf. Distract me not, but give me all the truth.

Bel. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the power of that old son of mischief;
No sooner was I lain on my sad bed,
But that vile wretch approach'd me, loose, un-
button'd,

Ready for violation. Then my heart

Throbb'd with its fears: Oh, how I wept and
sigh'd, [him]

And shrunk and trembled! wish'd in vain for
That should protect me! Thou, alas! wert gone.

Jaf. Patience, sweet heaven, till I make ven-
geance sure:

Bel. He drew the hideous dagger forth, thou
gav'st him,

And with upbraiding smiles, he said, Behold it:
This is the pledge of a false husband's love:
And in my arms then press'd, and would have
clasp'd me;

But with my cries I scar'd his coward heart,
'Till he withdrew, and mutter'd vows to hell.
These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy
honour,

Thy love, all stak'd, and all will go to ruin.

Jaf. No more: I charge thee keep this secret
close.

Clear up thy sorrows; look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire,

Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;
I'll heal its failings, and deserve thy love.

Bel. Oh! should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt

In anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaf. Return no more! I would not live without thee

Another night, to purchase the creation.

Bel. When shall we meet again?

Jaf. Anon, at twelve

I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms:
Come like a travell'd dove, and bring thee peace.

Bel. Indeed!

Jaf. By all our loves.

Bel. 'Tis hard to part:

But sure no falsehood ever look'd so fairly.

Farewell; remember twelve. [*Exit.*]

Jaf. Let heaven forget me,
When I remember not thy truth, thy love.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Jaffier!

Jaf. Who calls?

Pier. A friend, that could have wish'd
T' have found thee otherwise employ'd. What, hunt

A wife, on the dull soil! Sure a staunch husband
Of all hounds is the dullest. Wilt thou never,
Never be wean'd from caudles and confections?
What feminine tales hast thou been list'ning to,
Of unair'd sheets, catarrhs, and tooth-ach, got
By thin-sol'd shoes? Damnation! that a fellow,
Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction
Of a whole people, should sneak thus into corners
To ease his fulsome lusts, and fool his mind.

Jaf. May not a man then trifle out an hour
With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?

Pier. Not in a cause like ours.

Jaf. Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damn'd condition: for I'll tell thee,
That cankerworm, call'd lechery, has touch'd it;
'Tis tainted vilely. Wouldst thou think it?

Renault

(That mortified, old, wither'd, winter rogue.)
He visited her last night, like a kind guardian:
Faith! she has some temptation, that's the truth
on't.

Pier. He durst not wrong his trust.

Jaf. 'Twas something late, though,
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.

Pier. Was she in bed?

Jaf. Yes, faith, in virgin sheets,
White as her bosom, Pierre, dish'd neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.
Oh! how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him!

Pier. Patience guide me!
He us'd no violence?

Jaf. No, no; out on't, violence!
Play'd with her neck; brush'd her with his gray
beard;

But not a jot of violence.

Pier. Damn him.

Jaf. Ay, so say I: but hush, no more on't.
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no monster yet. Sure it is near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders:
Will the ambassador be here in person?

Pier. No, he has sent commission to that villain, Renault,

To give the executing charge:
I'd have thee be a man, if possible,

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And keep thy temper; for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.

Jaf. Fear not, I am cool as patience.

Pier. He's yonder, coming this way through
the hall;

His thoughts seem full.

Jaf. Prythee retire, and leave me
With him alone: I'll put him on some trial;
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.

Pier. Be careful, then. [*Exit.*]

Jaf. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.

What! be a devil, take a damning oath
For shedding native blood! Can there be a sin
In merciful repentance? Oh, this villain!

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Perverse and peevish! what a slave is
To let his rebel passions master him! [*man,*]
Despatch the tool her husband—that were well.
Who's there?

Jaf. A man.

Ren. My friend, my near ally,
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge,
is very well.

Jaf. Sir, are you sure of that?
Stands she in perfect health? Beats her pulse
Neither too hot nor cold? [*even;*]

Ren. What means that question?

Jaf. Oh! women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant in their wishes, always wavering,
And never fix'd. Was it not boldly done,
Even at first sight, to trust the thing I lov'd
(A tempting treasure too) with youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine? but thou art honest.

Ren. Who dares accuse me?

Jaf. Curs'd be he that doubts
Thy virtue! I have tried it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honour,
I'd put it in thy keeping: for I know thee.

Ren. Know me!

Jaf. Ay, know thee. There's no falsehood in
thee.

Thou look'st just as thou art. Let us embrace.
Now wouldst thou cut my throat, or I cut thine.

Ren. You dare not do't.

Jaf. You lie, Sir.

Ren. How!

Jaf. No more,
'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

*Enter SPINOSA, THEODORE, ELLIOTT, REVIL-
LIDO, DURAND, BROMVEIL, and the rest of the
Conspirators.*

Ren. Spinosa! Theodore!

Spin. The same.

Ren. You are welcome.

Spin. You are trembling, Sir.

Ren. 'Tis a cold night, indeed, and I am aged;
Full of decay and natural infirmities:

Re-enter PIERRE.

We shall be warm, my friends, I hope, to-morrow.

Pier. 'Twas not well done; thou shouldst have
strok'd him,
And not have gall'd him.

Jaf. Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heaven! where am I? beset with cursed fiends,
That wait to damn me! What a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature—hush, my heart.

Ren. My friends, 'tis late; are we assembled
all?

To-morrow's rising sun must see you all

Deck'd in your honours. Are the soldiers ready?

Pier. All, all.

Ren. You, Durand, with your thousand, must possess [ready, St. Mark's; you, captain, know your charge al-'Tis to secure the ducal palace. Be all this done with the least tumult possible, 'Till in each place you post sufficient guards; Then sheathe your swords in every breast you meet.

Jaf. Oh! reverend cruelty! damn'd bloody villain!

Ren. During this execution, Durand, you Must in the midst keep your battalia fast; And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon That they may command the streets; This done, we'll give the general alarm, Apply petards, and force the arsenal gates; Then fire the city round in several places, Or with our cannon (if it dare resist) Batter to ruin. But above all, I charge you, Shed blood enough; spare neither sex nor age, Name nor condition; if there live a senator After to-morrow, though the dullest rogue That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends. If possible, let's kill the very name Of senator, and bury it in blood.

Jaf. Merciless, horrid slave! A y, blood enough! Shed blood enough, old Renault! how thou charm'st me!

Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell, till fate

Join us again, or sep'rate us for ever.

First let's embrace. Heaven knows who next shall thus

Wing ye together; but let's all remember, We wear no common cause upon our swords: Let each man think that on his single virtue Depends the good and fame of all the rest; Eternal honour, or perpetual infamy. You droop, Sir.

Jaf. No; with most profound attention I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue. Oh, Belvidera! take me to thy arms.

And show me where's my peace, for I have lost it. [Exit.

Ren. Without the least remorse then, let's resolve

With fire and sword t' exterminate these tyrants, Under whose weight this wretched country labours;

The means are only in our hands to crown them.

Pier. And may those powers above that are propitious

To gallant minds, record this cause and bless it.

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish. Should there, my friends, be found among us one False to this glorious enterprise, what fate, What vengeance, were enough for such a villain?

Ell. Death here without repentance, hell here after.

Ren. Let that be my lot, if as here I stand, Listed by fate among her darling sons, Though I had one only brother, dear by all The strictest ties of nature; could I have such a friend

Join'd in this cause, and had but ground to fear He meant foul play; may this right hand drop from me,

If I'd not hazard all my future peace,

And stab him to the heart before you: who,

Who would do less? Wouldst thou not, Pierre the same?

Pier. You've singled me, Sir, out for this hard question,

As if it were started only for my sake!

Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom, Search it with all your swords. Am I a traitor?

Ren. No: but I fear you late commended friend

Is little less. Come, Sirs, 'tis now no time

To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffier?

Spin. He left the room just now, in strange disorder.

Ren. Nay, there is danger in him. I observ'd him;

During the time I took for explanation, He was transported from most deep attention To a confusion which he could not smother; His looks grew full of sadness and surprise, All which betray'd a wavering spirit in him, That labour'd with reluctance and sorrow.

What's requisite for safety, must be done With speedy execution; he remains Yet in our power: I, for my own part, wear

A dagger—

Pier. Well.

Ren. And I could wish it—

Pier. Where?

Ren. Buried in his heart.

Pier. Away, we're yet all friends,

No more of this, 'twill breed ill blood among us.

Spin. Let us all draw our swords, and search the house, [ing

Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.

Pier. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed the blood

That's dear to me? is't you, or you, or you, Sir? What, not one speak! how you stand gaping all On your grave oracle, your wooden god there! Yet not a word! Then, Sir, I'll tell you a secret, Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue.

[To, RENAUD.

Ren. A coward! [Handles his sword.

Pier. Put up thy sword, old man;

Thy hand shakes at it. Come, let's heal this breach,

I am too hot, we yet may all live friends.

Spin. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.

Pier. Again! Who's that?

Spin. 'Twas I.

Theo. And I.

Ren. And I.

Omnes. And all.

Ren. Who are on my side?

Spin. Every honest sword.

Let's die like men, and not be sold like slaves.

Pier. One such word more, by heaven I'll to the senate,

And hang ye all, like dogs, in clusters.

Why weep your coward swords half out their sheaths?

Why do you not all brandish them like mine?

You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

Ren. Go to the senate, and betray us! haste!

Secure thy wretched life; we fear to die

Less than thou dar'st be honest.

Pier. That's rank falsehood.

Fear'st not thou death! Fie, there's a knavish itch

In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had Jaffier's wife prov'd kind, he'd still been true.
Faugh, how that stinks! thou die, thou kill my friend!

Or thou! or thou! with that lean wither'd face.
Away, disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honour calls you.
I'll bring that man, whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly—
Hence! hence, I say.

[Exit RENAULT, angrily.]

Spin. I fear we've been to blame,
And done too much.

Theo. 'Twas too far urg'd against the man you lov'd.

Rev. Here, take our swords, and crush them with your feet.

Spin. Forgive us, gallant friend.

Pier. Nay, now you've found

The way to melt, and cast me as you will.
Whence rose all this discord?

Oh, what a dangerous precipice have we 'scap'd!
How near a fall was all we'd long been building!
What an eternal blot had stain'd our glories,
If one, the bravest and the best of men,
Had fallen a sacrifice to rash suspicion,
Butcher'd by those whose cause he came to cherish!

Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,
And to your loves, me better recommend,
That I've preserv'd your fame, and sav'd my friend.

Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Rialto.

Enter JAFFIER and BELVIDERA.

Jaf. Where dost thou lead me? Every step I move,

Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a rack'd friend. O, my charming ruin!
Where are we wandering?

Bel. To eternal honour.
To do a deed shall chronicle thy name
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have sav'd sinking nations. Thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
Who by thy piety have been preserv'd
From horrid violation. Every street
Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour;
And at thy feet this great inscription written,
Remember him that propp'd the fall of Venice.

Jaf. Rather, remember him, who, after all
The sacred bonds of oaths, and holier friendship,
In fond compassion to a woman's tears,
Forgot his manhood; virtue, truth, and honour,
To sacrifice the bosom that reliev'd him.
Why wilt thou damn me?

Bel. Oh, inconstant man!
How will you promise; how will you deceive!
Do, return back, replace me in my bondage,
Tell all my friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,

And let thy dagger do its bloody office.
Or, if thou think'st it nobler, let me live,
Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust
Of that infernal devil.
Last night, my love!

Jaf. Name it not again;
It shows a beastly image to my fancy,

Will wake me into madness.

Destruction, swift destruction, fall on my coward head.

Bel. Delay no longer then, but to the senate,
And tell the dismal'st story ever utter'd:
Tell 'em what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepar'd: how near 's the fatal hour.
Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed.

Jaf. Oh! think what then may prove my lot;
By all heaven's powers, prophetic truth dwells in thee;

For every word thou speak'st, strikes through my heart.

Just what thou'st made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place where I'm to say
This bitter lesson; where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends.
Must I betray my friend? Ah! take me quickly;
Secure me well before that thought's renew'd;
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

Bel. Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvidera?

Jaf. No; thou'rt my soul itself; wealth, friendship, honour,

All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summ'd in thee.

Come, lead me forward, now, like
To sacrifice. Thus, in his fatal garlands
Deck'd fine and pleas'd, the wanton skips and plays,

Trots by th' enticing, flatt'ring, priestess' side,
And, much transported with its little pride,
Forgets his dear companions of the plain;
Till, by her bound, he's on the altar lain,
Yet then, too, hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the pain.

Enter OFFICER and six Guards.

Offi. Stand! who goes there?

Bel. Friends.

Offi. But what friends are you?

Bel. Friends to the senate, and the state of Venice.

Offi. My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring 'em to the council,
Who are now sitting.

Jaf. Sir, you shall be obey'd.
Now the lot's cast, and fate, do what thou wilt.

[Exeunt, guarded.]

SCENE II.—The Senate-House.

DUKE OF VENICE, PRIULI, and other Senators.

Duke. Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
Speak, why are we assembled here to-night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The state of Venice' honour, or its safety?

Pri. Could words express the story I've to tell you,
Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
We all should weep, tear off these purple robes,
And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to heaven.
Heaven knows, if yet there be an hour to come
Ere Venice be no more.

All Sen. How!

Pri. Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's form'd a dark conspiracy,

To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends, our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes; nay, the hour too fix'd;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn e'en this
moment,

And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
I had this warning; but, if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do something
That may inform the world, in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruin'd, though we were.

[Noise.]

Room, room, make room for some prisoners—

Enter OFFICER and Guards.

Duke. Speak, there. What disturbance?

Off. Two prisoners have the guards seiz'd in
the street,

Who say they come t'inform this reverend senate
About the present danger.

Enter JAFFIER and OFFICER.

All Sen. Give 'em entrance.—Well, who are
you?

Jaf. A villain!

Would every man, that hears me,
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.

Duke. 'Tis rumour'd, that a plot has been
contriv'd

Against this state; and you've a share in't too:

If you are a villain, to redeem your honour,
Unfold the truth, and be restor'd with mercy.

Jaf. Think not, that I to save my life came
hither;

I know its value better; but in pity
To all those wretches whose unhappy dooms
Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenant'd foe of Venice:

But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.

Duke. The slave capitulates;
Give him the tortures.

Jaf. That you dare not do;

Your fear won't let you, not the longing itch
To hear the story which you dread the truth of:
Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get
from me. [whipp'd]

Cowards are scar'd with threat'nings; boys are
Into confessions; but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.

Give him the tortures! Name but such a thing
Again, by Heaven I'll shut these lips for ever.
Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels,
Shall force a groan away, that you may guess at.

Duke. Name your conditions.

Jaf. For myself full pardon,

Besides the lives of two-and-twenty friends,
Whose names are here enroll'd. Nay, let their
crimes

Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths
And sacred promise of this reverend council,
That, in a full assembly of the senate,
The thing I ask be ratified. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secret of your danger.

Duke. Propose the oath.

Jaf. By all the hopes

Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear.—Ye swear?

All Sen. We swear.

Jaf. And, as ye keep the oath,
May you and your posterity be bless'd,
Or curs'd for ever.

All Sen. Else be curs'd for ever.

Jaf. Then here's the list, and with't the full
disclose

Of all that threatens you. [*Delivers a paper*
Now, fate, thou hast caught me.

Duke. Give order that all diligent search be
made

To seize these men, their characters are public;
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of a fam'd Grecian courtesan,
Call'd Aquilina: see that place secur'd.

You, Jaffier, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.

Jaf. Would the chains of death

Had bound me safe, ere I had known this minute.

Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.

Jaf. Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may
lose me;

Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself, and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I appease thee?

[Exit.]

Offi. [*Without.*] More traitors; room, room,
room, make room there.

Duke. How's this? guards!

Where are our guards? Shut up the gates, the
treason's
Already at our doors.

Enter OFFICER.

Offi. My lords, more traitors,
Seiz'd in the very act of consultation;
Furnish'd with arms and instruments of mischief.
Bring in the prisoners.

*Enter PIERRE, RENAULT, THEODORE, ELLIOTT,
REVILLIDO, and other Conspirators, in fetters.*

Pier. You, my lords, and fathers

(As you are pleas'd to call yourselves) of Venice,
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often labour'd in your service?
Are these the wreaths of triumph ye bestow
On those, that bring you conquest home and
honours?

Duke. Go on; you shall be heard, Sir.

Ant. And be hang'd too, I hope.

Pier. Are these the trophies I've deserv'd for
fighting

Your battles with confederated powers?

When winds and seas conspir'd to overthrow you,
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own
harbours;

When you, great duke, shrunk trembling in your
palace,

And saw your wife, the Adriatic, plough'd,
Like a lewd whore, by bolder prows than yours,
Stepp'd not I forth, and taught your loose Vene-
tians

The task of honour, and the way to greatness?

Rais'd you from your capitulating fears

To stipulate the terms of sued-for peace?

And this my recompense! if I'm a traitor,
Produce my charge; or show the wretch that's
base

And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor.

Duke. Know you one Jaffier?

[Conspirators murmur.]

Pier. Yes, and know his virtue. [ings]

His justice, truth, his general worth; and suffer-
From a hard father, taught me first to love him.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Enter JAFFIER, guarded.

Pier. My friend too bound! nay then
Our fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall.
Why droops the man whose welfare's so much
mine,

They're but one thing? These reverend tyrants,
Jaffier,

Call us traitors. Art thou one, my brother?

Jaf. To thee, I am the falsest, veriest slave,
That e'er betray'd a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.
All our fair hopes, which morning was t' have
crown'd,

Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.

Pier. So, then all's over:
Venice has lost her freedom, I my life.
No more! Farewell!

Duke. Say, will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the senate's mercy?

Pier. Curs'd be your senate: curs'd your con-
stitution:

The curse of growing factions and divisions
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me.

Duke. Pardon, or death?

Pier. Death! honourable death!

Ren. Death's the best thing we ask, or you
can give;
No shameful bonds, but honourable death.

Duke. Break up the council. Captain, guard
your prisoners,
Jaffier, you're free, but these must wait for judg-
ment. [*Exeunt all the Senators.*]

Pier. Come, where's my dungeon? Lead me
to my straw:

It will not be the first time I've lodg'd hard

To do the senate service.

Jaf. Hold, one moment.

Pier. Who's he disputes the judgment of the
senate?

Presumptuous rebel—on— [*Strikes JAFFIER.*]

Jaf. By Heaven, you stir not!

I must be heard; I must have leave to speak.
Thou hast disgrac'd me, Pierre, by a vile blow:
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice?
But use me at thou wilt, thou canst not wrong
me,

For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries:

Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,

With pity and with charity behold me:

But, as there dwells a godlike nature in thee,

Listen with mildness to my supplications.

Pier. What whining monk art thou? what
holy cheat,

That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears,
And cant'st thus vilely? Hence! I know thee not;
Leave, hypocrite!

Jaf. Not know me, Pierre?

Pier. No, I know thee not! What art thou?

Jaf. Jaffier, thy friend, thy once lov'd, valu'd
friend!

Though now deservedly scorn'd, and used most
hardly.

Pier. Thou, Jaffier! thou, my once lov'd, valu'd
friend! [*friend,*]

By heavens, thou liest; the man so call'd, my
Was generous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant;

Noble in mind, and in his person lovely;

Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart:

But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,

Poor, even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect;
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest
thee.

Pr'ythee avoid; nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.

Jaf. I have not wrong'd thee, by these tears I
have not.

Pier. Hast thou not wrong'd me? Dar'st thou
call thyself

That once lov'd, valued friend of mine.

And swear thou hast not wrong'd me? Whence
these chains?

Whence the vile death which I may meet this
moment?

Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false
one?

Jaf. All's true; Yet grant one thing, and I've
done asking.

Pier. What's that?

Jaf. To take thy life on such conditions
The council have propos'd: thou, and thy friends,
May yet live long, and to be better treated.

Pier. Life! ask my life! confess! record my-
self!

A villain, for the privilege to breathe!

And carry up and down this curs'd city,

A discontented and repining spirit,

Burdensome to itself, a few years longer;

To lose it, may be at last, in a lewd quarrel

For some new friend, treacherous and false as
thou art!

No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,

When only men, like thee, are fit to live in't.

Jaf. By all that's just—

Pier. Swear by some other power,

For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.

Jaf. Then, by that hell I merit, I'll not leave
thee,

Till, to thyself, at least, thou'rt reconcil'd,

However thy resentment deal with me.

Pier. Not leave me?

Jaf. No; thou shalt not force me from thee.

Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;

Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs

On my poor head; I'll bear it all; with patience

Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty:

Lie at thy feet, and kiss 'em, though they spurn
me;

Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,

And raise me to thy arms, with dear forgiveness.

Pier. Art thou not—

Jaf. What?

Pier. A traitor?

Jaf. Yes.

Pier. A villain?

Jaf. Granted.

Pier. A coward, a most scandalous coward;

Spiritless, void of honour; one who has sold

Thy everlasting fame, for shameless life?

Jaf. All, all, and more, much more; my faults
are numberless.

Pier. And wouldst thou have me live on terms
like thine?

Base, as thou art false—

Jaf. No; 'tis to me that's granted;

The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,

In recompense for faith and trust so broken.

Pier. I scorn it more, because preserv'd by
thee;

And as, when first my foolish heart took pity

On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,

Reliev'd thy wants, and rais'd thee from the state
Of wretchedness, in which thy fate had plung'd
thee,

To rank thee in my list of noble friends,
All I receiv'd, in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths, and this, this dagger,
Given with a worthless pledge, thou since hast
stolen,—

So I restore it back to thee again;
Swearing, by all those powers which thou hast
violated,

Never, from this curs'd hour, to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.

Take it—farewell—for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaf. Say thou wilt live there.

Pier. For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tir'd with.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre!

Pier. No more.

Jaf. My eyes wont lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thee, and ache with gazing.

Pier. Leave me—Nay, then thus, thus I throw
thee from me:

And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee.
[*Exit.*]

Jaf. Amen.

He's gone, my father, friend, preserver;
And here's the portion he has left me:

[*Shows the dagger.*]

This dagger. Well remember'd! with this dag-
ger,

I gave a solemn vow of dire importance;

Parted with this, and Belvidera together.

Have a care, mem'ry, drive that thought no fur-
ther:

No, I'll esteem it as a friend's last legacy;
Treasure it up within this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That, when they meet, they start not from each
other. [lain,

So now for thinking—A blow, call'd a traitor, vil-
Coward, dishonourable coward; fough!
Oh! for a long sound sleep, and so forget it.
Down, busy devil!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. Whither shall I fly?

Where hide me and my miseries together?

Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted?

Sunk into trembling fears and desperation,

Not daring to look up to that dear face

Which used to smile, even on my faults; but,
down,

Bending these miserable eyes on earth,

Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

Jaf. Mercy! kind Heaven has surely endless
stores,

Hoarded for thee, of blessings yet untasted:

Oh, Belvidera! I'm the wretched'st creature

E'er crawl'd on earth.

My friend, too, Belvidera, that dear friend,

Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoic'd in,

Has us'd me like a slave, shamefully us'd me;

Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.

Bel. What has he done?

Jaf. Before we parted,

Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,

Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,

With eyes o'erflowing, and a bleeding heart,

As at his feet I kneel'd, and sued for mercy,

With a reproachful hand he dash'd a blow:

He struck me, Belvidera! by Heaven, he struck
me!

Buffeted, call'd me traitor, villain, coward.

Am I coward? Am I a villain? Tell me:

Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so!

Damnation! Coward!

Bel. Oh! forgive him, Jaffier;

And, if his sufferings wound thy heart already,

What will they do to-morrow?

Jaf. Ah!

Bel. To-morrow, [agonies

When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the

Of a tormenting and a shameful death;

His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,

Insulted o'er, by a vile butchering villain;

What will thy heart do then? Oh! sure 'twill

Like my eyes now. [stream

Jaf. What means thy dreadful story?

Death, and to-morrow! Broken limbs and bowels!

Bel. The faithless senators, 'tis they've de-
creed it:

They say, according to our friends' request,

They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage:

Declare their promis'd mercy all as forfeited:

False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession,

Warrants are pass'd for public death to-morrow.

Jaf. Death! doom'd to die! condemn'd un-
heard! unpleaded!

Bel. Nay, cruel'st racks and torments are pre-
paring

To force confession from their dying pangs.

Oh! do not look so terribly upon me!

How your lips shake, and all your face disorder'd!

What means my love?

Jaf. Leave me, I charge thee, leave me.—
Strong temptations

Wake in my heart.

Bel. For what?

Jaf. No more, but leave me.

Bel. Why?

Jaf. Oh! by Heaven, I love thee with that
fondness,

I would not have thee stay a moment longer

Near these curs'd hands. Are they not cold upon
thee?

[*Pulls the dagger half out of his bosom
and puts it back again.*]

Bel. No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.

To lean thus on thy breast, is softer ease

Than downy pillows, deck'd with leaves of roses

Jaf. Alas! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis
fill'd with: [pent,

Fly, ere they gall thee. There's a lurking ser-

Ready to leap and sting thee to the heart:

Art thou not terrified?

Bel. No.

Jaf. Call to mind

What thou hast done, and whither thou hast
brought me.

Bel. Hah!

Jaf. Where's my friend? my friend, thou
smiling mischief!

Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late; thou shouldst
have fled

When thy guilt first had cause; for dire revenge

Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans!

Hark, how he groans! his screams are in my ears

Already: see, they've fix'd him on the wheel,

And now they tear him.—Murder! Perjur'd
senate!

Murder.—Oh!—Hark thee, traitress, thou hast
done this!

Thanks to thy tears, and false persuading love.
How her eyes speak! Oh, thou bewitching creature!
[*Fumbling for his dagger.*]
Madness can't hurt thee. Come, thou little trembler,

Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe:
'Tis thy own citadel.—Hah—yet stand off.
Heaven must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy.
I'll wink, and then 'tis done—

Bel. What means the lord
Of me, my life, and love? What's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so? Nay, why am I thus treated?

[*Draws the dagger and offers to stab her.*]

Jaf. Know, Belvidera, when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee, as in trust,
To be thy portion if I e'er prov'd false.
On such condition was my truth believ'd:
But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.

[*Offers to stab her again.*]

Bel. Oh! Mercy!

Jaf. Nay, no struggling.

Bel. Now then, kill me.

[*Leaps on his neck, kisses him.*]

Jaf. I am, I am a coward; witness, Heaven,
Witness it, earth, and every being, witness:
'Tis but one blow! yet, by immortal love,
I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee.

[*He throws away the dagger and embraces her.*]
The seal of Providence is sure upon thee:

And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders.
Oh! thou wert either born to save or damn me.

By all the power that's given me o'er thy soul,
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
By the victorious love that still waits on thee,

Fly to thy cruel father, save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost for ever.

Fall at his feet, cling round his reverend knees,
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears,
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him,

Crush him in thy arms, torture him with thy soft-
Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
But conquer him, as thou hast conquer'd me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in PRIULI's House.

Enter PRIULI.

Pri. Why, cruel Heaven, have my unhappy days

Been lengthen'd to this sad one? Oh! dishonour
And deathless infamy is fallen upon me.
Was it my fault? Am I a traitor? No.
But then, my only child, my daughter wedded;
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seiz'd upon my memory.

Enter BELVIDERA, in a long mourning veil.

Bel. He's there, my father, my inhuman father,

That for three years has left an only child
Expos'd to all the outrages of fate,
And cruel ruin.—oh!—

Pri. What child of sorrow
Art thou, that comes wrapt in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were tow'rd a grave?

Bel. A wretch who from the very top of happiness

Am fallen into the lowest depths of misery,

And want your pitying hand to raise me up again

Pri. What wouldst thou beg for?

Bel. Pity and forgiveness.

[*Throws up her veil.*]

By the kind, tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.

Pri. My daughter!

Bel. Yes, your daughter.

Pri. Don't talk thus.

Bel. Yes, I must; and you must hear too.
I have a husband.

Pri. Damn him.

Bel. Oh! do not curse him;

He would not speak so hard a word towards you
On any terms, howe'er he deals with me.

Pri. Ha! what means my child?

Bel. Oh! my husband, my dear husband,
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera.

Pri. Kill thee!

Bel. Yes, kill me. When he pass'd his faith
And covenant against your state and senate,

He gave me up a hostage for his truth:

With me a dagger and a dire commission.

Whene'er he fail'd, to plunge it through this bosom.

I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
T' attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great love prevail'd, and bless'd me with success!
He came, confess'd, betray'd his dearest friends
For promis'd mercy. Now they're doom'd to suffer.

Gall'd with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows t' appease the gods

With this poor life, and make my blood th' atone-
ment.

Pri. Heavens!

Bel. If I was ever then your care, now hear me;

Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

Pri. Oh, my heart's comfort!

Bel. Will you not, my father?

Weep not, but answer me.

Pri. By Heaven I will.

Not one of them but what shall be immortal.

Canst thou forgive me all my follies past?

I'll henceforth be indeed a father; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,

Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life,

Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee.

Peace to thy heart. Farewell.

Bel. Go, and remember

'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Garden.

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Final destruction seize on all the world!
Bend down, ye Heavens, and shutting round this earth,

Crush the vile globe into its first confusion!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. My life—

Jaf. My plague— [Meeting him.]

Bel. Nay, then I see my ruin. [Turning from her.]

If I must die!

Jaf. Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy;

But answer me to what I shall demand,
With a firm temper and unshaken spirit

Bel. I will, when I've done weeping—
Jaf. Fie, no more on't—
 How long is't since that miserable day
 We wedded first?
Bel. Oh!—oh!—
Jaf. Nay, keep in thy tears,
 Lest they unman me too.
Bel. Heaven knows I cannot
 The words you utter sound so very sadly,
 The streams will follow—
Jaf. Come, I'll kiss 'em dry then.
Bel. But was't a miserable day?
Jaf. A curs'd one.
Bel. I thought it otherwise; and you've often
 sworn,
 In the transporting hours of warmest love,
 When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn
 you bless'd it.
Jaf. 'T was a rash oath.
Bel. Then why am I not curs'd too?
Jaf. No, Belvidera; by th' eternal truth,
 I dote with too much fondness.
Bel. Still so kind?
 Still then do you love me?
Jaf. Man ne'er was bless'd
 Since the first pair met, as I have been.
Bel. Then sure you will not curse me?
Jaf. No, I'll bless thee.
 I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee—
 'Tis now, I think, three years, we've liv'd to-
 gether.
Bel. And may no fatal minute ever part us,
 Till, reverend grown for age and love, we go
 Down to one grave, as our last bed, together;
 There sleep in peace, till an eternal morning.
Jaf. Did I not say, I came to bless thee?
Bel. You did.
Jaf. Then hear me, bounteous Heaven:
 Pour down your blessings on this beautiful head,
 Where everlasting sweets are always springing
 With a continual giving hand: let peace,
 Honour, and safety, always hover round her;
 Feed her with plenty; let her eyes ne'er see
 A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning:
 Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,
 Harmless as her own thoughts; and prop her
 virtue,
 To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd;
 And comfort her with patience in our parting.
Bel. How! Parting, parting!
Jaf. Yes, for ever parting;
 I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon Heaven,
 That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
 We part this hour for ever.
Bel. O! call back
 Your cruel blessing; stay with me and curse me.
Jaf. Now hold, heart, or never.
Bel. By all the tender days we've liv'd together,
 Pity my sad condition; speak, but speak.
Jaf. Oh!—oh!—
Bel. By these arms, that now cling round thy
 neck,
 By these poor streaming eyes—
Jaf. Murder! unhold me:
 By th' immortal destiny that doom'd me
 [Draws the dagger.
 'To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer;
 Resolve to let me go, or see me fall—
 Hark, the dismal bell [Passing-bell tolls.
 Tolls out for death! I must attend its call too;
 For my poor friend, my dying Pierre, expects me:
 He sent a message to require I'd see him

Before he died, and take his last forgiveness.
 Farewell, for ever.
Bel. Leave thy dagger with me,
 Bequeath me something—Not one kiss at parting?
 Oh! my poor heart, when wilt thou break?
 [Going out, looks back at him.
Jaf. Yet stay:
 We have a child, as yet a tender infant.
 Be a kind mother to him when I'm gone:
 Breed him in virtue, and the paths of honour,
 But never let him know his father's story;
 I charge thee, guard him from the wrongs my
 fate
 May do his future fortune, or his name.
 Now—nearer yet— [Approaching each other.
 Oh! that my arms were rivetted
 Thus round thee ever! But my friend! my oath!
 This and no more. [Kisses her.
Bel. Another, sure another,
 For that poor little one you've ta'en such care of.
 I'll give't him truly.
Jaf. So now, farewell.
Bel. For ever?
Jaf. Heaven knows, for ever; all good angels
 guard thee. [Exit.
Bel. All ill ones sure had charge of me this
 moment.
 Curs'd be my days, and doubly curs'd my nights.
 Oh! give me daggers, fire, or water:
 How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the
 waves
 Huzzing and booming round my sinking head,
 Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
 Oh! there's all quiet, here all rage and fury:
 The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain;
 I long for thick, substantial sleep; hell! hell!
 Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
 If thou art half so hot, so mad, as I am. [Exit.

SCENE III.—A Scaffold, and a Wheel pre-
 pared for the execution of PIERRE.

Enter OFFICER, PIERRE, Guards, Execu-
 tioner, &c.

Pier. My friend not come yet?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre!

Pier. Yet nearer.

Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone my fame,
 I can't forget to love thee. Pr'ythee, Jaffier,
 Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
 I'm now preparing for the land of peace,
 And fain would have the charitable wishes
 Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.

Jaf. Good! I am the vilest creature, worse then
 e'er

Suffer'd the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.
Off. The time grows short, your friends are
 dead already.

Jaf. Dead!

Pier. Yes, dead, Jaffier; they've all died like
 men too,

Worthy their character.

Jaf. And what must I do?

Pier. Oh, Jaffier!

Jaf. Speak aloud thy burden'd soul,
 And tell thy troubles to thy tortur'd friend.

Pier. Friend! Couldst thou yet be a friend, a
 generous friend,
 I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
 Heaven knows I want a friend.

Jaf. And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think, when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.

Pier. No! live, I charge thee, Jaffier.

Jaf. Yes, I will live:
But it shall be to see thy fall reveng'd
At such a rate, as Venice long shall groan for.

Pier. Wilt thou?

Jaf. I will, by Heaven.

Pier. Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh!—yet—shall I trust thee?

Jaf. No; I've been false already.

Pier. Dost thou love me?

Jaf. Rip up my heart, and satisfy my doubts.
ings.

Pier. Curse on this weakness! [*Weeps.*]

Jaf. Tears! Amazement! Tears!
I never saw thee melted thus before;
And know there's something labouring in thy
bosom,

That must have vent: though I'm a villain, tell
me.

Pier. See'st thou that engine?
[*Points to the Wheel.*]

Jaf. Why?

Pier. Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with hon-
our,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been crown'd with
conquest,

Be expos'd a common carcass on a wheel?

Jaf. Ha!

Pier. Speak! is't fitting?

Jaf. Fitting!

Pier. Yes; is't fitting?

Jaf. What's to be done?

Pier. I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attain it.

Off. The day grows late, Sir.

Pier. I'll make haste. Oh, Jaffier!
Though thou'st betray'd me, do me some way
justice.

Jaf. No more of that: thy wishes shall be
satisfied;

I have a wife, and she shall bleed; my child too,
Yield up his little throat and all
T' appease thee—

[*Going away, PIERRE holds him.*]
Pier. No—this—no more.

[*Whispers JAFFIER.*]

Jaf. Ha! is't then so?

Pier. Most certainly.

Jaf. I'll do it.

Pier. Remember!

Off. Sir.

Pier. Come, now I'm ready.

[*He & JAF. ascend the scaffold.*]
Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate, and die with decency.
Come. [*Takes off his gown, Executioner pre-
pares.*]

You'll think on't. [*To JAFFIER.*]

Jaf. 'T won't grow stale before to-morrow.

Pier. Now, Jaffier! now I'm going. Now—
[*Executioner having bound him.*]

Jaf. Have at thee,
Thou honest heart, then—here— [*Stabs him.*]

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And this is well.

[*Stabs himself*]

Pier. Now thou hast indeed been faithful.
This was done nobly—We've deceiv'd the senate.

Jaf. Bravely.

Pier. Ha, ha, ha—oh! oh! [*Dies.*]

Jaf. Now, ye curs'd rulers,
Thus of the blood y' have shed, I make libation
And sprinkle it, mingling. May it rest upon you,
And all your race! Be henceforth peace a stran-
ger

Within your walls; let plagues and famine waste
Your generation—Oh, poor Belvidera!

Sir, I have a wife, bear this in safety to her;
A token that with my dying breath I bless'd her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.

I'm sick—I'm quiet.

[*Dies; scene shuts upon them.*]

SCENE IV.—An Apartment at PRIULI'S.

*Soft music; enter BELVIDERA, distracted, led by
two of her women; PRIULI and Servants.*

Pri. Strengthen her heart with patience, pity-
ing Heaven.

Bel. Come, come, come, come, nay come
to bed. [*Whistle;*]

Pr'ythee, my love. The winds! hark how they
And the rain beats: Oh! how the weather shrinks
me!

You are angry now, who cares? pish, no indeed,
Choose then; I say you shall not go, you shall
not;

Whip your ill nature; get you gone then. Oh!
Are you return'd; see, father, here he's come
again:

Am I to blame to love him? O, thou dear one,
Why do you fly me? are you angry still then?
Jaffier, where art thou? father, why do you do
thus? [*somewhere.*]

Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here
Stand off, I say: what, gone! remember't, tyrant:
I may revenge myself of this trick, one day.
I'll do't—I'll do't.

Enter OFFICER.

Pri. News, what news?

[*OFFICER whispers PRIULI.*]

Off. Most sad, Sir;
Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabb'd Pierre, and next him
Both fell together. [*self.*]

Pri. Daughter!

Bel. Ha! look there!

My husband bloody, and his friend too! murder!
Who has done this? speak to me, thou sad vision.
On these poor trembling knees I beg it. Va-
nish'd—

Here they went down—Oh, I'll dig, dig the den
up!

You sha'n't delude me thus. Hoa, Jaffier, Jaffier!
Peep up, and give me but a look. I have him!
I've got him, father: Oh!

My love! my dear! my blessing! help me! help
me!

They have hold on me, and drag me to the bot-
tom.

Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell—

[*Dies; the curtain falls slowly to music*]

THE WONDER:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

REMARKS.

This ingenious comedy was first acted at Drury Lane in 1714, and is still a favourite. A more lively delineation of jealousy is scarcely to be found on the stage than in the well-drawn character of Don Felix, whose love-quarrel with Violante is well sustained. In 1757, Mr. Garrick added to his reputation by the revival of this play, in which he was eminently successful as Don Felix; and in this character closed his career of histrionic glory, on the 10th June, 1776, on which interesting occasion he delivered a farewell, in language with which we shall embellish the present page.

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

"It has been customary with persons, under my circumstances, to address you in a farewell Epilogue. I had the same intention, and turned my thoughts that way; but I found myself then as incapable of writing such an Epilogue, as I should be now of speaking it.

"The jingle of rhyme, and the language of fiction, would but ill suit my present feelings.

"This is to me a very awful moment: it is no less than parting for ever with those, from whom I have received the greatest kindness, and upon the spot where that kindness and your favours were enjoyed.

"Whatever may be the changes of my future life, the deepest impression of your kindness will always remain here—here in my heart, fixed and unalterable.

"I will very readily agree to my successors having more skill and ability for their station than I have had: but I defy them all to take more uninterrupted pains for your favour, or to be more truly sensible of it, than is your grateful humble servant."

Mrs. Yates, Mrs. Crawford, Mrs. Abington, Mrs. Pope, and Mrs. Jordan, "though last, not least," have successively added to their celebrity, in the heroine.

The original hint of the Wonder was probably derived from some one of the old Spanish Romantic Novels, so much admired by the ladies at that period.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY LANE, 1815.

COVENT GARDEN, 1817.

DON LOPEZ,.....	<i>Mr. Penley.</i>	<i>Mr. Blanchard.</i>
DON FELIX,.....	<i>Mr. Rae.</i>	<i>Mr. C. Kemble.</i>
FREDERIC,.....	<i>Mr. Barnard.</i>	<i>Mr. Claremont.</i>
DON PEDRO,.....	<i>Mr. Gattie.</i>	<i>Mr. Simmons.</i>
COLONEL BRITON,.....	<i>Mr. Holland.</i>	<i>Mr. Abbot.</i>
GIBBY,.....	<i>Mr. R. Palmer.</i>	<i>Mr. Emery.</i>
LISSARDO,.....	<i>Mr. Harley.</i>	<i>Mr. Fawcett.</i>
ALGUAZIL,.....	<i>Mr. Maddocks.</i>	<i>Mr. Atkins.</i>
VASQUEZ,.....	<i>Mr. Evans.</i>	
SOLDIER,.....	<i>Mr. Cooke.</i>	
DONNA VIOLANTE,.....	<i>Mrs. Glover.</i>	<i>Miss Brunton.</i>
DONNA ISABELLA,.....	<i>Mrs. Orger.</i>	<i>Miss Foote.</i>
FLORA,.....	<i>Miss Kelly.</i>	<i>Mrs. Gibbs.</i>
INIS,.....	<i>Mrs. Scott.</i>	<i>Miss Logan.</i>

Attendants, Servants, &c.

SCENE—Lisbon.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter DON LOPEZ, meeting FREDERIC.

Fred. My lord, Don Lopez.

Lop. How d'y'e, Frederic?

Fred. At your lordship's service. I am glad to

see you look so well, my lord; I hope Antonio is out of danger?

Lop. Quite the contrary; his fever increases, they tell me; and the surgeons are of opinion his wound is mortal.

Fred. Your son, Don Felix, is safe, I hope?

Lop. I hope so too; but they offer large rewards to apprehend him.

Fred. When heard your lordship from him?

Lop. Not since he went. I forbade him writing till the public news gave him an account of Antonio's health. Letters might be intercepted, and the place of his abode discovered; however, if Antonio dies, Felix shall for England. You have been there; what sort of people are the English?

Fred. My lord, the English are by nature, what the ancient Romans were by discipline, courageous, bold, hardy, and in love with liberty. Liberty is the idol of the English, under whose banner all the nation enlists; give but the word for liberty, and straight more armed legions would appear, than France and Philip keep in constant pay.

Lop. I like their principles. Who does not wish for freedom in all degrees of life? though common prudence sometimes makes us act against it, as I am now obliged to do; for I intend to marry my daughter to Don Guzman, whom I expect from Holland every day, whither he went to take possession of a large estate left him by his uncle.

Fred. You will not, surely, sacrifice the lovely Isabella, to aage, avarice, and a fool? pardon the expression, my lord; but my concern for your beautiful daughter transports me beyond that good manners which I ought to pay your lordship's presence.

Lop. I can't deny the justness of the character, Frederic; but you are not insensible what I have suffered by these wars; and he has two things which render him very agreeable to me for a son-in-law; he is rich, and well-born! as for his being a fool, I don't conceive how that can be any blot in a husband who is already possessed of a good estate.—A poor fool, indeed, is a very scandalous thing; and so are your poor wits in my opinion, who have nothing to be vain of but the inside of their skulls. Now, for Don Guzman, I know I can rule him as I think fit: this is acting the politic part, Frederic, without which it is impossible to keep up the port of this life.

Fred. But have you no consideration for your daughter's welfare, my lord?

Lop. Is a husband of twenty thousand crowns a year no consideration? Now I think it a very good consideration.

Fred. One way, my lord. But what will the world say of such a match?

Lop. Sir, I value not the world a button.

Fred. I cannot think your daughter can have any inclination for such a husband.

Lop. There I believe you are pretty much in the right, though it is a secret which I never had the curiosity to inquire into, nor I believe ever shall.—Inclination, quotha! Parents would have a fine time on't if they consulted their children's inclinations! No, no, Sir, it is not a father's business to follow his children's inclinations, till he makes himself a beggar.

Fred. But this is of another nature, my lord.

Lop. Lookye, Sir, I resolve she shall marry Don Guzman the moment he arrives; though I could not govern my son, I will my daughter, I assure you.

Fred. This match, my lord, is more preposterous than that which you proposed to your son, from whence arose this fatal quarrel.—Don Antonio's sister, Elvira, wanted beauty only, but Guzman every thing, but—

Lop. Money—and that will purchase every thing; and so adieu. [Exit.]

Fred. Monstrous! These are the resolutions which destroy the comforts of matrimony—he is rich and well-born, powerful arguments indeed! Could I but add them to the friendship of Don Felix, what might I not hope? But a merchant and a grandee of Portugal are inconsistent names—

Enter LISSARDO, in a riding-habit.

Lissardo! From whence came you?

Lis. That letter will inform you, Sir.

Fred. I hope your master's safe?

Lis. I left him so; I have another to deliver which requires haste.—Your most humble servant, Sir. [Bowing.]

Fred. To Violante, I suppose?

Lis. The same. [Exit.]

Fred. [Reads.] *Dear Frederic—The two chief blessings of this life are, a friend and a mistress; to be debarred the sight of those is not to live. I hear nothing of Antonio's death, and therefore resolve to venture to thy house this evening, impatient to see Violante, and embrace my friend.*

Yours,

FELIX.

Pray Heaven he comes undiscovered.—Ha! colonel Briton.

Enter COLONEL BRITON, in a riding-habit.

Col. B. Frederic, I rejoice to see thee.

Fred. What brought you to Lisbon, colonel?

Col. B. *La fortune de la guerre*, as the French say: I have commanded these last three years in Spain, but my country has thought fit to strike up a peace, and give us good Protestants leave to hope for Christian burial; so I resolved to take Lisbon in my way home.

Fred. If you are not provided of a lodging, colonel, pray command my house, while you stay.

Col. B. If I were sure I should not be troublesome, I would accept your offer, Frederic.

Fred. So far from trouble, colonel, I shall take it as a particular favour. What have we here?

Col. B. My footman. This is our country dress, you must know; which, for the honour of Scotland, I make all my servants wear.

Enter GIBBY, in a Highland dress.

Gibby. What mun I de wi' the horses, and like yer honour? They will tack could gin they stand in the causey.

Fred. Oh, I'll take care of them. What, ho! Vasquez!

Enter VASQUEZ.

Put those horses, which that honest fellow will show you, into my stable, do you hear, and feed them well.

Vas. Yes, Sir.—Sir, by my master's orders, I am, Sir, your most obsequious, humble servant. Be pleased to lead the way.

Gibby. 'Sbleed, gang yer gate, Sir, and I sall follow ye: Ise ower hungry to feed on compliments.

[Exit with VASQUEZ.]

Fred. Ha, ha! a comical fellow.—Well, how do you like our country, colonel?

Col. B. Why, faith, Frederic, a man might pass his time agreeably enough withinside of a nunnery; but to behold such troops of soft, plump, tender, melting, wishing, nay, willing girls too, through a damned grate, gives us Britons strong temptations to plunder. Ah, Frederic, your priests are wicked rogues; they immure beauty for their own proper use, and show it only to the laity

to create desires, and inflame accompts, that they may purchase pardons at a dear rate.

Fred. I own wenching is something more difficult here than in England, where women's liberties are subservient to their inclinations, and husbands seem of no effect, but to take care of the children which their wives provide.

Col. B. And does restraint get the better of inclination with your women here? No, I'll be sworn not, even in fourscore. Don't I know the constitution of the Spanish ladies?

Fred. And of all the ladies where you come, colonel; you were ever a man of gallantry.

Col. B. Ah, Frederic, the kirk half starves us Scotsmen. We are kept so sharp at home, that we feed like cannibals abroad. Harkye, hast thou never a pretty acquaintance now, that thou wouldst consign over to a friend for half an hour, ha?

Fred. Faith, colonel, I am the worst pimp in Christendom; you had better trust to your own luck; the women will soon find you out I warrant you.

Col. B. Ay, but its dangerous foraging in an enemy's country; and since I have some hopes of seeing my own again, I had rather purchase my pleasure, than run the hazard of a stiletto in my guts. Wilt thou recommend me to a wife then; one that is willing to exchange her maidores for English liberty? ha, friend?

Fred. She must be very handsome, I suppose?

Col. B. The handsomer the better—but be sure she has a nose.

Fred. Ay, ay, and some gold.

Col. B. Oh, very much gold; I shall never be able to swallow the matrimonial pill, if it be not well gilded.

Fred. Pho, beauty will make it slide down nimbly.

Col. B. At first, perhaps, it may; but the second or third dose will choke me.—I confess, Frederic, women are the prettiest play-things in nature; but gold, substantial gold, gives 'em the air, the mien, the shape, the grace, and beauty of a goddess.

Fred. And has not gold the same divinity in their eyes, colonel?

Col. B. Too often——

None marry now for love; no, that's a jest: The selfsame bargain serves for wife and beast.

Fred. You are always gay, colonel. Come, shall we take a refreshing glass at my house, and consider what has been said?

Col. B. I have two or three compliments to discharge for some friends, and then I will wait on you with pleasure. Where do you live?

Fred. At yon corner house with the green rails.

Col. B. In the close of the evening I will endeavour to kiss your hand. Adieu.

Fred. I shall expect you with impatience.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in DON LOPEZ'S House.

Enter ISABELLA, and INIS, her maid.

Inis. For goodness' sake, Madam, where are you going in this pet?

Isa. Any where to avoid matrimony; the thought of a husband is terrible to me.

Inis. Ay, of an old husband; but if you may choose for yourself, I fancy matrimony would be no such frightful thing to you.

Isa. You are pretty much in the right, Inis.

but to be forced into the arms of an idiot, who has neither person to please the eye, sense to charm the ear, nor generosity to supply those defects!—Ah, Inis, what pleasant lives women lead in England, where duty wears no fetter but inclination. The custom of our country enslaves from our very cradles, first to our parents, next to our husbands; and, when Heaven is so kind to rid us of both these, our brothers still usurp authority, and expect a blind obedience from us: so that, maids, wives, or widows, we are little better than slaves to the tyrant, man; therefore to avoid their power, I resolve to cast myself into a monastery.

Inis. That is, you'll cut your own throat, to avoid another's doing it for you. Ah, Madam, those eyes tell me you have no nun's flesh about you! A monastery, quotha! where you'll wish yourself into the green sickness in a month.

Isa. What care I? there will be no man to plague me.

Inis. No, nor what's much worse, to please you neither—Od's life, Madam, you are the first woman that e'er despaired in a Christian country: were I in your place—

Isa. Why, what would your wisdom do, if you were?

Inis. I'd embark with the first fair wind with all my jewels, and seek my fortune on t'other side the water; no shore can treat you worse than your own; there's never a father in Christendom should make me marry any man against my will.

Isa. I am too great a coward to follow your advice: I must contrive some way to avoid Don Guzman, and yet stay in my own country.

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. Must you so, mistress; but I shall take care to prevent you. [*Aside.*] Isabella, whither are you going, my child?

Isa. To church, Sir.

Inis. The old rogue has certainly overheard her.

[*Aside.*]

Lop. Your devotion must needs be very strong, or your memory very weak, my dear; why, vespers are over for this night. Come, come, you shall have a better errand to church than to say your prayers there. Don Guzman is arrived in the river, and I expect him ashore to-morrow.

Isa. Ha! to-morrow!

Lop. He writes me word, that his estate in Holland is worth twelve thousand crowns a year; which, together with what he had before, will make thee the happiest wife in Lisbon.

Isa. And the most unhappy woman in the world. Oh, Sir! if I have any power in your heart, if the tenderness of a father be not quite extinct, hear me with patience.

Lop. No objection against the marriage, and I will hear whatsoever thou hast to say.

Isa. That's torturing me on the rack, and forbidding me to groan; upon my knees, I claim the privilege of flesh and blood.

[*Kneels.*]

Lop. I grant it, thou shalt have an arm full of flesh and blood to-morrow. Flesh and blood, quotha! Heaven forbid I should deny thee flesh and blood, my girl.

Inis. Here's an old dog for you!

[*Aside.*]

Isa. Do not mistake, Sir; the fatal stroke which separates soul and body, is not more terrible to the thoughts of sinners, than the name of Guzman to my ear.

Lop. Puh, puh; you lie, you lie.

Isa. My frightened heart beats hard against my breast, as if it sought a passage to your feet, to beg you'd change your purpose.

Lop. A very pretty speech this; if it were turned into blank verse, it would serve for a tragedy. Why, thou hast more wit than I thought thou hadst, child.—I fancy this was all extempore; I don't believe thou didst ever think one word on't before.

Inis. Yes, but she has, my lord; for I have heard her say the same things a thousand times.

Lop. How, how? What, do you put your second-hand jests upon your father, hussy, who knows better what's good for you than you do yourself? Remember, 'tis your duty to obey.

Isa. [*Rises.*] I never disobeyed before, and wish I had not reason now; but nature has got the better of my duty, and makes me loathe the harsh commands you lay.

Lop. Ha, ha! very fine! Ha, ha!

Isa. Death itself would be welcome.

Lop. Are you sure of that?

Isa. I am your daughter, my lord, and can boast as strong a resolution as yourself; I'll die before I'll marry Guzman.

Lop. Say you so? I'll try that presently. [*Draws.*] Here, let me see with what dexterity you can breathe a vein now. [*Offers her his sword.*] The point is pretty sharp: 'twill do your business, I warrant you.

Inis. Bless me, Sir, what do you mean, to put a sword into the hands of a desperate woman?

Lop. Desperate! ha, ha, ha! you see how desperate she is. What, art thou frightened, little Bell? ha!

Isa. I confess I am startled at your morals, Sir. *Lop.* Ay, ay, child, thou hadst better take the man, he'll hurt thee the least of the two.

Isa. I shall take neither, Sir; death has many doors, and when I can live no longer with pleasure, I shall find one to let him in at without your aid.

Lop. Say'st thou so, my dear Bell? Ods, I'm afraid thou art a little lunatic, Bell. I must take care of thee, child. [*Takes hold of her, and pulls a key out of his pocket.*] I shall make bold to secure thee, my dear. I'll see if locks and bars can keep thee till Guzman comes. Go, get into your chamber. [*Locks her in.*]

There I'll your boasted resolution try,
And see who'll get the better, you or I.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in DON PEDRO'S House.

Enter VIOLANTE, reading a letter, and FLORA following.

Flora. What, must that letter be read again? *Vio.* Yes, and again, and again, and again, a thousand times again; a letter from a faithful lover can never be read too often, it speaks such kind, such soft, such tender things— [*Kisses it.*]

Flora. But always the same language.

Vio. It does not charm the less for that.

Flora. In my opinion, nothing charms that does not change; and any composition of the four-and-twenty letters, after the first essay, from the same hand, must be dull, except a bank-note or a bill of exchange.

Vio. Thy taste is my aversion—[*Reads.*]

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*My all that's charming, since life's not life
exil'd from thee, this night shall bring me to thy
arms. Frederic and thee are all I trust. These
six weeks' absence, have been, in love's account,
six hundred hours. When it is dark, expect the
wonted signal at thy window; till when, adieu.
Thine more than his own,* FELIX.

Flora. Who would not have said as much to a lady of her beauty, and twenty thousand pounds? [*Aside.*]—Were I a man, methinks, I could have said a hundred finer things.

Vio. What would you have said?

Flora. I would have compared your eyes to the stars, your teeth to ivory, your lips to coral, your neck to alabaster, your shape to—

Vio. No more of your bombast; truth is the best eloquence in a lover.—What proof remains ungiven of his love? When his father threatened to disinherit him for refusing Don Antonio's sister, from whence sprung this unhappy quarrel, did it shake his love for me? And now, though strict inquiry runs through every place, with large rewards to apprehend him, does he not venture all for me?

Flora. But you know, Madam, your father, Don Pedro, designs you for a nun—to be sure, you look very like a nun!—and says your grandfather left you your fortune upon that condition.

Vio. Not without my approbation, girl, when I come to one-and-twenty, as I am informed. But, however, I shall run the risk of that. Go, call in Lissardo.

Flora. Yes, Madam. Now for a thousand verbal questions. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Re-enter FLORA, with LISSARDO.

Vio. Well, and how do you do, Lissardo?

Lis. Ah, very weary, Madam.—Faith, thou look'st wondrous pretty, Flora. [*Apart to FLORA.*]

Vio. How came you?

Lis. En chevalier, Madam, upon a hackney jade, which they told me formerly belonged to an English colonel. But I should have rather thought she had been bred a good Roman Catholic all her life-time; for she downed on her knees to every stock and stone we came along by.—My chops water for a kiss, they do, Flora. [*Apart to FLORA.*]

Flora. You'd make one believe you are wondrous fond now. [*Apart to LISSARDO.*]

Vio. Where did you leave your master?

Lis. Odd, if I had you alone, housewife, I'd show you how fond I could be—[*Apart to FLORA.*]

Vio. Where did you leave your master?

Lis. At a little farm-house, Madam, about five miles off. He'll be at Don Frederic's in the evening.—Odd, I will so revenge myself of those lips of thine. [*Apart to FLORA.*]

Vio. Is he in health?

Flora. Oh, you counterfeit wondrous well.

[*Apart to LISSARDO.*]

Lis. No, every body knows I counterfeit very ill.

[*Apart to FLORA.*]

Vio. How say you? Is Felix ill? What's his distemper? Ha!

Lis. A pies on't, I hate to be interrupted, [*Aside.*]—Love, Madam, love.—In short, Madam, I believe he has thought of nothing but your ladyship ever since he left Lisbon. I am sure he could not, if I may judge of his heart by my own.

[*Looks lovingly upon FLORA.*]

Vio. How came you so well acquainted with your master's thoughts, Lissardo?

Lis. By infallible rule, Madam; words are the pictures of the mind, you know; now to prove he thinks of nothing but you, he talks of nothing but you—for example, Madam: coming from shooting t'other day with a brace of partridges, "Lissardo," said he, "go bid the cook roast me these Violantes."—I flew into the kitchen, full of thoughts of thee, and cried, "Here roast me these Florellas." [To FLORA.]

Flora. Ha, ha! excellent.—You mimic your master then, it seems. [To LISSARDO.]

Lis. I can do every thing as well as my master, you little rogue. [To FLORA.]—Another time, Madam, the priest came to make him a visit, he called out hastily, "Lissardo," said he, "bring a Violante for my father to sit on."—Then he often mistook my name, Madam, and called me Violante; in short, I heard it so often, that it became as familiar to me as my prayers.

Vio. You live very merrily, then, it seems.

Lis. Oh, exceedingly merry, Madam.

[Kisses FLORA's hand.]

Vio. Ha! exceeding merry. Had you treats and balls?

Lis. Oh! yes, yes, Madam, several.

Flora. You are mad, Lissardo; you don't mind what my lady says to you. [Apart to LISSARDO.]

Vio. Ha! balls.—Is he so merry in my absence? [Aside.] And did your master dance, Lissardo?

Lis. Dance, Madam! where, Madam?

Vio. Why, at those balls you speak of.

Lis. Balls! what balls, Madam?

Vio. Why, sure you are in love, Lissardo; did not you say, but now, you had balls where you have been?

Lis. Balls, Madam! wash-balls, Ma'am. Odds-life, I ask your pardon, Madam! I, I, I had mislaid some wash-balls of my master's t'other day; and because I could not think where I had laid them, just when he asked for them, he very fairly broke my head, Madam, and now it seems I can think of nothing else. Alas! he dance, Madam! No, no, poor gentleman, he is as melancholy as an unbraced drum.

Vio. Poor Felix! There, wear that ring for your master's sake, and let him know I shall be ready to receive him. [Exit.]

Lis. I shall, Madam.—[Puts on the ring.] Methinks a diamond ring is a vast addition to the little finger of a gentleman. [Admires his hand.]

Flora. That ring must be mine. [Aside.]—Well, Lissardo! what haste you make to pay off arrears now. Look how the fellow stands!

Lis. 'Egad, methinks I have a very pretty hand—and very white—and the shape!—Faith, I never minded it so much before!—In my opinion it is a very fine-shaped hand—and becomes a diamond ring as well as the first grandee's in Portugal.

Flora. The man's transported!—Is this your love? This your impatience?

Lis. [Takes snuff.] Now in my mind—I take snuff with a very jantee air.—Well, I am persuaded I want nothing but a coach and a title to make me a very fine gentleman. [Struts about.]

Flora. Sweet Mr. Lissardo, [Courtesies.] if I may presume to speak to you, without affronting your little finger—

Lis. Odso, Madam, I ask your pardon.—Is it to me or to the ring—you direct your discourse, Madam?

Flora. Madam, good lack! How much a diamond ring improves one!

Lis. Why, though I say it—I can carry myself as well as any body.—But what wert thou going to say, child?

Flora. Why I was going to say, that I fancy you had best let me keep that ring; it will be a very pretty wedding ring, Lissardo; would it not?

Lis. Humph! Ah! But—but—but—but—I believe I sha'n't marry yet awhile.

Flora. You sha'n't, you say?—Very well! I suppose you design that ring for Inis?

Lis. No, no; I never bribe an old acquaintance.—Perhaps I might let it sparkle in the eyes of a stranger a little, till we come to a right understanding—but, then, like all other mortal things, it would return from whence it came.

Flora. Insolent!—Is that your manner of dealing?

Lis. With all but thee.—Kiss me, you little rogue you. [Hugs her.]

Flora. Little rogue! Prythee, fellow, don't be so familiar; [Pushes him away.] If I mayn't keep your ring, I can keep my kisses.

Lis. You can, you say? Spoke with the air of a chambermaid.

Flora. Replied with the spirit of a serving man.

Lis. Prythee, Flora, don't let you and I fall out; I am in a merry humour, and shall certainly fall in somewhere.

Flora. What care I where you fall in.

Re-enter VIOLANTE.

Vio. Why do you keep Lissardo so long, Flora, when you don't know how soon my father may awake? His afternoon naps are never long.

Flora. Had Don Felix been with her, she would not have thought the time long. These ladies consider nobody's wants but their own. [Aside.]

Vio. Go, go, let him out.

Flora. Yes, Madam.

Lis. I fly, Madam.

[Exeunt LISSARDO and FLORA.]

Vio. The day draws in, and night, the lover's friend, advances.—Night, more welcome than the sun to me, because it brings my love.

Flora. [Within.] Ah, thieves, thieves! murder, murder!

Vio. [Shrieks.] Ah, defend me, Heaven! what do I hear? Felix is certainly pursued, and will be taken.

Re-enter FLORA, running.

How now! Why dost stare so? Answer me quickly; what's the matter?

Flora. Oh, Madam! as I was letting out Lissardo, a gentleman rushed between him and I, struck down my candle, and is bringing a dead person in his arms into our house.

Vio. Ha! a dead person! Heaven grant it does not prove my Felix.

Flora. Here they are, Madam.

Vio. I'll retire, till you discover the meaning of this accident. [Exit.]

Enter COLONEL BRITON, with ISABELLA in his arms, whom he sets down in a chair, and addresses herself to FLORA.

Col. B. Madam, the necessity this lady was under of being conveyed into some house with

speed and secrecy, will, I hope, excuse any indecency I might be guilty of, in pressing so rudely into this—I am an entire stranger to her name and circumstances;—would I were so to her beauty too. [*Aside.*] I commit her, Madam, to your care, and fly to make her retreat secure; if the street be clear, permit me to return, and learn from her own mouth if I can be further serviceable. Pray, Madam, what is the lady of this house called?

Flora. Violante, Signior.

Col. B. Are you she, Madam?

Flora. Only her woman, Signior.

Col. B. Your humble servant, Mistress. Pray be careful of the lady.

[*Gives her two moidores, and exit.*]

Flora. Two moidores! Well, he is a generous fellow. This is the only way to make one careful.

Re-enter VIOLANTE.

Vio. Was you distracted, Flora, to tell my name to a man you never saw? Unthinking wench! Who knows what this may turn to?—What, is the lady dead?—Ah! defend me, Heaven! 'tis Isabella, sister to my Felix. What has befallen her! Pray Heaven he's safe.—Run and fetch some cold water.—Stay, stay, Flora—Isabella, friend, speak to me—oh, speak to me, or I shall die with apprehension.

Isa. Oh! hold, my dearest father, do not force me; indeed I cannot love him.

Vio. How wild she talks!

Isa. Ha! where am I?

Vio. With one as sensible of thy pain as thou thyself canst be.

Isa. Violante!—what kind star preserved and lodged me here?

Flora. It was a terrestrial star, called a man, Madam; pray Jupiter, he proves a lucky one.

Isa. Oh! I remember now. Forgive me, dear Violante; my thoughts ran so much upon the danger I escaped, I forgot.

Vio. May I not know your story?

Isa. Thou art no stranger to one part of it. I have often told thee that my father designed to sacrifice me to Don Guzman, who it seems is just returned from Holland, and expected ashore tomorrow, the day that he has set to celebrate our nuptials. Upon my refusing to obey him, he locked me into my chamber, vowing to keep me there till he arrived, and force me to consent. I know my father to be positive, never to be won from his design; and, having no hope left me to escape the marriage, I leaped from the window into the street.

Vio. You have not hurt yourself, I hope!

Isa. No; a gentleman passing by, by accident, caught me in his arms: at first, my fright made me apprehend it was my father, till he assured me to the contrary.

Flora. He is a very fine gentleman, I promise you, Madam; and a well bred man, I warrant him. I think I never saw a grandee put his hand into his pocket with a better air in my whole lifetime: then he opened his purse with such a grace, that nothing but his manner of presenting me with the gold could equal.

Vio. There is but one common road to the heart of a servant, and 'tis impossible for a generous person to mistake it.—Go leave us, Flora. [*Exit FLORA.*] But how came you hither, Isabella?

Isa. I know not; I desired the stranger to con-

vey me to the next monastery; but ere I reached the door, I saw, or fancied that I saw, Lissardo, my brother's man; and the thought that his master might not be far off, flung me into a swoon, which is all that I can remember.—Ha! what's here? [*Takes up a letter.*] For Colonel Briton; to be left at the post-house, in Lisbon.—This must be dropped by the stranger who brought me hither.

Vio. Thou art fallen into the hands of a soldier; take care he does not lay thee under contribution, girl.

Isa. I find he is a gentleman; and if he is but unmarried, I could be content to follow him all the world over.—But I shall never see him more, I fear. [*Sighs.*]

Vio. What makes you sigh, Isabella?

Isa. The fear of getting into my father's clutches again.

Vio. Can I be serviceable to you?

Isa. Yes, if you conceal me two or three days.

Vio. You command my house, and secrecy.

Isa. I thank you, Violante. I wish you would oblige me with Mrs. Flora awhile.

Vio. I'll send her to you.—I must watch if dad be still asleep, or here will be no room for Felix. [*Exit.*]

Isa. Well, I don't know what ails me; methinks, I wish I could find this stranger out.

Re-enter FLORA.

Flora. Does your ladyship want me, Madam?

Isa. Ay, Mrs. Flora, I resolve to make you my confidante.

Flora. I shall endeavour to discharge my duty, Madam.

Isa. I doubt it not; and desire you to accept this as a token of my gratitude.

Flora. O dear signora, I should have been your humble servant without a fee.

Isa. I believe it. But to the purpose—do you think, if you saw the gentleman which brought me hither, you should know him again?

Flora. From a thousand, Madam: I have an excellent memory where a handsome man is concerned.—When he went away, he said he would return again immediately. I admire he comes not.

Isa. Here did you say? you rejoice me—though I'll not see him, if he comes. Could not you contrive to give him a letter?

Flora. With the air of a duenna.

Isa. Not in this house—you must veil and follow him.—He must not know it comes from me.

Flora. What, do you take me for a novice in love affairs? Though I have not practised the art since I have been in Donna Violante's service, yet I have not lost the theory of a chambermaid.—Do you write the letter, and leave the rest to me—here, here, here's pen, ink, and paper.

Isa. I'll do it in a minute. [*Sits down to write.*]

Flo. So! this is a business after my own heart: love always takes care to reward his labourers, and Great Britain seems to be his favourite country.—Oh, I long to see the other two moidores with a British air. Methinks there's a grace peculiar to that nation, in making a present.

Isa. So, I have done—now, if he does but find this house again.

Flora. If he should not, I warrant I'll find him if he's in Lisbon; for I have a strong possession that he has two more moidores as good as ever were told. [*Puts the letter into her bosom.*]

Re-enter VIOLANTE.

Vio. Flora, watch my papa; he's fast asleep in his study; if you find him stir, give me notice. [*FELIX taps at the window.*] Hark, I hear Felix at the window; admit him instantly, and then to your post. [*Exit FLORA.*]

Isa. What say you, Violante? Is my brother come?

Vio. It is his signal at the window.

Isa. [*Kneels.*] Oh, Violante! I conjure thee by all the love thou bearest to Felix, by thy own generous nature, nay more, by that unspotted virtue thou art mistress of, do not discover to my brother I am here!

Vio. Contrary to your desire, be assured I never shall. But where's the danger?

Isa. Art thou born in Lisbon, and ask that question? He'll think his honour blemished by my disobedience; and would restore me to my father, or kill me; therefore, dear, dear girl—

Vio. Depend upon my friendship; nothing shall draw the secret from these lips; not even Felix, though at the hazard of his love. I hear him coming; retire into that closet.

Isa. Remember, Violante, upon thy promise my very life depends. [*Exit.*]

Vio. When I betray thee, may I share thy fate.

Enter FELIX.

My Felix! my everlasting love!

[*Runs into his arms.*]

Fel. My life! my soul! my Violante!

Vio. What hazards dost thou run for me? Oh, how shall I requite thee?

Fel. If, during this tedious, painful exile, thy thoughts have never wandered from thy Felix, thou hast made me more than satisfaction.

Vio. Can there be room within this heart for any but thyself? No, if the god of love were lost to all the rest of human-kind, thy image would secure him in my breast: I am all truth, all love, all faith, and know no jealous fears.

Fel. My heart's the proper sphere where love resides: could he quit that, he would be nowhere; and: and yet, Violante, I'm in doubt.

Vio. Did I ever give thee cause to doubt, my Felix?

Fel. True love has many fears, and fear as many eyes as fame; yet sure I think they see no fault in thee. [*COL. B. taps at the window.*]

What's that? [*A tap.*]

Vio. What? I hear nothing. [*A tap again.*]

Fel. Ha! What means this signal at your window?

Vio. Some one, perhaps, in passing by, might accidentally hit it; it can be nothing else.

Col. B. [*Within.*] Hist, hist! Donna Violante, Donna Violante!

Fel. They use your name by accident too, do they, Madam?

Re-enter FLORA.

Flora. There is a gentleman at the window, Madam, which I fancy to be the same who brought Isabella hither. Shall I admit him?

[*Aside to VIOLANTE.*]

Vio. Admit distraction rather! Thou art the cause of this, unthinking wretch! [*Apart.*]

Fel. What, has Mrs. Scout brought you fresh intelligence? Death, I'll know the bottom of this immediately. [*Offers to go.*]

Flora. Scout! I scorn your words, Seignior.

Vio. Nay, nay, nay, you must not leave me.

Fel. Oh, 'tis not fair not to answer the gentleman, Madam. It is none of his fault that his visit proves unseasonable. Pray let me go; my presence is but a restraint upon you.

[*Struggles to get from her.*]

Flora. It must be the colonel—now to deliver my letter to him.

[*Aside, and exit: the Colonel taps louder.*]

Fel. Hark! he grows impatient at your delay. Why do you hold the man whose absence would oblige you? Pray, let me go, Madam. Consider, the gentleman wants you at the window.—Confusion! [*Struggles.*]

Vio. It is not me he wants.

Fel. Death! not you! Is there another of your name in the house?—But come on, convince me of the truth of what you say; open the window. If his business does not lie with you, your conversation may be heard. This, and only this, can take off my suspicion.—What, do you pause? Oh, guilt! guilt! Have I caught you? Nay, then I'll leap the balcony. If I remember, this way leads to it.

[*Goes to the door where ISABELLA is.*]

Vio. Hold, hold, hold, hold! not for the world you enter there! Which way shall I preserve his sister from his knowledge. [*Aside.*]

Fel. What have I touched you? Do you fear your lover's life?

Vio. I fear for none but you—For goodness' sake, do not speak so loud, my Felix. If my father hears you, I am lost for ever.—Felix! Felix! your curiosity shall be satisfied. [*Goes to the window, and throws up the sash.*] Whoever you are, that with such insolence dare use my name, and give the neighbourhood pretence to reflect upon my conduct, I charge you instantly to be gone, or expect the treatment you deserve.

Col. B. I ask pardon, Madam, and will obey; but when I left this house to-night—

Fel. Good.

Vio. You are mistaken in the house, I suppose, Sir.

Fel. No, no, he's not mistaken—Pray, Madam, let the gentleman go on.

Vio. Pray be gone, Sir, I know of no business you have here.

Col. B. I wish I did not know it neither—But this house contains my soul; then can you blame my body for hovering about it?

Fel. Excellent.

Vio. I tell you again, you are mistaken; however, for your own satisfaction, call to-morrow.

Fel. Matchless impudence! an assignation before my face—No, he shall not live to meet your wishes. [*Takes out a pistol, and goes towards the window.*]

Vio. Ah! [*Shrieks.*] hold, I conjure you.

Col. B. To-morrow's an age, Madam! may I not be admitted to-night?

Vio. If you be a gentleman, I command your absence.—Unfortunate! what will my stars do with me? [*Aside.*]

Col. B. I have done—Only this—Be careful of my life, for it is in your keeping.

[*Exit from the window.*]

Fel. Pray observe the gentleman's request, Madam.

Vio. I am all confusion.

Fel. You are all truth, all love, all faith: oh, thou all woman!—How have I been deceived.

Sdeath, could you not have imposed upon me for this one night? Could neither my faithful love, nor the hazard I have run to see you, make me worthy to be cheated on? Oh, thou—

Vio. Can I hear this from you? [*Weeps.*]

Fel. [*Repeats.*] "When I left this house to-night."—To-night, the devil! return so soon!

Vio. Oh, Isabella! what hast thou involved me in? [*Aside.*]

Fel. [*Repeats.*] "This house contains my soul." Oh, sweet soul!

Vio. Yet I resolve to keep the secret. [*Aside.*]

Fel. [*Repeats.*] "Be careful of my life, for 'tis in your keeping."—Damnation!—How ugly she appears!

Vio. Do not look so sternly on me, but believe me, Felix, I have not injured you, nor am I false.

Fel. Not false, not injured me? Oh, Violante, lost and abandoned to thy vice! Not false! Oh, monstrous!

Vio. Indeed I am not.—There is a cause which I must not reveal.—Oh, think how far honour can oblige your sex—then allow a woman may be bound by the same rule to keep a secret.

Fel. Honour! What hast thou to do with honour, thou that canst admit plurality of lovers? A secret! ha, ha, ha! his affairs are wondrous safe, who trusts his secret to a woman's keeping; but you need give yourself no trouble about clearing this point, Madam, for you are become so indifferent to me, that your truth and falsehood are the same.

Re-enter FLORA.

Flora. Madam, your father bade me see what noise that was.—For goodness' sake, Sir, why do you speak so loud?

Fel. I understand my cue, mistress; my absence is necessary, I'll oblige you.

[*Going, she holds him.*]

Vio. Oh, let me undeceive you first.

Fel. Impossible!

Vio. 'Tis very possible, if I durst.

Fel. Durst! ha, ha, ha! durst, quotha!

Vio. But another time I'll tell thee all.

Fel. Nay, now or never.

Vio. Now it cannot be.

Fel. Then it shall never be.—Thou most ungrateful of thy sex, farewell.

[*Breaks from her, and exit.*]

Vio. Oh, exquisite trial of my friendship! Yet not even this shall draw the secret from me.

*That I'll preserve, let fortune frown or smile;
And trust to love, my love to reconcile.*

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. Was ever man thus plagued! Odsheart! I could swallow my dagger for madness; I know not what to think; sure Frederic had no hand in her escape.—She must get out of the window; and she could not do that without a ladder: and who could bring it her but him? Ay, it must be so. This graceless baggage—but I'll to Frederic immediately; I'll take the alguazil with me, and search his house; and if I find her, I'll use her—by St. Anthony, I don't know how I'll use her.

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[*Exit.*]

Enter COLONEL BRITON, with ISABELLA's letter in his hand; GIBBY following.

Col. B. Well, though I could not see my fair incognita, fortune, to make me amends, has flung another intrigue in my way. Oh! how I love these pretty, kind, coming females, that won't give a man the trouble of racking his invention to deceive them.—This letter I received from a lady in a veil.—Some duenna; some necessary implement of Cupid. I suppose the style is frank and easy, I hope like her that writ it.—[*Reads.*] "*Sir, I have seen your person, and like it*"—very concise—"and if you'll meet me at four o'clock in the morning, upon the Terriero de Passa, half an hour's conversation will let me into your mind."—Ha, ha, ha! a philosophical wench; this is the first time I ever knew a woman had any business with the mind of a man.—"*If your intellects answer your outward appearance, the adventure may not displease you. I expect you'll not attempt to see my face, nor offer any thing unbecoming the gentleman I take you for.*"—Humph, the gentleman she takes me for! I hope she takes me to be flesh and blood, and then I'm sure I shall do nothing unbecoming a gentleman. Well, if I must not see her face, it shall go hard if I don't know where she lives.—*Gibby.*

Gibby. Here, and like yer honour.

Col. B. Follow me at a good distance, do you hear, *Gibby*?

Gibby. In troth dee I, weel enough, Sir.

Col. B. I am to meet a lady on the Terriero de Passa.

Gibby. The de'il an mine e'en gin I ken her, Sir.

Col. B. But you will when you come there, sirrah.

Gibby. Like enough, Sir; I have as sharp an e'e till a bonny lass as ere a lad in aw Scotland: and what maun I dee wi' her, Sir?

Col. B. Why, if she and I part, you must watch her home, and bring me word where she lives.

Gibby. In troth sal I, Sir, gin the de'il tak' her not.

Col. B. Come along then, 'tis pretty near the time.—I like a woman that rises early to pursue her inclination.

*Thus we improve the pleasures of the day,
While tasteless mortals sleep their time away.*

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—FREDERIC'S House.

Enter INIS and LISSARDO.

Lis. Your lady run away, and you know not whither, say you?

Inis. She never greatly cared for me after finding you and I together: but you are very grave, methinks, *Lissardo*.

Lis. [*Looking on the ring.*] Not at all—I have some thoughts indeed of altering my course of living; there is a critical minute in every man's life, which, if he can but lay hold of, he may make his fortune.

Inis. Ha! what do I see? a diamond ring! where the deuce had he that ring? [*Aside.*] You have got a very pretty ring there, *Lissardo*.

Lis. Ay, the trifle is pretty enough; but the lady who gave it to me is a *bona roba*, in beauty, I assure you.

[*Cocks his hat, and struts.*]

Inis. I can't bear this.—The lady! [*Aside.*] What lady, pray?

Lis. O fie! There's a question to ask a gentleman.

Inis. A gentleman! Why the fellow's spoiled! Is this your love for me? Ungrateful man, you'll break my heart, so you will.

[Bursts into tears.

Lis. Poor tender-hearted fool— [Aside.

Inis. If I knew who gave you that ring, I'd tear her eyes out, so I would. [Sobs.

Lis. So, now the jade wants a little coaxing. [Aside.] Why, what dost weep for now, my dear, ha?

Inis. I suppose Flora gave you that ring; but I'll—

Lis. No, the devil take me if she did; you make me swear now.—So, they are all for the ring, but I shall bob 'em. [Aside.] I did but joke, the ring is none of mine, it is my master's; I am to give it to be new set, that's all; therefore, prythee, dry thy eyes, and kiss me, come.

Enter FLORA, unobserved.

Inis. And do you really speak truth, now?

Lis. Why do you doubt it?

Flora. So, so, very well! I thought there was an intrigue between him and Inis, for all he has forsworn it so often. [Aside.

Inis. Nor han't you seen Flora, since you came to town?

Flora. Ha! how dares she mention my name?

[Aside.

Lis. No, by this kiss, I han't. [Kisses her.

Flora. Here's a dissembling varlet. [Aside.

Inis. Nor don't you love her at all?

Lis. Love the devil! why did I not always tell thee she was my aversion?

Flora. Did you so, villain?

[Gives him a box on the ear.

Lis. Zounds, she's here! I have made a fine piece of work on't. [Aside.

Inis. What's that for, ha? [Goes up to her.

Flora. I shall tell you by and by, Mrs. Frippery, if you don't get about your business.

Inis. Who do you call Frillery, Mrs. Trollup? Pray get about your business, if you go to that; I hope you pretend to no right and title here.

Lis. What the devil, do they take me for an acre of land, that they quarrel about right and title to me?

Flora. Pray what right have you, mistress, to ask that question?

Inis. No matter for that, I can show a better title to him than you, I believe.

Flora. What, has he given thee nine months' earnest for a living title? ha, ha!

Inis. Don't fling your flaunting jests at me, Mrs. Boldface, for I won't take 'em, I assure you.

Lis. So! now I am as great as the famed Alexander. But my dear Statira and Roxana, don't exert yourselves so much about me; now I fancy, if you would agree lovingly together, I might, in a modest way, satisfy both your demands upon me.

Flora. You satisfy! No, sirrah, I am not to be satisfied so soon as you think, perhaps.

Inis. No, nor I neither.—What, do you make no difference between us?

Flora. You pitiful fellow you! What you fancy I warrant, that I gave myself the trouble of dogging you out of love to your filthy person; but you are mistaken, sirrah.—It was to detect your treachery.—How often have you sworn to me that you hated Inis, and only carried fair for the good

cheer she gave you; but that you could never like a woman with crooked legs, you said.

Inis. How, how sirrah, crooked legs! Odds, I could find in my heart—

[Snatches up her petticoat a little.

Lis. Here's a lying young jade, now! Prythee, my dear, moderate thy passion.

[Coaxingly.

Inis. I'd have you to know, sirrah, my legs were never—your master, I hope, understands legs better than you do, sirrah. [Passionately.

Lis. My master, so, so.

[Shakes his head and winks.

Flora. I am glad I have done some mischief, however. [Aside.

Lis. Art thou really so foolish to mind what an enraged woman says? Don't you see she does it on purpose to part you and I? [To INIS: runs to FLORA.] Could not you find the joke without putting yourself in a passion? you silly girl you. Why I saw you follow us plain enough, and said all this, that you might not go back with only your labour for your pains.—But you are a revengeful young slut though, I tell you that; but come, kiss and be friends.

Flora. Don't think to coax me; hang your kisses.

Fel. [Without.] Lissardo.

Lis. Odsheart, here's my master: the devil take both these jades for me, what shall I do with them? [Aside.

Inis. Ha! 'tis Don Felix's voice; I would not have him find me here with his footman for the world. [Aside.

Fel. [Without.] Why, Lissardo, Lissardo!

Lis. Coming, Sir. What a pox will you do?

Flora. Bless me, which way shall I get out?

Lis. Nay, nay, you must e'en set your quarrel aside, and be content to be mewed up in this clothes-press together, or stay where you are, and face it out—there is no help for it.

Flora. Put me any where, rather than that; come, come, let me in.

[He opens the press, and she goes in.

Inis. I'll see her hanged before I'll go into the place where she is.—I'll trust fortune with my deliverance. Here used to be a pair of back stairs; I'll try to find them out. [Exit.

Enter DON FELIX and FREDERIC.

Fel. Was you asleep, sirrah, that you did not hear me call?

Lis. I did hear you, and answered you I was coming, Sir.

Fel. Go, get the horses ready; I'll leave Lisboa to-night, never to see it more.

Lis. Hey-day! what's the matter now? [Exit.

Fred. Pray tell me, Don Felix, what has ruffled your temper thus?

Fel. A woman—Oh, friend, who can name woman, and forget inconstancy?

Fred. This from a person of mean education were excusable, such low suspicions have their source from vulgar conversation; men of your politer taste never rashly censure.—Come, this is some groundless jealousy.—Love raises many fears.

Fel. No, no; my ears conveyed the truth into my heart, and reason justifies my anger. Oh, my friend! Violante's false, and I have nothing left but thee, in Lisbon, which can make me wish ever to see it more, except revenge upon my rival.

of whom I am ignorant. Oh, that some miracle would reveal him to me, that I might through his heart punish her infidelity.

Re-enter LISSARDO.

Lis. Oh, Sir! here's your father, Don Lopez, coming up.

Fel. Does he know that I am here?

Lis. I can't tell, Sir; he asked for Don Frederic.

Fred. Did he see you?

Lis. I believe not, Sir; for as soon as I saw him, I ran back to give my master notice.

Fel. Keep out of his sight then, [*Exit LISSARDO.*]—And, dear Frederic, permit me to retire into the next room, for I know the old gentleman will be very much displeased at my return without his leave. [*Exit.*]

Fred. Quick, quick, be gone, he is here.

Enter DON LOPEZ, speaking as he enters.

Lop. Mr. alguazil, wait you without till I call for you. Frederic, an affair brings me here—which—requires privacy—so that if you have any body within ear-shot, pray order them to retire.

Fred. We are private, my lord, speak freely.

Lop. Why then, Sir, I must tell you that you had better have pitched upon any man in Portugal to have injured, than myself.

Fred. I understand you not, my lord.

Lop. Though I am old, I have a son.—Alas, why name I him? he knows not the dishonour of my house.

Fred. Explain yourself, my lord; I am not conscious of any dishonourable action to any man, much less to your lordship.

Lop. 'Tis false! you have debauched my daughter.

Fred. My lord, I scorn so foul a charge.

Lop. You have debauched her duty at least, therefore instantly restore her to me, or by St. Anthony I'll make you.

Fred. Restore her, my lord! where shall I find her?

Lop. I have those that will swear she is here in your house.

Fred. You are misinformed, my lord; upon my reputation, I have not seen Donna Isabella since the absence of Don Felix.

Lop. Then pray, Sir—if I am not too inquisitive, what motive had you for those objections you made against her marriage with Don Guzman yesterday?

Fred. The disagreeableness of such a match, I feared, would give your daughter cause to curse her duty, if she complied with your demands; that was all, my lord.

Lop. And so you helped her through the window, to make her disobey.

Fred. This is insulting me, my lord, when I assure you, I have neither seen nor known any thing of your daughter.—If she is gone, the contrivance was her own, and you may thank your rigour for it.

Lop. Very well, Sir; however, my rigour shall make bold to search your house. Here, call in the alguazil—

Flora. [*Peeps.*] The alguazil! What in the name of wonder, will become of me?

Fred. The alguazil! My lord, you'll repent this.

Enter ALGUAZIL and Attendants.

Lop. No, Sir, 'tis you that will repent it. I charge you, in the king's name, to assist me in finding my daughter.—Be sure you leave no part of the house unsearched. Come, follow me.

[*Gets towards the door where FELIX is: FREDERIC draws, and plants himself before it.*]

Fred. Sir, I must first know by what authority you pretend to search my house, before you enter here.

Alg. How, Sir, dare you presume to draw your sword upon the representative of majesty? I am, Sir, I am his majesty's alguazil, and the very quintessence of authority—therefore put up your sword, or I shall order you to be knocked down—For know, Sir, the breath of an alguazil is as dangerous as the breath of a demi-culverin.

Lop. She is certainly in that room, by his guarding the door—if he disputes your authority, knock him down, I say.

Fred. I shall show you some sport first! The woman you look for is not here; but there is something in this room which I'll preserve from your sight at the hazard of my life.

Lop. Enter, I say; nothing but my daughter can be there—Force his sword from him.

[*FELIX comes out and joins FREDERIC.*]
Fel. Villains, stand off! assassinate a man in his own house!

Lop. Oh, oh, oh, misericordia! what do I see, my son?

Alg. Ha, his son! Here's five hundred pounds good, my brethren, if Antonio dies; and that's in the surgeon's power, and he's in love with my daughter, you know; so seize him—

Lop. Hold, hold! Oh, that ever I was born!

Fred. Did I not tell you, you would repent, my lord? What, ho! within there.

Enter VASQUEZ.

Arm yourselves, and let not a man in or out but Felix. [*Exit VASQUEZ.*]

Fel. Generous Frederic!

Fred. Look ye, alguazil; when you would betray my friend for filthy lucre, I shall no more regard you as an officer of justice; but as a thief and a robber thus resist you.

Fel. Come on, Sir; we'll show you play for the five hundred pounds.

Re-enter VASQUEZ and Servants.

Lop. Hold, hold, alguazil; I'll give you the five hundred pounds; that is, my bond to pay upon Antonio's death, and twenty pistoles, however things go, for you and these honest fellows to drink my health.

Alg. Say you so, my lord? Why, look ye, my lord, I bear the young gentleman no ill will, my lord; if I but get the five hundred pounds, my lord—why, look ye, my lord—'tis the same thing to me whether your son be hanged or not, my lord.

Fel. Scoundrels!

[*Exeunt Servants.*]

Lop. Ay, well, thou art a good-natured fellow, that is the truth on't—Come then, we'll to the tavern, and sign and seal this minute. Oh, Felix! why wouldst thou serve me thus?—But I cannot upbraid thee now, nor have I time to talk. Be careful of thyself, or thou wilt break my heart.

[*Exeunt LOPEZ, ALGUAZIL, Attendants, &c.*]

Fel. Now, Frederic, though I ought to thank you for your care of me, yet till I am satisfied as to my father's accusation, for I overheard it all, I can't return the acknowledgments I owe you. Know you aught relating to my sister.

Fred. I hope my faith and truth are known to you—and here by both I swear, I am ignorant of every thing relating to your father's charge.

Fel. Enough; I do believe thee. Oh, fortune! where will thy malice end?

Re-enter VASQUEZ.

Vas. Sir, I bring you joyful news.

Fel. What's the matter?

Vas. I am told that Don Antonio is out of danger, and now in the palace.

Fel. I wish it be true; then I'm at liberty to watch my rival, and pursue my sister. Pr'ythee, Frederic, inform thyself of the truth of this report.

Fred. I will this minute—Do you hear, let nobody in to Don Felix till my return.

Vas. I'll observe, Sir. *[To VASQUEZ, and exit. Exit.]*

Flora. *[Peeps.]* They have almost frightened me out of my wits—I'm sure—Now Felix is alone, I have a good mind to pretend I came with a message from my lady; but how then shall I say I came in the cupboard?

Re-enter VASQUEZ opposing the entrance of somebody.

Vas. I tell you, Madam, Don Felix is not here.

Vio. *[Within.]* I tell you, Sir, he is here, and I will see him.

Fel. What noise is that?

Enter VIOLANTE.

Vio. You are as difficult of access, Sir, as a first minister of state.

Flora. My stars! my lady here!

Fel. If your visit was designed to Frederic, Madam, he is abroad.

Vio. No, Sir, the visit is to you.

Fel. You are very punctual in your ceremonies, Madam.

Vio. Though I did not come to return your visit, but to take that which your civility ought to have brought me.

Fel. If my eyes, my ears, and my understanding lied, then I am in your debt; else not, Madam.

Vio. I will not charge them with a term so gross, to say they lied, but call it a mistake; nay, call it any thing to excuse, my Felix—could I, think ye, could I put off my pride so far, poorly to dissemble a passion which I did not feel, or seek a reconciliation with what I did not love?—No law, whilst single, binds us to obey, but your sex are obliged to pay a deference to all womankind.

Fel. These are fruitless arguments. 'Tis most certain thou wert dearer to these eyes than all that Heaven e'er gave to charm the sense of man; but I would rather tear them out, than suffer them to delude my reason, and enslave my peace.

Vio. Can you love without esteem? and where is the esteem for her you still suspect? Oh, Felix, there is a delicacy in love, which equals even a religious faith! True love never doubts the object it adores, and sceptics there will disbelieve their sight.

Fel. Your notions are too refined for mine, Madam.

Re-enter VASQUEZ.

How now, sirrah, what do you want?

Vas. Only my master's cloak out of this press, Sir; that's all.

Fel. Make haste then.

[VASQUEZ opens the press, sees FLORA.]

Vas. Oh! the devil! the devil! *[Exit.]*

Flora. Discovered! Nay, then, legs befriend me. *[Runs out.]*

Vio. Ha! a woman concealed! very well, Felix.

Fel. A woman in the press!

Re-enter LISSARDO.

How the devil came a woman there, sirrah?

Lis. What shall I say now? *[Aside.]*

Vio. Now, Lissardo, show your wit to bring your master off.

Lis. Off, Madam? Nay, nay, nay, there, there needs no great wit to, to, to bring him off, Madam; for she did, and she did not come as, as, as a, a, a man may say directly to, to, to speak to my master, Madam.

Vio. I see by your stammering, Lissardo, that your invention is at a very low ebb.

Fel. 'Sdeath, rascal, speak without hesitation, and the truth too, or I shall stick my spado in your guts!

Vio. No, no, your master mistakes; he would not have you speak the truth.

Fel. Madam, my sincerity wants no excuse.

Lis. I am so confounded between one and the other, that I can't think of a lie. *[Aside.]*

Fel. Sirrah, fetch me this woman back instantly; I'll know what business she had here!

Vio. Not a step; your master shall not be put to the blush—Come, a truce, Felix! Do you ask me no more questions about the window, and I'll forgive this.

Fel. I scorn forgiveness, where I own no crime; but your soul, conscious of its guilt, would fain lay hold of this occasion to blend your treason with my innocence.

Vio. Insolent! Nay, if, instead of owning your fault, you endeavour to insult my patience, I must tell you, Sir, you don't behave yourself like that man of honour you would be taken for; you ground your quarrel with me upon your own inconstancy; 'tis plain you are false yourself, and would make me the aggressor.—It was not for nothing the fellow opposed my entrance.—This last usage has given me back my liberty; and now my father's will shall be obeyed without the least reluctance: and so your servant. *[Exit.]*

Fel. Oh, stubborn, stubborn heart, what wilt thou do? her father's will shall be obeyed; ha! that carries her to a cloister, and cuts off all my hopes at once—By Heaven she shall not, must not leave me! No, she is not false, at least my love now represents her true, because I fear to lose her. Ha! villain, art thou here? *[Turns upon LISSARDO.]* Tell me this moment who this woman was, and for what intent she was here concealed—or—

Lis. Ay, good Sir, forgive me, and I'll tell you the whole truth. *[Falls on his knees.]*

Fel. Out with it then.

Lis. It, it, it was Mrs. Flora, Sir, Donna Violante's woman. You must know, Sir, we had a sneaking kindness for one another a great while. She was not willing you should know it; so, when she heard your voice, she ran into the clothes-press.

I would have told you this at first, but I was afraid of her lady's knowing it; this is the truth, as I hope for a whole skin, Sir.

Fel. If it be not, I'll not leave you a whole bone in it, sirrah: fly, and observe if Violante goes directly home.

Lis. Yes, Sir, yes.

Fel. Fly, you dog, fly. [*Exit LISSARDO.*] I must convince her of my faith. Oh! how irresolute is a lover's heart!—How absolute a woman's power!

In vain we strive their tyranny to quit;

In vain we struggle, for we must submit.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*The Terriero de Passa.*

Enter COLONEL BRITON, and ISABELLA veiled; GIBBY at a distance.

Col. B. Then you say it is impossible for me to wait upon you home, Madam?

Isa. I say, it is inconsistent with my circumstances, colonel, and that way impossible for me to admit of it.

Col. B. Consent to go with me then.—I lodge at one Don Frederic's, a merchant, just by here: he is a very honest fellow, and I dare confide in his secrecy.

Isa. Ha! does he lodge there? Pray Heaven, I am not discovered!

[*Aside.*]

Col. B. What say you, my charmer? shall we breakfast together? I have some of the best tea in the universe.

Isa. Pooh! tea! Is that the best treat you can give a lady at your lodgings, colonel?

Col. B. Well hinted. [*Aside.*] No, no, no, I have other things at your service, child.

Isa. What are these things, pray?

Col. B. My heart, soul, and body into the bargain.

Isa. Has the last no incumbrance upon it? Can you make a clear title, colonel?

Col. B. All freehold, child; and I'll afford thee a very good bargain.

[*Embraces her.*]

Gibby. O' my saul, they mak' muckle words about it. Ise sair weary wi' standing; Ise e'en tak' a sleep.

Isa. If I take a lease, it must be for life, colonel.

Col. B. Thou shalt have me as long or as little time as thou wilt, my dear. Come, let's to my lodging, and we'll sign and seal this minute.

Isa. Oh, not so fast, colonel; there are many things to be adjusted before the lawyer and the parson come.

Col. B. The lawyer and parson! No, no, you little rogue, we can finish our affairs without the help of the law—or the gospel.

Isa. Indeed but we can't, colonel.

Col. B. Indeed! Why, hast thou, then, tripped me out of my warm bed this morning for nothing? Why, this is showing a man, half-famished, a well-furnished larder, then clapping a padlock on the door, till you starve him quite.

Isa. If you can find in your heart to say grace, colonel, you shall keep the key.

Col. B. I love to see my meat before I give thanks, Madam; therefore uncover thy face, child, and I'll tell thee more of my mind. If I like you—

Isa. I dare not risk my reputation upon your ifs, colonel, and so adieu.

[*Going.*]

Col. B. Nay, nay, nay, we must not part.

Isa. As you ever hope to see me more, suspend

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your curiosity now; one step farther loses me forever.—Show yourself a man of honour, and you will find me a woman of honour.

Col. B. Well, for once, I'll trust to a blind bargain, Madam. [*Kisses her hand; exit ISABELLA.*] But I shall be too cunning for your ladyship, if Gibby observes my orders.—Methinks, these intrigues, which relate to the mind, are very insipid—the conversation of bodies is much more diverting. Ha! what do I see? my rascal asleep? Sirrah, did not I charge you to watch the lady? And is it thus you observe my orders, you dog?

[*Kicks GIBBY, who shrugs, rubs his eyes, and yawns.*]

Gibby. That's true, an like yer honour; but I thought that when yence you had her in yer ain hands, ye might a ordered her yersel' weel enough, without me, e'en ye ken, an like yer honour.

Col. B. Sirrah, hold your impertinent tongue, and make haste after her. If you don't bring me some account of her, never dare to see my face again.

[*Exit.*]

Gibby. Ay, this is bonny wark indeed! to rin three hunder mile tae this wicked town, and before I can weel fill my wame, to be sent a whore-hunting after this black she-devil!—What gate sal I gang to speer for this wutch now? Ah! for a ruling elder, or the kirk's treasurer, or his man, I'd gar my master mak' twa o' this. But I am sure there's nae sic honest folk here, or there wad na be sae muckle sculdudderie.

Enter a SOLDIER, passing along.

Gudemam, did ye see a woman, a lady, ony gate here awa' e'en now?

Sol. Yes, a great many. What kind of a woman is it you inquire after?

Gibby. Gude troth, she's no kenspeckle; she's a' in a cloud.

Sol. What, 'tis some Highland monster, which you brought over with you, I suppose: I see no such, not I. Kenspeckle, quotha!

Gibby. Hooly, hooly, man; the de'il pike out yer e'en, and then ye'll see the better, ye Porti-geese tike.

Sol. What says the fellow? [*Turns to GIBBY.*]

Gibby. Say? Say I am a better fallow than e'er stude upon yer shanks—and gin I hear mair o' yer din, de'il o' my saul, Sir, but Ise crack yer croon.

Sol. Get you gone, you Scotch rascal, and thank your heathen dialect, which I don't understand, that you han't your bones broke.

Gibby. Ay, an ye dinna understaun' a Scotsman's tongue, Ise see gin ye can understaun' a Scotsman's gripe. Wha's the better man, now, Sir?

[*Trips up his heels and gets astride over him.*]

Enter VIOLANTE, who crosses the stage; GIBBY jumps from the SOLDIER, and brushes up to her.

I vow, Madam, but I am glad that ye and I are forgotten.

[*Exit SOLDIER*]

Vio. What would the fellow have?

Gibby. Nothing ava, Madam, wo' worth yer heart; what a muckle deal o' mischief had you like to bring upon puir Gibby!

Vio. The man's drunk.

Gibby. In troth am I not. And gin I had nae found ye, Madam, the Laird kens when I should;

for my maister bade me ne'er gang hame without tidings o' ye, Madam.

Vio. Sirrah, get about your business, or I'll have your bones drubbed.

Gibby. Gude faith, my maister has e'en done that t'yer hands, Madam.

Vio. Who is your master, Sir?

Gibby. Mony a ane speers the gate they ken right weel. It is not sae lang sin' ye parted wi' him. I wish he ken ye hauf as weel as ye ken him.

Vio. Poh, the creature's mad, or mistakes me for somebody else; and I should be as mad as he, to talk to him any longer.

[*Enters DON PEDRO's house.*]

Enter LISSARDO at the upper end of the stage.

Lis. So, she's gone home, I see. What did that Scotch fellow want with her? I'll try to find it out; perhaps I may discover something that may make my master friends with me again.

Gibby. Are ye gane, Madam? a de'il scope in yer company; for I'm as wise as I was. But I'll bide and see wha's house it is, gin I can meet wi' ony civil body to speer at. [*Turns and sees LISSARDO.*] My lad, wot ye wha lives here?

Lis. Don Pedro de Mendosa.

Gibby. And did you see a lady gang in but now?

Lis. Yes, I did.

Gibby. And d'ye ken her tae?

Lis. It was Donna Violante, his daughter.—What the devil makes him so inquisitive? Here is something in it, that's certain. [*Aside.*—] 'Tis a cold morning, brother; what think you of a dram?

Gibby. In troth, very weel, Sir.

Lis. You seem an honest fellow; pr'ythee, let's drink to our better acquaintance.

Gibby. Wi' aw my heart, Sir, gang your gate to the next house, and Ise follow ye.

Lis. Come along then. [*Exit.*]

Gibby. Don Pedro de Mendosa—Donna Violante, his daughter. That's as right as my leg, now. Ise need nae mair; I'll tak' a drink, and then to my maister.

*Is bring him news will mak' his heart full blee;
Gin he rewards it not, de'il pimp for me.* [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—VIOLANTE'S Lodgings.

Enter ISABELLA, in a gay temper, and VIOLANTE out of humour.

Isa. My dear, I have been seeking you this half hour, to tell you the most lucky adventure.

Vio. And you have pitched upon the most unlucky hour for it, that you could possibly have found in the whole four and twenty.

Isa. Hang unlucky hours, I wot think of them; I hope all my misfortunes are past.

Vio. And mine all to come.

Isa. I have seen the man I like.

Vio. And I have seen the man that I could wish to hate.

Isa. And you must assist me in discovering whether he can like me or not.

Vio. You have assisted me in such a discovery already, I thank ye.

Isa. What say you, my dear?

Vio. I say I am very unlucky at discoveries, Isabella; I have too lately made one pernicious to my case; your brother is false.

Isa. Impossible!

Vio. Most true.

Isa. Some villain has traduced him to you.

Vio. No, Isabella, I love too well to trust the eyes of others; I never credit the ill-judging world, or form suspicions upon vulgar censures; no, I had ocular proof of his ingratitude.

Isa. Then I am most unhappy. My brother was the only pledge of faith betwixt us; if he has forfeited your favour, I have no title to your friendship.

Vio. You wrong my friendship, Isabella; your own merit entitles you to every thing within my power.

Isa. Generous maid!—But may I not know what grounds you have to think my brother false?

Vio. Another time—But tell me, Isabella, how can I serve you?

Isa. Thus, then—The gentleman that brought me hither, I have seen and talked with upon the Terriero de Passa this morning, and I find him a man of sense, generosity, and good humour; in short, he is every thing that I could like for a husband, and I have dispatched Mrs. Flora to bring him hither; I hope you'll excuse the liberty I have taken.

Vio. Hither! to what purpose?

Isa. To the great universal purpose, matrimony.

Vio. Matrimony! why, do you design to ask him?

Isa. No, Violante, you must do that for me.

Vio. I thank you for the favour you design me, but desire to be excused: I manage my own affairs too ill, to be trusted with those of other people; I can't for my life admire your conduct, to encourage a person altogether unknown to you.—'Twas very imprudent to meet him this morning, but much more so to send for him hither, knowing what inconveniency you have already drawn upon me.

Isa. I am not sensible how far my misfortunes have embarrassed you; and, if you please, will sacrifice my quiet to your own.

Vio. Unkindly urged!—Have I not preferred your happiness to every thing that's dear to me?

Isa. I know thou hast—Then do not deny me this last request, when a few hours perhaps may render my condition able to clear thy fame, and bring my brother to thy feet for pardon.

Vio. I wish you don't repent of this intrigue. I suppose he knows you are the same woman that he brought in here last night?

Isa. Not a syllable of that; I met him veiled, and to prevent his knowing the house, I ordered Mrs. Flora to bring him by the back-door into the garden.

Vio. The very way which Felix comes; if they should meet, there would be fine work—Indeed, my dear, I can't approve of your design.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. Madam, the colonel waits your pleasure.

Vio. How durst you go upon such a message, mistress, without acquainting me?

Flora. So, I am to be huffed for every thing.

Isa. 'Tis too late to dispute that now, dear Violante; I acknowledge the rashness of the action—But consider the necessity of my deliverance.

Vio. That indeed is a weighty consideration: well, what am I to do?

Isa. In the next room I'll give you instructions—In the meantime, Mrs. Flora, show the colonel into this. [*Exit FLORA one way, ISABELLA and*

VIOLANTE another.

Re-enter FLORA, with COLONEL BRITON.

Flora. The lady will wait on you presently, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Col. B. Very well—This is a very fruitful soil. I have not been here quite four and twenty hours, and I have three intrigues upon my hands already; but I hate the chase without partaking of the game.

Re-enter VIOLANTE, veiled.

Ha! a fine-sized woman—Pray Heaven, she proves handsome. [*Aside.*]—I am come to obey your ladyship's commands.

Vio. Are you sure of that, colonel?

Col. B. If you be not very unreasonable, indeed, Madam. A man is but a man.

[*Kisses her hand.*]

Vio. Nay, we have no time for compliments, colonel.

Col. B. I understand you, Madam—*Montrez moi votre chambre.* [*Takes her in his arms.*]

Vio. Nay, nay, hold, colonel, my bed-chamber is not to be entered without a certain purchase.

Col. B. Purchase! Humph, this is some kept mistress, I suppose, who industriously lets out her leisure hours. [*Aside.*]—Look you, Madam, you must consider we soldiers are not overstocked with money—But we make ample satisfaction in love: we have a world of courage upon our hands now, you know. Then prythee, use a conscience, and I'll try if my pocket can come up to your price.

Vio. Nay, don't give yourself the trouble of drawing your purse, colonel; my design is levelled at your person, if that be at your own disposal.

Col. B. Ay, that it is, faith, Madam, and I'll settle it as firmly upon thee—

Vio. As law can do it.

Col. B. Hang law in love affairs; thou shalt have right and title to it out of pure inclination. —A matrimonial hint again. [*Aside.*]

Vio. Then you have an aversion to matrimony, colonel. Did you never see a woman, in all your travels, that you could like for a wife?

Col. B. A very odd question. [*Aside.*]—Do you really expect that I should speak the truth, now?

Vio. I do, if you expect to be dealt with, colonel.

Col. B. Why, then—Yes.

Vio. Is she in your country, or this?

Col. B. This is a very pretty kind of a catechism. [*Aside.*]—In this town, I believe, Madam.

Vio. Her name is—

Col. B. Ay, how is she called, Madam?

Vio. Nay, I ask you that, Sir.

Col. B. Oh, oh, why she is called—Pray, Madam, how is it you spell your name?

Vio. Oh, colonel, I am not the happy woman, nor do I wish it.

Col. B. No; I am not sorry for that. —What the devil does she mean by all these questions?

[*Aside.*]

Vio. Come, colonel, for once be sincere. Perhaps you may not repent it.

Col. B. This is like to be but a silly adventure, here's so much sincerity required. [*Aside.*]—

Faith, Madam, I have an inclination to sincerity, but I'm afraid you'll call my manners in question.

Vio. Not at all; I prefer truth before compliment, in this affair.

Col. B. Why then, to be plain with you, Ma-

dam, a lady last night wounded my heart by a fall from a window, whose person I could be content to take, as my father took my mother, till death do us part. But whom she is, or how distinguished, whether maid, wife, or widow, I can't inform you. Perhaps you are she.

Vio. Not to keep you in suspense, I am not she, but I can give you an account of her. The lady is a maid of condition, has ten thousand pounds, and if you are a single man, her person and fortune are at your service.

Col. B. I accept the offer with the highest transports; but say, my charming angel, art thou not she?

Vio. Once again, colonel, I tell you, I am not she—But at six this evening you shall find her on the Terriero de Passa, with a white handkerchief in her hand. Get a priest ready, and you know the rest.

Col. B. I shall infallibly observe your directions, Madam.

Re-enter FLORA hastily, and whispers VIOLANTE, who starts and seems surprised.

Vio. Ha! Felix crossing the garden, say you? What shall I do now?

Col. B. You seem surprised, Madam.

Vio. Oh, colonel, my father is coming hither, and if he finds you here I am ruined.

Col. B. Odslife, Madam, thrust me anywhere. Can't I go out this way?

Vio. No, no, no, he comes that way. How shall I prevent their meeting? Here, here, step into my bed-chamber.

Col. B. Oh, the best place in the world, Madam.

Vio. And be still as you value her you love. Don't stir till you've notice, as ever you hope to have her in your arms.

Col. B. On that condition, I'll not breathe.

[*Exit.*]

Enter FELIX.

Fel. I wonder where this dog of a servant is all this while. But she is at home, I find. How coldly she regards me. [*Aside.*] You look, Violante, as if the sight of me were troublesome to you.

Vio. Can I do otherwise, when you have the assurance to approach me, after what I saw to-day?

Fel. Assurance! rather call it good nature, after what I heard last night. But such regard to honour have I in my love to you, I cannot bear to be suspected, nor suffer you to entertain false notions of my truth, without endeavouring to convince you of my innocence; so much good nature have I more than you, Violante.—Pray give me leave to ask your woman one question; my man assures me she was the person you saw at my lodgings.

Flora. I confess it, Madam, and ask your pardon.

Vio. Impudent baggage, not to undeceive me sooner; what business could you have there?

Fel. Lissardo and she, it seems, imitate you and I.

Flora. I love to follow the example of my betters, Madam.

Fel. I hope I am justified—

Vio. Since we are to part, Felix, there needs no justification.

Fel. Methinks you talk of parting as a thing indifferent to you. Can you forget how I have loved?

Vio. I wish I could forget my own passion, I should with less concern remember yours—But, for Mrs. Flora—

Fel. You must forgive her—Must, did I say? I fear I have no power to impose, though the injury was done to me.

Vio. 'Tis harder to pardon an injury done to what we love, than to ourselves; but at your request, Felix, I do forgive her. Go watch my father, Flora, lest he should awake and surprise us.

Flo. Yes, Madam.

Fel. Dost thou then love me, Violante?

Vio. What need of repetition from my tongue, when every look confesses what you ask?

Fel. Oh, let no man judge of love but those who feel it; what wondrous magic lies in one kind look—One tender word destroys a lover's rage, and melts his fiercest passion into soft complaint. Oh, the window, Violante; wouldst thou but clear that one suspicion!

Vio. Prythee, no more of that, my Felix, a little time shall bring thee perfect satisfaction.

Fel. Well, Violante, on condition, you think no more of a monastery, I'll wait with patience for this mighty secret.

Vio. Ah, Felix, love generally gets the better of religion in us women. Resolutions made in the heat of passion ever dissolve upon reconciliation.

Re-enter FLORA, hastily.

Flora. Oh, Madam, Madam, Madam, my lord your father has been in the house, and locked the back door, and comes muttering to himself this way.

Vio. Then we are caught. Now, Felix, we are undone.

Fel. Heavens forbid! This is most unlucky! Let me step into your bed-chamber, he wont look under the bed; there I may conceal myself.

[Runs to the door.]

Vio. No, no, Felix, that's no safe place; my father often goes thither; and should you cough, or sneeze, we are lost.

Fel. Either my eye deceived me, or I saw a man within. I'll watch him close.

Flora. Oh, invention, invention! I have it, Madam. Here, here, Sir: off with your sword, and I'll fetch you a disguise.

Fel. She shall deal with the devil, if she conveys him out without my knowledge.

Vio. Bless me, how I tremble!

Re-enter FLORA with a riding-hood.

Flora. Here, Sir, put on this. Be sure you don't speak a word.

Fel. Not for the Indies.

Ped. [Within.] Why, how came the garden door open?

Enter DON PEDRO.

Ha! how now! Who have we here?

Flora. 'Tis my mother, and please you, Sir.

Ped. Your mother! by St. Andrew she's a strapper; why, you are a dwarf to her. How many children have you, good woman?

Vio. If he speaks we are lost.

Flora. Oh! dear Seignior, she cannot hear you; she has been deaf these twenty years.

Ped. Alas, poor woman!—Why you muffle

her up as if she was blind too; turn up her hood.

Vio. Undone for ever! St. Anthony forbid [Aside.] Oh, Sir, she has the dreadfulest unlucky eyes—Pray don't look upon them: I made her hood shut on purpose—Oh, oh, on, oh!

Ped. Eyes! Why, what's the matter with her eyes?

Flora. My poor mother, Sir, is much afflicted with the colic; and about two months ago she had it grievously in her stomach, and was over-persuaded to take a dram of filthy English Geneva—which immediately flew up into her head, and caused such a defluxion in her eyes, that she could never since bear the day-light.

Ped. Say you so? Poor woman!—Well, make her sit down, Violante, and give her a glass of wine.

Vio. Let her daughter give her a glass below, Sir; for my part, she has frightened me, I sha'n't be myself these two hours. I am sure her eyes are evil eyes.

Ped. Well, well, do so—Evil eyes! there are no evil eyes, child.

Flora. Come along, mother.

Ped. Good bye, good woman.

[Exeunt FELIX and FLORA.]

Vio. I'm glad he's gone.

Ped. Hast thou heard the news, Violante?

Vio. What news, Sir?

Ped. Why, Vasquez tells me, that Don Lopez's daughter, Isabella, is run away from her father; that lord has very ill fortune with his children. Well, I'm glad my daughter has no inclination to mankind, that my house is plagued with no suitors.

Vio. This is the first word ever I heard of it: I pity her frailty.

Ped. Well said, Violante. Next week I intend thy happiness shall begin.

Re-enter FLORA.

Vio. I don't intend to stay so long, thank you, papa.

[Aside.]

Ped. My lady abbess writes word she longs to see thee, and has provided every thing in order for thy reception. Thou wilt lead a happy life, my girl—fifty times before that of matrimony, where an extravagant coxcomb might make a beggar of thee, or an ill-natured surly dog break thy heart.

Flora. Break her heart! She had as good have her bones broke as to be a nun; I am sure I had rather, of the two.

[Aside.] You are wondrous kind, Sir; but if I had such a father, I know what I would do.

Ped. Why, what would you do, minx, ha?

Flora. I would tell him I had as good a right and title as he had.

Ped. You would, mistress! who the devil doubts it? A good assurance is a chambermaid's coat of arms; and lying and contriving the supporters. Your inclinations are on tip-toe, it seems. If I were your father, housewife, I'd have a penance enjoined you, so strict, that you should not be able to turn in your bed for a month. You are enough to spoil your lady, housewife, if she had not abundance of devotion.

Vio. Flora, are you not ashamed to talk thus to my father? You said yesterday, you would be glad to go with me into the monastery.

Flora. Did I? I told a great lie, then.

Ped. She go with thee! No, no, she's enough

to debauch the whole convent. Well, child, remember what I said to thee: next week—

Vio. Ay, and what I am to do this, too. [*Aside.*]—I am all obedience, Sir; I care not how soon I change my condition.

Ped. Well said, Violante.—Well, child, I am going into the country for two or three days, to settle some affairs with thy uncle; and when I return, we'll provide for thy happiness, child—Good bye, Violante; take care of thyself.

[*Exeunt DON PEDRO and VIOLANTE.*]

Flora. So, now for the colonel. Hist, hist, colonel.

Re-enter COLONEL BRITON.

Col. B. Is the coast clear?

Flora. Yes, if you can climb; for you must get over the wash-house, and jump from the garden-wall into the street.

Col. Nay, nay, I don't value my neck, if my incognita answers but thy lady's promise.

[*Exeunt COLONEL BRITON and FLORA.*]

Re-enter FELIX.

Fel. I have lain perdu under the stairs, till I watched the old man out. [*VIOLANTE opens the door.*] 'Sdeath, I am prevented. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter VIOLANTE.

Vio. Now to set my prisoner at liberty. [*Goes to the door where the COLONEL is hid.*] Sir, sir, you may appear.

Re-enter FELIX, following her.

Fel. May he so, Madam? I had cause for my suspicions, I find. Treacherous woman!

Vio. Ha, Felix here! Nay, then all's discovered. [*Aside.*]

Fel. [*Draws.*] Villain, whoever thou art, come out, I charge thee, and take the reward of thy adulterous errand.

Vio. What shall I say? Nothing but the secret which I have sworn to keep can reconcile this quarrel. [*Aside.*]

Fel. A coward! Nay, then I'll fetch you out. Think not to hide thyself; no, by St. Anthony, an altar should not protect thee. [*Exit.*]

Vio. Defend me, Heaven! What shall I do? I must discover Isabella, or here will be murder.

Re-enter FLORA.

Flora. I have helped the colonel off clear, Madam.

Vio. Sayest thou so, my girl? Then I am armed.

Re-enter FELIX.

Fel. Where has the devil, in compliance to your sex, conveyed him from my resentment?

Vio. Him! whom do you mean, my dear, inquisitive spark? Ha, ha, ha, ha! you will never leave these jealous whims.

Fel. Will you never cease to impose upon me?

Vio. You impose upon yourself, my dear. Do you think I did not see you? Yes, I did, and resolved to put this trick upon you.

Fel. Trick!

Vio. Yes, trick; I knew you'd take the hint, and soon relapse into your wonted error. How easily your jealousy is fired! I shall have a blessed life with you.

Fel. Was there nothing in it then, but only to try me?

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Vio. Wont you believe your eyes?

Fel. My eyes! no, nor my ears, nor any of my senses, for they have all deceived me. Well, I am convinced that faith is as necessary in love as in religion; for the moment a man lets a woman know her conquest, he resigns his senses, and sees nothing but what she'd have him.

Vio. And as soon as that man finds his love returned, she becomes as errant a slave as if she had already said after the priest.

Fel. The priest, Violante, would dissipate those fears which cause these quarrels; when wilt thou make me happy?

Vio. To-morrow I will tell thee; my father is gone for two or three days to my uncle's, we have time enough to finish our affairs.—But, pr'ythee, leave me now, lest some accident should bring my father.

Fel. To-morrow then—

Fly swift ye hours, and bring to-morrow m—
But must I leave you now, my Violante?

Vio. You must, my Felix. We soon shall meet, to part no more.

Fel. Oh, rapt'rous sounds! Charming woman! Thy words and looks have fill'd my heart
With joy, and left no room for jealousy.
Do thou, like me, each doubt and fear remove,
And all to come be confidence and love.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—FREDERIC'S House.

Enter FELIX and FREDERIC.

Fel. This hour has been propitious; I am reconciled to Violante, and you assure me Antonio is out of danger.

Fred. Your satisfaction is doubly mine.

Enter LISSARDO.

Fel. What haste you made, sirrah, to bring me word if Violante went home.

Lis. I can give you very good reasons for my stay, Sir.—Yes, Sir, she went home.

Fred. Oh! your master knows that, for he has been there himself, Lissardo.

Lis. Sir, may I beg the favour of your ear?

Fel. What have you to say?

[*Whispers; FELIX uneasy*]

Fred. Ha! Felix changes colour at Lissardo's news. What can it be?

Fel. A Scotch footman, that belongs to colonel Briton, an acquaintance of Frederic's, say you? The devil!—If she be false, by Heaven I'll trace her.—[*Aside.*] Pr'ythee Frederic, do you know one colonel Briton, a Scotsman?

Fred. Yes. Why do you ask me?

Fel. Nay, no great matter: but my man tells me that he has had some little differences with a servant of his, that's all.

Fred. He is a good, harmless, innocent fellow; I am sorry for it. The colonel lodges in my house; I knew him formerly in England, and met him here by accident last night, and gave him an invitation home. He is a gentleman of good estate, besides his commission; of excellent principles, and strict honour, I assure you.

Fel. Is he a man of intrigue?

Fred. Like other men, I suppose. Here he comes.

Enter COLONEL BRITON.

Colonel, I began to think I had lost you.

Col. B. And not without some reason, if you knew all.

Fel. There's no danger of a fine gentleman's being lost in this town, Sir.

Col. B. That compliment don't belong to me, Sir—but I assure you I have been very near being run away with.

Fred. Who attempted it?

Col. B. Faith, I know not—only that she is a charming woman; I mean as much as I saw of her.

Fel. My heart swells with apprehension: [*Aside.*] some accidental encounter?

Fred. A tavern, I suppose, adjusted the matter.

Col. B. A tavern? No, no, Sir, she is above that rank, I assure you; this nymph sleeps in a velvet bed, and lodgings every way agreeable.

Fel. Ha! a velvet bed! [*Aside.*] I thought you said but now, Sir, you knew her not.

Col. B. No more I don't, Sir.

Fel. How came you then so well acquainted with her bed?

Fred. Ay, ay, come, come, unfold.

Col. B. Why then you must know, gentlemen, that I was conveyed to her lodgings, by one of Cupid's emissaries, called a chambermaid, in a chair, through fifty blind alleys, who by the help of a key let me into a garden.

Fel. 'Sdeath, a garden! This must be Violante's garden. [*Aside.*]

Col. B. From thence conducted me into a spacious room, told me her lady would wait on me presently; so, without unveiling, modestly withdrew.

Fel. Damn her modesty! this was Flora.

[*Aside.*]

Fred. Well, how then, colonel?

Col. B. Then, Sir, immediately from another door issued forth a lady, armed at both eyes, from whence such showers of darts fell around me, that had I not been covered with the shield of another beauty, I had infallibly fallen a martyr to her charms: for you must know I just saw her eyes—eyes, did I say? No, no, hold, I saw but one eye, though I suppose it had a fellow equally as killing.

Fel. But how came you to see her bed, Sir?—'Sdeath, this expectation gives a thousand racks. [*Aside.*]

Col. B. Why, upon her maid's giving notice her father was coming, she thrust me into the bed-chamber.

Fel. Upon her father's coming?

Col. B. Ay, so she said; but putting my ear to the key-hole of the door, I found it was another lover.

Fel. Confound the jilt! 'Twas she, without dispute. [*Aside.*]

Fred. Ah, poor colonel! ha, ha, ha!

Col. B. I discovered they had had a quarrel, but whether they were reconciled or not, I can't tell; for the second alarm brought the father in good earnest, and had like to have made the gentleman and I acquainted; but she found some other stratagem to convey him out.

Fel. Contagion seize her, and make her body ugly as her soul! There is nothing left to doubt of now.—'Tis plain 'twas she.—Sure he knows me, and takes this method to insult me. 'Sdeath, cannot bear it! [*Aside.*]

Fred. So when she had dispatched her old lover, she paid you a visit in her bed-chamber, ha, colonel?

Col. B. No, plague take the impertinent puppy, he spoiled my diversion, I saw her no more.

Fel. Very fine! Give me patience, Heaven, or I shall burst with rage. [*Aside.*]

Fred. That was hard.

Col. B. Nay, what was worse—But, Sir, dear Sir, do hearken to this. [*To FELIX.*] The nymph that introduced me, conveyed me out again over the top of a high wall, where I ran the danger of having my neck broke, for the father, it seems, had locked the door by which I entered.

Fel. That way I missed him. Damn her invention. [*Aside.*] Pray, colonel—ha, ha, ha! it's very pleasant, ha, ha!—was this the same lady you met upon the Terriero de Passa this morning?

Col. B. Faith, I can't tell, Sir; I had a design to know who that lady was, but my dog of a footman, whom I had ordered to watch her home, fell fast asleep. I gave him a good beating for his neglect, and I have never seen the rascal since.

Fred. Here he comes.

Enter GIBBY.

Col. B. Where have you been, sirrah?

Gibby. Troth, Ise been seeking ye, an lik' yer honour, these two hours and mair. I bring these glad teedings, Sir.

Col. B. What, have you found the lady?

Gibby. Gude faith, ha' I, Sir; and she's call'd Donna Violante, and her parent Don Pedro de Mendosa; and, gin ye will gang wi' me, and lik' yer honour, Ise make ye ken the hoose right weel.

Fel. Oh, torture, torture! [*Aside.*]

Col. B. Ha! Violante! That's the lady's name of the house where my incognita is: sure it could not be her; at least it was not the same house, I'm confident. [*Aside.*]

Fred. Violante! 'Tis false; I would not have you credit him, colonel.

Gibby. The de'il burst my bletcher, Sir, gin I lee.

Fel. Sirrah, I say you do lie, and I'll make you eat it, you dog; [*Kicks him.*] and if your master will justify you—

Col. B. Not I, faith, Sir. I answer for nobody's lies but my own. If you please, kick him again.

Gibby. But gin he does, Ise na tak' it, Sir, gin he was a thousand Spaniards.

[*Walks about in a passion.*]

Col. B. I owed you a beating, sirrah, and I am obliged to this gentleman for taking the trouble off my hands; therefore say no more, d'ye hear, Sir?

[*Apart to GIBBY.*]

Gibby. Troth do I, Sir, and feel tae.

Fred. This must be a mistake, colonel; for I know Violante perfectly well, and I am certain she would not meet you upon the Terriero de Passa.

Col. B. Don't be too positive, Frederic. Now I have some reasons to believe it was that very lady.

Fel. You'll very much oblige me, Sir, if you'd let me know these reasons.

Col. B. Sir!

Fel. Sir, I say I have a right to inquire into these reasons you speak of.

Col. B. Ha, ha! really, Sir, I cannot conceive how you, or any man, can have a right to inquire into my thoughts.

Fel. Sir, I have a right to every thing that relates to Violante.—And he that traduces her fame, and refuses to give his reasons for't, is a villain.

[*Draws.*]

Col. B. What the devil have I been doing? Now, blisters on my tongue by dozens. [*Aside.*]

Fred. Prythee, Felix, don't quarrel till you know for what: this is all a mistake, I'm positive!

Col. B. Look you, Sir, that I dare draw my sword, I think will admit of no dispute.—But though fighting's my trade, I'm not in love with it, and think it more honourable to decline this business than pursue it.—This may be a mistake: however, I'll give you my honour never to have any affair, directly or indirectly, with Violante, provided she is your Violante; but, if there should happen to be another of that name, I hope you will not enross all the Violantes in the kingdom.

Fel. Your vanity has given me sufficient reason to believe I'm not mistaken. I'll not be imposed upon, Sir.

Col. B. Nor I be bullied, Sir.

Fel. Bullied! 'Sdeath, such another word, and I'll nail thee to the wall.

Col. B. Are you sure of that, Spaniard?

Gibby. [*Draws.*] Say nae mair, man. O'my saul, here's twa to twa. Dinna fear, Sir, Gibby stands by ye for the honour o' Scotland.

[*Vapours about.*]
Fred. [*Interposes.*] By St. Anthony, you sha'n't fight on bare suspicion: be certain of the injury, and then—

Fel. That I will, this moment; and then, Sir—I hope you are to be found—

Col. B. Whenever you please, Sir.

Gibby. 'Sbleed, Sir, there ne'er was a Scotsman yet that shamed to show his face.

[*Struts about.*]
Fred. So, quarrels spring up like mushrooms, in a minute. Violante and he were but just reconciled, and you have furnished him with fresh matter for falling out again; and I am certain, colonel, Gibby is in the wrong.

Gibby. Gin I be, Sir, the man that tauld me leed; and gin he did, the de'il be my landlord, hell my winter-quarters, and a rape my winding-sheet, gin I dinna lick him as lang as I can haud a stick in my haund, now see ye.

Col. B. I am sorry for what I have said, for the lady's sake: but who could divine that she was his mistress? Prythee, who is this warm spark?

Fred. He is the son of one of our grantees, named Don Lopez de Pimentel, a very honest gentleman; but something passionate in what relates to his love. He is an only son, which may perhaps be one reason for indulging his passion.

Col. B. When parents have but one child, they either make a madman or a fool of him.

Fred. He is not the only child; he has a sister; but I think, through the severity of his father, who would have married her against her inclination, she has made her escape; and notwithstanding he has offered five hundred pounds, he can get no tidings of her.

Col. B. Ha! how long has she been missing?

Fred. Nay, but since last night, it seems

Col. B. Last night! The very time! [*Aside.*] How went she?

Fred. Nobody can tell: they conjecture through the window.

Col. B. I'm transported! This must be the lady I caught! [*Aside.*] What sort of a woman is she?

Fred. Middle-sized, a lovely brown, a fine pout-

ing lip, eyes that roll and languish, and seem to speak the exquisite pleasure her arms could give.

Col. B. Oh! I am fired with the description! —'Tis the very she. [*Aside.*] What's her name?

Fred. Isabella.—You are transported, colonel.

Col. B. I have a natural tendency in me to the flesh, thou knowest; and who can hear of charms so exquisite, and yet remain unmoved!—Oh, how I long for the appointed hour! I'll to the Terriero de Passa, and wait my happiness; if she fails to meet me, I'll once more attempt to find her at Violante's, in spite of her brother's jealousy. [*Aside.*] Dear Frederic, I beg your pardon, but I had forgot I was to meet a gentleman upon business at five: I'll endeavour to dispatch him, and wait on you again as soon as possible.

Fred. Your humble servant, colonel.

Col. B. Gibby, I have no business with you at present. [*Exit.*]

Gibby. That's weel. Now will I gang and seek this loon, and gar him gang wi' me to Don Pedro's hoose.—Gin he'll no gang o' himself, I see gar him gang by the lug, Sir. Godswarbit, Gibby hates a leer. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—VIOLANTE'S Lodgings.

Enter VIOLANTE and ISABELLA.

Isa. The hour draws on, Violante, and now my heart begins to fail me; but I resolve to venture, for all that.

Vio. What, does your courage sink, Isabella?

Isa. Only the force of resolution a little retreated; but I'll rally it again, for all that.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. Don Felix is coming up, Madam.

Isa. My brother! Which way shall I get out?—Dispatch him as soon as you can, dear Violante. [*Exit into the closet.*]

Vio. I will.

Enter FELIX, in a surly humour.

Felix, what brings you back so soon? did I not say to-morrow?

Fel. My passion chokes me; I cannot speak—Oh! I shall burst!

[*Aside; throws himself into a chair.*]

Vio. Bless me, are you not well, my Felix?

Fel. Yes—no—I don't know what I am.

Vio. Hey-day! What's the matter now? Another jealous whim!

Fel. With what an air she carries it!—I sweat at her impudence. [*Aside.*]

Vio. If I were in your place, Felix, I'd choose to stay at home when these fits of spleen are upon me, and not trouble such persons as are not obliged to bear with them.

[*Here he affects to be careless of her.*]

Fel. I am very sensible, Madam, of what you mean: I disturb you, no doubt; but were I in better humour, I should not incommode you less I am but too well convinced you could easily dispense with my visit.

Vio. When you behave yourself as you ought to do, no company so welcome; but when you reserve me for your ill nature, I waive your merit, and consider what's due to myself.—And I must be so free to tell you, Felix, that these humours of yours will abate, if not absolutely destroy the very principles of love.

Fel. [*Rises.*] And I must be so free to tell you

Madam, that since you have made such ill returns to the respect that I have paid you, all you do shall be indifferent to me for the future; and you shall find me abandon your empire with so little difficulty, that I'll convince the world your chains are not so hard to break as your vanity would tempt you to believe.—I cannot brook the provocation you give.

Vio. This is not to be borne—Insolent! You abandon! You! Whom I've so often forbade ever to see me more! Have you not fallen at my feet? Implored my favour and forgiveness? Did not you trembling wait and wish, and sigh, and swear yourself into my heart? Ungrateful man! if my chains are so easily broke as you pretend, then you are the silliest coxcomb living, you did not break 'em long ago; and I must think him capable of brooking any thing, on whom such usage could make no impression.

Fel. I always believed, Madam, my weakness was the greatest addition to your power; you would be less imperious, had my inclination been less forward to oblige you.—You have, indeed, forbade me your sight, but your vanity even then assured you I would return, and I was fool enough to feed that vanity—Your eyes, with all their boasted charms, have acquired the greatest glory in conquering me. And the brightest passage of your life is, wounding this heart with such arms as pierce but few persons of my rank.

[*Walks about in a great passion.*]

Vio. Matchless arrogance! True, Sir, I should have kept measures better with you, if the conquest had been worth preserving; but we easily hazard what gives us no pains to lose.—As for my eyes, you are mistaken if you think they have vanquished none but you; there are men above your boasted rank, who have confessed their power, when their misfortune in pleasing you made them obtain such a disgraceful victory.

Fel. Yes, Madam, I am no stranger to your victories.

Vio. And what you call the brightest passage of my life, is not the least glorious part of yours.

Fel. Ha, ha, don't put yourself in a passion, Madam, for I assure you, after this day, I shall give you no trouble.—You may meet your sparks on the Terriero de Passa, at four in the morning, without the least regard to me; for when I quit your chamber the world sha'n't bring me back.

Vio. I am so well pleased with your resolution, I don't care how soon you take your leave.—But what you mean by the Terriero de Passa, at four in the morning, I can't guess.

Fel. No, no, no, not you—You were not upon the Terriero de Passa, at four this morning?

Vio. No I was not: but if I was, I hope I may walk where I please, and at what hour I please, without asking your leave.

Fel. Oh, doubtless, Madam! and you might meet colonel Briton there, and afterwards send your emissary to fetch him to your house—and upon your father's coming in, thrust him into your bed-chamber—without asking my leave. 'Tis no business of mine, if you are exposed among all the footmen in town—nay, if they ballad you, and cry you about at a halfpenny a piece—they may, without my leave.

Vio. Audacious! don't provoke me—don't; my reputation is not to be sported with [*Going up to him.*] at this rate.—No, Sir, it is not. [*Bursts into tears.*] Inhuman Felix!—Oh, Isabella, what a

train of ills thou hast brought on me; [*Aside.*

Fel. Ha! I cannot bear to see her weep—a woman's tears are far more fatal than our swords, [*Aside.*]—Oh, Violante—Sdeath! what a dog am I? now have I no power to stir.—Dost thou not know such a person as colonel Briton? pry-thee tell me, didst thou not meet him at four this morning upon the Terriero de Passa?

Vio. Were it not to clear my fame, I would not answer thee, thou black ingrate!—But I cannot bear to be reproached with what I even blush to think of, much less to act. By Heaven, I have not seen the Terriero de Passa this day.

Fel. Did not a Scotch footman attack you in the street neither, Violante?

Vio. Yes; but he mistook me for another, or he was drunk, I know not which.

Fel. And do you not know this Scotch colonel?

Vio. Pray ask me no more questions; this night shall clear my reputation, and leave you without excuse for your base suspicions. More than this I shall not satisfy you; therefore, pray leave me.

Fel. Didst thou ever love me, Violante?

Vio. I'll answer nothing.—You were in haste to be gone just now; I should be very well pleased to be alone, Sir.

[*She sits down, and turns aside.*]

Fel. I shall not long interrupt your contemplation.—Stubborn to the last. [*Aside.*]

Vio. Did ever woman involve herself as I have done? [*Aside.*]

Fel. Now would I give one of my eyes to be friends with her; for something whispers to my soul she is not guilty. [*Aside; he pauses, then pulls a chair, and sits by her at a little distance, looking at her some time without speaking, then draws a little nearer to her.*] Give me your hand at parting, however, Violante, wont you? [*He lays his hand upon her knee several times.*] wont you—wont you—wont you?

Vio. [*Half regarding him.*] Wont I do what?

Fel. You know what I would have, Violante. Oh! my heart!

Vio. [*Smiles.*] I thought my chains were easily broke. [*Lays her hand in his.*]

Fel. [*Draws his chair close to hers, and kisses her hand in a rapture.*] Too well thou knowest thy strength—Oh, my charming angel, my heart is all thy own! forgive my hasty passion, 'tis the transport of a love sincere! Oh, Violante, Violante!

Ped. [*Within.*] Bid Sancho get a new wheel to my chariot presently.

Vio. Bless me, my father returned! what shall we do now, Felix? we are ruined, past redemption.

Fel. No, no, no, my love; I can leap from the closet window. [*Runs to the door where ISABELLA is, who closes and bolts herself in.*] Confusion! somebody bolts the door withinside. I'll see who you have concealed here, if I die for't. Oh, Violante, hast thou again sacrificed me to my rival?

[*Draws.*]

Vio. By Heaven! thou hast no rival in my heart! let that suffice—Nay, sure you will not let my father find you here—distraction!

Fel. Indeed but I shall, except you command this door to be opened, and that way conceal me from his sight.

[*He struggles with her to come at the door.*]

Vio. Hear me, Felix—Though I were sure the refusing what you ask would separate us for ever, by all that's powerful, you shall not enter

here. Either you do love me, or you do not. Convince me by your obedience.

Fel. That's not the matter of debate—I will know who is in this closet, let the consequence be what it will. Nay, nay, nay, you strive in vain; I will go in.

Vio. You shall not go in.

Enter DON PEDRO.

Ped. Hey-day! what's here to do? "I will go in," and, "you sha'n't go in"—and "I will go in"—Why, who are you, Sir?

Fel. 'Sdeath! what shall I say now? [*Aside.*]
Ped. Don Felix! pray, what's your business in my house? ha, Sir.

Vio. Oh, Sir, what miracle returned you home so soon? some angel 'twas that brought my father back to succour the distressed. This ruffian, he,—I cannot call him gentleman, has committed such an uncommon rudeness, as the most profligate wretch would be ashamed to own. As I was at my devotions in my closet—

Fel. Devotions!

Vio. I heard a loud knocking at my door, mixed with a woman's voice, which seemed to imply she was in danger. I flew to the door with the utmost speed, where a lady veiled rushed in upon me, who, falling on her knees, begged my protection from a gentleman, who she said pursued her. I took compassion on her tears, and locked her in this closet; but in the surprise, having left open the door, this very person whom you see, with his sword drawn, ran in, protesting, if I refused to give her up to his revenge, he'd force the door.

Fel. What in the name of goodness, does she mean to do? hang me!

Vio. I strove with him till I was out of breath, and had you not come as you did, he must have entered—but he's in drink, I suppose, or he could not have been guilty of such an indecorum.

[*Leering at FELIX.*]

Ped. I'm amazed!

Fel. The devil never failed a woman at a pinch:—what a tale has she formed in a minute!—In drink, quotha: a good hint; I'll lay hold on't to bring myself off.

Ped. Fie, Don Felix! no sooner rid of one broil but you are commencing another. To assault a lady with a naked sword derogates much from the character of a gentleman, I assure you.

Fel. [*Counterfeits drunkenness.*] Who? I assault a lady! upon honour, the lady assaulted me, Sir, and would have seized this body politic upon the king's highway—Let her come out, and deny it, if she can.—Pray, Sir, command the door to be opened, and let her prove me a liar, if she knows how.

Ped. Ay, ay, who doubts it, Sir?—open the door, Violante, and let the lady come out. Come, I warrant thee he sha'n't hurt her.

Fel. No, no, I won't hurt the dear creature.—Now which way will she come off?

Vio. [*Unlocks the door.*] Come forth, Madam; none shall dare to touch your veil—I'll convey you out with safety, or lose my life.—I hope she understands me.

Re-enter ISABELLA, veiled, who crosses the Stage.

Isa. Excellent girl!

Fel. The devil! a woman! I'll see if she be really so.

Vio. Get clear of my father, and follow me to

the Terriero de Passa, when all mistakes shall be rectified. [*Apart to FELIX, and exit; FELIX offers to follow her.*]

Ped. [*Draws his sword.*] Not a step, Sir, till the lady be past your recovery; I never suffer the laws of hospitality to be violated in my house, Sir—Come, Sir, you and I will take a pipe and bottle together.

Fel. Damn your pipe, and damn your bottle! I hate drinking and smoking—and how will you help yourself, old Whiskers?

Ped. As to smoking or drinking, you have your liberty; but you shall stay, Sir.

Fel. But I won't stay; for I don't like your company: besides, I have the best reason in the world for my not staying.

Ped. Ay! What's that?

Fel. Why, I am going to be married; and so good bye.

Ped. To be married! it can't be! Why, you are drunk, Felix!

Fel. Drunk! Ay to be sure. You don't think I'd go to be married if I was sober.—But drunk or sober I am going to be married for all that; and if you won't believe me, to convince you, I'll show you the contract, old gentleman.

Ped. Ay do; come, let's see this contract then.

Fel. Yes, yes, I'll show you the contract—I'll show you the contract.—Here, Sir—here's the contract. [*Draws a pistol.*]

Ped. [*Starts.*] Well, well, I'm convinced; go, go—pray go and be married, Sir.

Fel. Yes, yes, I'll go—I'll go and be married; but sha'n't we take a bottle first?

Ped. No, no—pray, dear Sir, go and be married.

Fel. Very well, very well; [*Going.*] but I insist upon your taking one glass, though.

Ped. No, not now—some other time.—Consider, the lady waits.

Fel. What a cross old fool! First he will, and then he won't; and then he will, and then he won't. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Here's Don Lopez de Pimentell, to wait on you, Seigneur.

Ped. What the devil does he want? He is not going to be married too—bring him up; [*Exit SERVANT.*] he's in pursuit of his son, I suppose.

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. I am glad to find you at home, Don Pedro; I was told that you was seen upon the road to—this afternoon.

Ped. That might be, my lord; but I had the misfortune to break the wheel of my chariot, which obliged me to return.—What is your pleasure with me, my lord?

Lop. I am informed my daughter is in your house.

Ped. That's more than I know, my lord; but here was your son just now, as drunk as an emperor.

Lop. My son drunk! I never saw him in drink in my life. Where is he, pray, Sir?

Ped. Gone to be married.

Lop. Married! To whom? I don't know that he courted any body.

Ped. Nay, I know nothing of that—but, I'm sure he showed me the contract.—Within there!

Enter a SERVANT.

Bid my daughter come hither; she'll tell you another story, my lord.

Serv. She's gone out in a chair, Sir!

Ped. Out in a chair! what do you mean, Sir?

Serv. As I say, Sir: and Donna Isabella went in another just before her.

Lop. Isabella!

Serv. And Don Felix followed in another; I overheard them all bid the chairs go to the Terriero de Passa.

Ped. Ha! what business has my daughter there? I am confounded, and know not what to think.—Within there!

Lop. My heart misgives me plaguily.—Call me an alguazil; I'll pursue them strait. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Street before DON PEDRO'S House.*

Enter LISSARDO.

Lis. I wish I could see Flora.—Methinks I have a hankering kindness after the slut.—We must be reconciled.

Enter GIBBY.

Gibby. A' my saul, Sir, but Ise blithe to find ye here now.

Lis. Ha! brother! give me thy hand, boy.

Gibby. No sae fast, see ye me.—Brither me, nae brithers; I scorn a leer as muckle as a thief, see ye now; and ye must gang intul this hoose wi' me, and justify to Donna Violante's face, that she was the lady that gaed in here this morn, see ye me, or the de'il hae my saul, Sir, but ye and I shall be twa folks.

Lis. Justify it to Donna Violante's face, quotha; for what? sure you don't know what you say.

Gibby. Troth de I, Sir, as well as ye de; therefore come along, and mak' nae mair words about it.

Lis. Why, what the devil do you mean? Don't you consider you are in Portugal? Is the fellow mad?

Gibby. Fellow! Ise nane of yer fellow, Sir: and gin the place were hell, I'd gar ye de me justice. [*LISSARDO going.*] Na, the de'il a fit ye gang.

[*Lays hold of him and knocks.*]

Lis. Ha! Don Pedro himself; I wish I were fairly off. [*Aside.*]

Enter DON PEDRO.

Ped. How now? what makes you knock so loud?

Gibby. Gin this be Don Pedro's house, Sir, I wa'd speak wi' Donna Violante, his daughter.

Ped. Ha! what is it you want with my daughter, pray?

Gibby. An' she be your daughter, an' lik' your honour, command her to come out, and answer for hersel' now, and either justify or disprove what this cheeld told me this morn.

Lis. So, here will be a fine piece of work.

[*Aside.*]

Ped. Why, what did he tell you, ha?

Gibby. By my saul, Sir, Ise tell you a' the truth; his maister got a pratty lady upon the how-de-call't—passa—here, at five this morn, and he gar'd me watch her hame.—And in troth I lodged her here; and meeting this ill-favoured

thief, see ye me, I speered wha she was—and he tauld me her name was Donna Violante, Don Pedro de Mendosa's daughter.

Ped. Ha! my daughter with a man, abroad at five in the morning. Death, hell, and furies! By St. Anthony, I'm undone.

Gibby. Wounds, Sir, ye put yer saint intul bonny company.

Ped. Who is your master, you dog, you?

Gibby. You dog, you! 'Sbleed, Sir, don't ca' names—I wont tell you wha my maister is, see ye me now.

Ped. And who are you, rascal, that know my daughter so well, ha?

[*To LISSARDO, holding up his cane.*]

Lis. What shall I say to make him give this Scotch dog a good beating? [*Aside.*] I know your daughter, seignior? Not I; I never saw your daughter in all my life.

Gibby. [*Knocks him down with his fist.*] De'il hae my saul, sar, gin ye get no your carich for that lee now.

Ped. What, ho! Where are all my servants?

Enter COLONEL BRITON, FELIX, ISABELLA, and VIOLANTE.

Raise the house in pursuit of my daughter.

Col. B. Hey-day! What's here to do?

Gibby. This is the loon-like tike, an' like yer honour, that sent me hame wi' a lee this morn.

Fel. This is a day of jubilee, Lissardo: no quarrelling with him this day.

Lis. A plague take his fists.—Egad, these Britons are but a word and a blow.

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. So, have I found you, daughter? Then you have not hanged yourself yet, I see.

Col. B. But she is married, my lord.

Lop. Married! Zounds, to whom?

Col. B. Even to your humble servant, my lord. If you please to give us your blessing. [*Kneels.*]

Lop. Why, hark ye, mistress! are you really married? [*To ISABELLA.*]

Isa. Really so, my lord.

Lop. And who are you, Sir?

[*To COLONEL BRITON.*]

Col. B. An honest North Briton by birth, and a colonel by commission, my lord.

Lop. A heretic, the devil!

[*Holds up his hands.*]

Ped. She has played you a slippery trick indeed, my lord!—Well, my girl, thou hast been to see thy friend married.—Next week thou shalt have a better husband, my dear. [*To VIOLANTE.*]

Fel. Next week is a little too soon, Sir; I hope to live longer than that.

Ped. What do you mean, Sir? You have not made a rib of my daughter too, have you?

Vio. Indeed but he has, Sir, I know not how; but he took me in an unguarded minute—when my thoughts were not over strong for a nunnery, father.

Lop. Your daughter has played you a slippery trick too, seignior.

Ped. But your son shall never be the better for't my lord; her twenty thousand pounds was left on certain conditions, and I'll not part with a shilling.

Lop. But we have a certain thing called law shall make you do justice Sir.

Ped. Well, we'll try that,—my lord, much good may it do you with your daughter-in-law.

Lop. I wish you much joy of your rib.

[*Exeunt PEDRO and LOPEZ.*]

Enter FREDERIC.

Fel. Frederic, welcome!—I sent for thee to be partaker of my happiness; and pray give me leave to introduce you to the cause of it.

Fred. Your messenger has told me all, and I sincerely share in all your happiness.

Col. B. To the right about, Frederic; wish thy friend joy.

Fred. I do, with all my soul;—and, Madam, I congratulate your deliverance. [*To ISABELLA.*]—Your suspicions are cleared now, I hope, Felix?

Fel. They are; and I heartily ask the colonel pardon, and wish him happy with my sister: for

love has taught me to know, that every man's happiness consists in choosing for himself.

Lis. After that rule, I fix here. [*To FLORA*]

Flora. That's your mistake; I prefer my lady's service, and turn you over to her that pleaded right and title to you to-day.

Lis. Choose, proud fool; I sha'n't ask you twice.

Gibby. What say ye now, lass; will ye gie your haund to puir Gibby? [*To INIS.*]

Inis. That I may not leave my lady—I take you at your word.—And though our wooing has been short, I'll, by her example, love you dearly.

Fel. Now, my Violante, I shall proclaim thy virtues to the world.

Let us no more thy sex's conduct blame,

Since thou'rt a proof, to their eternal fame,

That man has no advantage but the name.

[*Exeunt.*]

THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY.

REMARKS.

THE caprice of public opinion condemned this farce on its first representation, in 1764, under the title of *What must we all come to*; but in 1776, Mr. Lewis ventured to produce it for his benefit, with its present name, and it was then established in favour.

This smart little piece is well conceived, occasionally verging on caricature: the flippant foolery of Sir Charles Rackett, the ridiculous airs of his lady, the pertness of Dimity, &c. produce a piquant and laughable *tout ensemble*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN.		COVENT GARDEN.	
SIR CHARLES RACKETT,	Mr. Lewis.	LADY RACKETT,	Mrs. Maddocks.
DRUGGET,	Mr. Munden.	MRS. DRUGGET,	Mrs. Davenport.
LOVELACE,	Mr. Farley.	NANCY,	Miss Sims.
WOODLEY,	Mr. Young.	DIMITY,	Mrs. Green.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter WOODLEY and DIMITY.

Dim. Po! po! no such thing;—I tell you, Mr. Woodley, you are a mere novice in these affairs.

Wood. Nay, but listen to reason, Mrs. Dimity; has not your master, Mr. Drugget, invited me down to his country-seat? has not he promised to give me his daughter Nancy in marriage? and with what pretence can he now break off?

Dim. What pretence!—you put a body out of all patience. Go on your own way, Sir; my advice is lost upon you.

Wood. You do me injustice, Mrs. Dimity. Your advice has governed my whole conduct. Have not I fixed an interest in the young lady's heart?

Dim. An interest in a fiddlestick!—You ought to have made sure of the father and mother. What, do you think the way to get a wife, at this time of day, is by speaking fine things to the lady you have a fancy for? that was the practice, indeed, but things are altered now. You must address the old people, Sir; and never trouble your head about your Mistress.

Wood. But you know, my dear Dimity, the old couple have received every mark of attention from me.

Dim. Attention! to be sure you did not fall asleep in their company; but what then? you should have entered into their characters, played with their humours, and sacrificed to their absurdities.

Wood. But, if my temper is too frank—

Dim. Frank, indeed! yes, you have been frank enough to ruin yourself. Have not you to do with a rich old shopkeeper, retired from business with a hundred thousand pounds in his pocket, to enjoy the dust of the London-road, which he calls living in the country? and yet you must find fault with his situation! What, if he has made a ridiculous gimcrack of his house and gardens? you know his heart is set upon it: and could not you have commended his taste? But you must be too frank! “Those walks and alleys are too regular;—those evergreens should not be cut into such fantastic shapes.”—And thus you advise a poor old mechanic, who delights in every thing that’s monstrous, to follow nature. Oh, you are likely to be a successful lover!

Wood. But why should I not save a father-in-law from being a laughing-stock?

Dim. Make him your father-in-law first. And then the mother; how have you played your cards in that quarter? She wants a tinsel man of fashion for her second daughter. "Don't you see (says she) how happy my eldest girl is made by her match with Sir Charles Rackett? She has been married three entire weeks, and not so much as one angry word has passed between them! Nancy shall have a man of quality too."

Wood. And yet I know Sir Charles Rackett perfectly well.

Dim. Yes, so do I; and I know he'll make his lady wretched at last. But what then? you should have humoured the old folks: you should have been a talking, empty fop to the good old lady; and to the old gentleman, an admirer of his taste in gardening. But you have lost him: he is grown fond of this beau, Lovelace, who is here in the house with him; the coxcomb ingratiate himself by flattery, and you're undone by frankness.

Wood. And yet, Dimity, I won't despair.

Dim. And yet you have reason to despair; a million of reasons: to-morrow is fixed for the wedding-day; Sir Charles and his lady are to be here this very night; they are engaged, indeed, at a great rout in town, but they take a bed here, notwithstanding. The family is sitting up for them; Mr. Drugget will keep you all in the next room there, till they arrive; to-morrow the business is over; and yet you don't despair!—Hush! hold your tongue; here comes Lovelace: step in, and I'll devise something, I warrant you. [*Exit WOODLEY.*] The old folks shall not have their own way. It is enough to vex a body, to see an old father and mother marrying their daughter as they please, in spite of my judgment, and all I can do.

Enter LOVELACE.

Dim. Do lend us your assistance, Mr. Lovelace. You are a sweet gentleman, and love a good-natured action.

Love. Why, how now! what's the matter?

Dim. My master is going to cut the two yew-trees into the shape of two devils, I believe; and my poor mistress is breaking her heart for it. Do, run and advise him against it. She is your friend, you know she is, Sir.

Love. Oh, if that's all, I'll make that matter easy directly.

Dim. My mistress will be for ever obliged to you; and you will marry her daughter in the morning.

Love. Oh, my rhetoric shall dissuade him.

Dim. And, Sir, put him against dealing with that nursery-man; Mrs. Drugget hates him.

Love. Does she?

Dim. Mortally.

Love. Say no more; the business is done.

[*Exit.*]

Dim. If he says one word against the giants at Guildhall, he is undone. Old Drugget will never forgive him. My brain was at its last shift; but, if this plot takes—so, here comes our Nancy.

Enter NANCY.

Nan. Well, Dimity, what's to become of me?

Dim. My stars! what makes you up, Miss? I thought you were gone to bed.

Nan. What should I go to bed for? only to tumble, and toss, and fret, and be uneasy. They

are going to marry me, and I am frightened out of my wits.

Dim. Why then you are the only young lady within fifty miles round, that would be frightened at such a thing.

Nan. Ah! if they would let me choose for myself.

Dim. Don't you like Mr. Lovelace?

Nan. My mamma does, but I don't; I don't mind his being a man of fashion, not I.

Dim. And, pray, can you do better than to follow the fashion?

Nan. Ah! I know there's a fashion for new bonnets, and a fashion for dressing the hair; but I never heard of a fashion for the heart.

Dim. Why then, my dear, the heart mostly follows the fashion now.

Nan. Does it? Pray, who sets the fashion of the heart?

Dim. All the fine ladies in London, o' my conscience.

Nan. And what's the last new fashion, pray?

Dim. Why to marry any fop that has a few deceitful agreeable appearances about him; something of a pert phrase, a good operator for the teeth, and a tolerable tailor.

Nan. And do they marry without loving?

Dim. Oh! marrying for love has been a great while out of fashion.

Nan. Why then I'll wait till that fashion comes up again.

Dim. And then, Mr. Lovelace, I reckon—

Nan. Pshaw! I don't like him: he talks to me as if he was the most miserable man in the world, and the confident thing looks so pleased with himself all the while. I want to marry for love, and not for card-playing. I should not be able to bear the life my sister leads with Sir Charles Rackett. Shall I tell you a secret? I will forfeit my new cap, if they don't quarrel soon.

Dim. Oh, fie! no! they won't quarrel yet awhile. A quarrel in three weeks after marriage, would be somewhat of the quickest. By and by we shall hear of their whims and their humours. Well, but if you don't like Mr. Lovelace, what say you to Mr. Woodley?

Nan. Ah!—I don't know what to say—but I can sing something that will explain my mind.

When first the dear youth, passing by,

Disclos'd his fair form to my sight,

I gaz'd, but I could not tell why,

My heart it went throb with delight.

As nearer he drew, those sweet eyes

Were with their dear meaning so bright,

I trembled, and, lost in surprise,

My heart it went throb with delight.

When his lips their dear accents did try

The return of my love to excite,

I feign'd, yet began to guess why,

My heart it went throb with delight.

We chang'd the stol'n glance, the fond smile,

Which lovers alone read aright;

We look'd and we sigh'd, yet the while

Our hearts they went throb with delight.

Consent I soon blush'd, with a sigh

My promise I ventur'd to plight;

Come, Hymen, we then shall know why

Our hearts they go throb with delight.

Enter WOODLEY.

Wood. My sweetest angel! I have heard it all, and my heart overflows with love and gratitude

Nan. Ah! but I did not know you were listening. You should not have betrayed me so, Dimity; I shall be angry with you.

Dim. Well, I'll take my chance for that. Run both into my room, and say all your pretty things to one another there, for here comes the old gentleman—make haste, away.

[*Exeunt* WOODLEY and NANCY.]

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. A forward, presuming coxcomb! Dimity, do you step to Mrs. Drugget, and send her hither.

Dim. Yes, Sir;—it works upon him, I see.

[*Exit.*]

Drug. The yew-trees ought not to be cut, because they'll help to keep off the dust, and I am too near the road already. A sorry, ignorant fop! When I am in so fine a situation, and can see every cart, wagon, and stage-coach, that goes by. And then to abuse the nursery-man's rarities! A finer sucking pig in lavender, with sage growing in his belly, was never seen! And yet he wants me not to have it: but have it I will.—There's a fine tree of knowledge, with Adam and Eve in juniper; Eve's nose not quite grown, but it's thought in the spring will be very forward: I'll have that too, with the serpent in ground ivy. Two poets in wormwood! I'll have them both. Ay; and there's a Lord Mayor's feast in honeysuckle; and the whole court of aldermen in horn-beam: they all shall be in my garden, with the Dragon of Wantley in box, all, all; I'll have them all, let my wife and Mr. Lovelace say what they will.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Did you send for me, lovey?

Drug. The yew-trees shall be cut into the giants at Guildhall, whether you will or not.

Mrs. D. Sure my own dear will do as he pleases.

Drug. And the pond, though you praise the green banks, shall be walled round; and I'll have a little fat boy in marble, spouting up water in the middle.

Mrs. D. My sweet, who hinders you?

Drug. Yes, and I'll buy the nursery-man's whole catalogue. Do you think, after retiring to live all the way here, almost four miles from London, that I won't do as I please in my own garden?

Mrs. D. My dear, but why are you in such a passion?

Drug. I'll have the lavender pig, and the Adam and Eve, and the Dragon of Wantley, and all of 'em; and there sha'n't be a more romantic spot on the London road than mine.

Mrs. D. I'm sure it is as pretty as hands can make it.

Drug. I did it all myself, and I'll do more. And Mr. Lovelace sha'n't have my daughter.

Mrs. D. No! what's the matter now, Mr. Drugget?

Drug. He shall learn better manners than to abuse my house and gardens. You put him into the head of it, but I'll disappoint ye both. And so you may go and tell Mr. Lovelace that the match is quite off.

Mrs. D. I can't comprehend all this, not I. But I'll tell him so, if you please, my dear. I am willing to give myself pain, if it will give you plea-

sure: must I give myself pain? Don't ask me pray don't; I can't support all this uneasiness

Drug. I am resolved, and it shall be so.

Mrs. D. Let it be so then. [*Cries.*] Oh! oh! cruel man! I shall break my heart if the match is broke off. If it is not concluded to-morrow send for an undertaker, and bury me the next day.

Drug. How! I don't want that neither.

Mrs. D. Oh! oh!

Drug. I am your lord and master, my dear, but not your executioner. Before George, it must never be said that my wife died of too much compliance. Cheer up, my love; and this affair shall be settled as soon as Sir Charles and Lady Rackett arrive.

Mrs. D. You bring me to life again. You know, my sweet, what a happy couple Sir Charles and his lady are. Why should not we make our Nancy as happy?

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. Sir Charles and his lady, Ma'am.

Mrs. D. Oh! charming! I'm transported with joy! where are they? I long to see 'em. [*Exit.*]

Dim. Well, Sir; the happy couple are arrived.

Drug. Yes, they do live happy indeed.

Dim. But how long will it last?

Drug. How long! Don't forbode any ill, you jade; don't, I say. It will last during their lives, I hope.

Dim. Well, mark the end of it. Sir Charles, I know, is gay and good-humoured; but he can't bear the least contradiction, no, not in the merest trifle.

Drug. Hold your tongue; hold your tongue.

Dim. Yes, Sir, I have done; and yet there is in the composition of Sir Charles a certain humour, which, like the flying gout, gives no disturbance to the family, till it settles in the head: when once it fixes there, mercy on every body about him! But here he comes. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir C. My dear Sir, I kiss your hand. But why stand on ceremony? To find you up at this late hour mortifies me beyond expression.

Drug. 'Tis but once in a way, Sir Charles.

Sir C. My obligations to you are inexpressible; you have given me the most amiable of girls; our tempers accord like unisons in music.

Drug. Ah! that's what makes me happy in my old days; my children and my garden are all my care.

Sir C. And my friend Lovelace—he is to have our sister Nancy, I find.

Drug. Why, my wife is so minded.

Sir C. O, by all means, let her be made happy. A very pretty fellow Lovelace; as to that Mr.—Woodley, I think you call him—he is but a plain, underbred, ill-fashioned, sort of a—Nobody knows him; he is not one of us. Oh, by all means marry her to one of us.

Drug. I believe it must be so. Would you take any refreshment?

Sir C. Nothing in nature—it is time to retire to rest.

Drug. Well, well, good night, Sir Charles. Ha! here comes my daughter. Good night, Sir Charles.

Sir C. *Bon repos.*

Enter LADY RACKETT.

Lady R. Dear Sir! I did not expect to see you up so late.

Drug. My Lady Rackett, I am glad to hear how happy you are: I won't detain you now. There's your good man waiting for you; good night, my girl. *[Exit.]*

Sir C. I must humour this old pot, in order to be remembered in his will.

Lady R. O, la! I am quite fatigued. I can hardly move. Why don't you help me, you barbarous man?

Sir C. There, take my arm.—

Lady R. But I won't be laughed at. *[Looking tenderly at him.]* I don't love you.

Sir C. Don't you?

Lady R. No. Dear me! this glove! why don't you help me off with my glove? Pshaw! you awkward thing, let it alone; you can't fit to be about my person. I might as well not be married, for any use you are of. Reach me a chair. You have no compassion for me. I am so glad to sit down. Why do you drag me to routs? You know I hate them.

Sir C. Oh! there is no existing, no breathing, unless one does as other people of fashion do.

Lady R. But I am out of humour: I lost all my money.

Sir C. How much?

Lady R. Three hundred.

Sir C. Never fret for that. I don't value three hundred pounds to contribute to your happiness.

Lady R. Don't you?—not value three hundred pounds to please me?

Sir C. You know, I don't.

Lady R. Ah! you fond fool!—But I hate gaming: it almost metamorphoses a woman into a fury. Do you know that I was frightened at myself several times to-night? I had a huge oath at the very tip of my tongue.

Sir C. Had ye?

Lady R. I caught myself at it; but I bit my lips, and so I did not disgrace myself. And then I was crammed up in a corner of the room, with such a strange party at a whist-table, looking at black and red spots: did you mind them?

Sir C. You know I was busy elsewhere.

Lady R. There was that strange, unaccountable woman, Mrs. Nightshade: she behaved so fretfully to her husband, a poor, inoffensive, good-natured, good sort of a good-for-nothing kind of man: but she so teased him—"How could you play that card? Ah, you've a head, and so has a pin—You're a numskull, you know you are—Ma'am, he has the poorest head in the world, he does not know what he is about; you know you don't—Oh, fy! I'm ashamed of you!"

Sir C. She has served to divert you, I see.

Lady R. And to crown all, there was my lady Clackit, who runs on with an eternal 'larum about nothing, out of all season, time, and place—In the very midst of the game she begins, "Lard, Ma'am, I was apprehensive I should not be able to wait on your la'ship; my poor little dog, Pompey—the sweetest thing in the world,—a spade led! there's the knave—I was fetching a walk, Me'm, the other morning in the Park; a fine frosty morning it was; I love frosty weather of all things. Let me look at the last trick—and so, Me'm, little Pompey—Oh! if your la'ship was to see the dear creature pinched with the frost, and

mincing his steps along the Mall, with his pretty innocent face—I vow I don't know what to play—And so, Me'm, while I was talking to Captain Flimsey—Your la'ship knows Captain Flimsey—Nothing but rubbish in my hand—I can't help it—And so, Me'm, five odious frights of dogs beset my poor little Pompey—the dear creature has the heart of a lion, but who can resist five at once? And so Pompey barked for assistance. The hurt he received was upon his chest; the doctor would not advise him to venture out till the wound is healed, for fear of an inflammation—Pray, what's trumps?"

Sir C. My dear, you'd make a most excellent actress.

Lady R. Why don't you hand me up stairs? Oh! I am so tired; let us go to rest.

Sir C. *[Assisting her.]* You complain, and yet raking is the delight of your little heart.

Lady R. *[Leaning on him as he walks away.]* It is you that make a rake of me. Oh, Sir Charles, how shockingly you played that last rubber, when I stood looking over you!

Sir C. My love, I played the truth of the game.

Lady R. No, indeed, my dear, you played it wrong. Ah! Sir Charles, you have a head.

Sir C. Po! nonsense! you don't understand it.

Lady R. I beg your pardon: I am allowed to play better than you.

Sir C. All conceit, my dear: I was perfectly right.

Lady R. No such thing, Sir Charles. How can you dispute it? The diamond was the play.

Sir C. Po! ridiculous! the club was the card against the world.

Lady R. Oh, no, no, no; I say it was the diamond.

Sir C. Zounds! Madam, I say it was the club.

Lady R. What do you fly into such a passion for?

Sir C. Death and fury! do you think I don't know what I am about? I tell you once more, the club was the judgment of it.

Lady R. May be so. Have it your own way, Sir. *[Walks about and sings.]*

Sir C. Vexation! you're the strangest woman that ever lived; there's no conversing with you. Lookye here, my Lady Rackett; it is the clearest case in the world; I'll make it plain to you in a moment.

Lady R. Very well, Sir. To be sure you must be right. *[With a sneering laugh.]*

Sir C. Listen to me, Lady Rackett; I had four cards. Trumps were out. The lead was mine. They were six—no, no, no, they were seven, and we nine; then, you know, the beauty of the play was to—

Lady R. Well, now it's amazing to me, that you can't perceive: give me leave, Sir Charles. Your left hand adversary had led his last trump, and he had before finessed the club, and roughed the diamond: now if you had led your diamond—

Sir C. Zoons! Madam, but we played for the odd trick.

Lady R. And sure the play for the odd trick—

Sir C. Death and fury! can't you hear me?

Lady R. And must not I be heard, Sir?

Sir C. Zoons! hear me, I say. Will you hear me?

Lady R. I never heard the like in my life.

[Hums a tune, and walks about fretfully]

Sir C. Why then you are enough to provoke

the patience of a Stoic.—[*Looks at her; he walks about and laughs.*]—Very well, Madam; you know no more of the game than your father's leaden Hercules on the top of the house. You know no more of whist than he does of gardening.

Lady R. Go on your own way, Sir.

[*Takes out a glass, and settles her hair.*]

Sir C. Why then, by all that's odious, you are the most perverse, obstinate, ignorant—

Lady R. Polite language, Sir!

Sir C. You are, Madam, the most perverse, the most obstinate—you are a vile woman!

Lady R. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Sir C. You are a vile woman, I tell you so, and I will never sleep another night under one roof with you.

Lady R. As you please.

Sir C. Madam, it shall be as I please. I'll order my chariot this moment. [*Going.*] I know how the cards should be played as well as any man in England, that let me tell you. [*Going.*]—And when your family were standing behind counters, measuring out tape, and bartering for Whitechapel needles, my ancestors, my ancestors, Madam, were squandering away whole estates at cards; whole estates, my Lady Rackett. [*She hums a tune, and he looks at her.*] Why then, by all that's dear to me, I'll never exchange another word with you, good, bad, or indifferent. [*Goes and turns back.*] Will you command your temper, and listen to me?

Lady R. Go on, Sir.

Sir C. Can't you be cool as I am?—Lookye, my Lady Rackett; thus it stood. The trumps being all out, it was then my business—

Lady R. To play the diamond, to be sure.

Sir C. Damnation! I have done with you for ever; for ever, Madam, and so you may tell your father. [*Going.*]

Lady R. What a passion the gentleman is in!

Sir C. Will you let me speak?

Lady R. Who hinders you, Sir?

Sir C. Once more, then out of pure good nature—

Lady R. Oh! Sir, I am convinced of your good nature—

Sir C. That, and that only, prevails with me to tell you, the club was the play.

Lady R. I am prodigiously obliged to you for the information. I am perfectly satisfied, Sir.

Sir C. It is the clearest point in the world. Only mind now. We were nine, and—

Lady R. And for that reason, the diamond was the play. Your adversary's club was the best in the house.

Sir C. Why then, such another fiend never existed. There is no reasoning with you. It is in vain to say a word. Good sense is thrown away upon you. I now see the malice of your heart. You are a base woman, and I part from you for ever. You may live here with your father, and admire his fantastical evergreens, till you become as fantastical yourself. I'll set out for London this moment. Your servant, Madam. [*Turns and looks at her.*] The club was not the best in the house.

Lady R. How calm you are!—Well, I'll go to bed. Will you come? You had better. Not come when I ask you?—Oh! Sir Charles.

[*Going.*]

Sir C. That ease is so provoking. I desire

you will stay and hear me. Don't think to carry it in this manner. Madam, I must and will be heard.

Lady R. Oh! lud; with that terrible countenance!—you frighten me away.

[*Runs in and shuts the door.*]

Sir C. [*Following her.*] You shall not fly me thus. Confusion! open the door—will you open it? this contempt is beyond enduring. [*Walks away.*] I intended to have made it clear to her, but now let her continue in her absurdity. She is not worth my notice. My resolution is taken. She has touched my pride, and I now renounce her for ever; yes, for ever; not to return, though she were to request, beseech, and implore, on her very knees. [*Exit.*]

Lady R. [*Peeping in.*] Is he gone? [*Comes forward.*] Bless me! what have I done?—I have carried this too far, I believe. I had better call him back. For the sake of peace I'll give up the point. What does it signify, which was the best of the play?—It is not worth quarrelling about.—How!—here he comes again.—I'll give up nothing to him. He shall never get the better of me: I am ruined for life if he does. I will conquer him, and I am resolved he shall see it.

[*Runs in and shuts the door.*]

Sir C. [*Looking in.*] No; she wont open it. Headstrong and positive!—If she could but command her temper, the thing would be as clear as day-light. She has sense enough, if she would but make use of it. It were pity she should be lost. [*Advances towards the door.*] All owing to that perverse spirit of contradiction.—I may reclaim her still.—[*Peeping through the key-hole.*] Not so much as a glimpse of her. [*Taps at the door.*] Lady Rackett—Lady Rackett—

Lady R. [*Within.*] What do you want?

Sir C. [*Laughing affectedly.*] Come, you have been very pleasant. Open the door: I cannot help laughing at all this.—Come, no more foolery: have done now, and open the door.

Lady R. [*Within.*] Don't be such a torment.

Sir C. Will you open it?

Lady R. [*Laughing.*] No—no—ho, ho!

Sir C. Hell and confusion! what a puppy I make of myself! I'll bear this usage no longer. To be trifled with in this sort by a false, treacherous,

—[*Runs to the door and speaks through the key-hole.*] The diamond was not the play.

[*Walks away as fast as he can.*] I know what I am about, [*Looks back in a violent rage.*] and the club was not the best in the house. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter DIMITY, laughing violently.

Dim. Oh, I shall die; I shall expire in a fit of laughing. 'Tis the modish couple that were so happy! such a quarrel as they have had; the whole house is in an uproar. Ho, ho, ho! a rare proof of the happiness they enjoy in high life. I shall never hear people of fashion mentioned again, but I shall be ready to, crack my sides. They were both—Ho, ho, ho! This is three weeks after marriage, I think.

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. Hey! how! what's the matter, Dimity?—What am I called down stairs for?

Dim. Why, there's two people of fashion—

Drug. Why, you malapert hussey! explain this moment. [*Stiffles a laugh.*]

Dim. The fond couple have been together by the ears this half hour. Are you satisfied now?

Drug. Ay! what, have they quarrelled? what was it about?

Dim. Something too nice and fine for my comprehension, and yours too, I believe. People in high life understand their own forms best. And here comes one that can unriddle the whole affair.

[*Exit.*]

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir C. [*To the people within.*] I say, let the horses be put to this moment. So, Mr. Drugget!

Drug. Sir Charles, here's a terrible bustle. I did not expect this. What can be the matter?

Sir C. I have been used by your daughter in so base, so contemptuous, so vile a manner, that I am determined not to stay in this house to-night.

Drug. This is a thunderbolt to me! after seeing how elegantly and fashionably you lived together, to find now all sunshine vanished! Do, Sir Charles, let me heal this breach, if possible.

Sir C. Sir, it is impossible. I'll not live with her an hour longer.

Drug. Nay, nay, don't be too hasty. Let me intreat you, go to bed and sleep upon it. In the morning, when you are cool—

Sir C. Oh, Sir, I am very cool, I assure you. Ha! ha!—it is not in her power, Sir, to—a—a—to disturb the serenity of my temper. Don't imagine that I'm in a passion. I am not so easily ruffled as you imagine. But, quietly and deliberately, I can repay the injury done me by a false, ungrateful, deceitful woman.

Drug. The injuries done you by a false, ungrateful! My daughter, I hope, Sir—

Sir C. Her character is now fully known to me. I understand her perfectly. She is a vile woman! that's all I have to say, Sir!

Drug. Hey! how!—a vile woman! what has she done? I hope she is not capable—

Sir C. I shall enter into no detail, Mr. Drugget. See if the horses are put to.

Drug. Mercy on me! in my old days to hear this.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Deliver me! I am all over in such a tremble. Sir Charles, I shall break my heart if there is any thing amiss.

Sir C. Madam, I am very sorry, for your sake; but to live with her is impossible.

Mrs. D. My poor dear girl! what can she have done?

Sir C. What all her sex can do: it needs no explanation: the very spirit of them all.

Drug. Ay! I see how it is.—She is bringing foul disgrace upon us. This comes of her marrying a man of fashion.

Sir C. Fashion, Sir, that should have instructed her better. She might have been sensible of her happiness. Whatever you may think of the fortune you gave her, my rank in life claims respect; claims obedience, attention, and truth.

Drug. And let me tell you, however you may estimate your quality, my daughter is dear to me.

Sir C. And, Sir, my character is dear to me. It shall never be in her power to expose me.

Drug. Yet you must give me leave to tell you—

Sir C. I won't hear a word.

Drug. Not in behalf of my own daughter?

Mrs. D. Don't be so hasty, my love; have some respect for Sir Charles' rank; don't be violent with a man of his fashion.

Drug. Hold your tongue, woman, I say; hold your tongue. You are not a person of fashion, at least. My daughter was ever a good girl.

Sir C. I have found her out.

Drug. Oh! then it's all over, and it does not signify arguing about it.

Mrs. D. That ever I should live to see this hour! How the unfortunate girl could take such wickedness in her head, I can't imagine. I'll go and speak to the unhappy creature this moment.

[*Exit.*]

Sir C. She stands detected now: detected in her truest colours.

Drug. Well, grievous as it may be, let me hear the circumstances of this unhappy business.

Sir C. Mr. Drugget, I have not leisure now. Her behaviour has been so exasperating, that I shall make the best of my way to town. My mind is fixed. She sees me no more, and so, your servant, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Drug. What a calamity has here befallen us! A good girl, and so well disposed! But the evil communication of high life, and fashionable vices, turned her heart to folly.

Enter LADY RACKETT, MRS. DRUGGET, and DIMITY.

Lady R. A cruel, barbarous man, to quarrel in this unaccountable manner; to alarm the whole house, and to expose me and himself too.

Mrs. D. Oh, child! I never thought it would have come to this. Your shame will not end here; it will be all over St. James' parish by to-morrow morning.

Lady R. Well, if it must be so, there is one comfort still; the story will tell more to his disgrace than mine.

Dim. As I'm a sinner, and so it will, Madam. He deserves what he has met with.

Mrs. D. Dimity, don't you encourage her. You shock me to hear you speak so. I did not think you had been so hardened.

Lady R. Hardened do you call it? I have lived in the world to very little purpose if such trifles as these are to disturb my rest.

Mrs. D. You wicked girl! do you call it a trifle to be guilty of falsehood to your husband's bed?

Lady R. How!—[*Turns short, and stares at her.*] Well, I protest and vow I don't comprehend all this. Has Sir Charles accused me of any impropriety in my conduct?

Mrs. D. Oh! too true he has: he has found you out, and you have behaved basely, he says.

Lady R. Madam!

Mrs. D. You have fallen into frailty, like many of your sex, he says; and he is resolved to come to a separation directly.

Lady R. Why then, if he is so base a wretch as to dishonour me in that manner, his heart shall ache before I live with him again.

Dim. Hold to that, Ma'am, and let his head ache into the bargain.

Mrs. D. Your poor father heard it as well as I.

Lady R. Then let your doors be open for him this very moment; let him return to London. If he does not, I'll lock myself up, and the false one sha'n't approach me, though he were to whine on

his knees at my very door. A base, injurious man!

Mrs. D. Dimity, do let us follow, and hear what she has to say for herself.

Dim. She has excuse enough, I warrant her. What a noise is here indeed. I have lived in polite families, where there was no such bustle made about nothing.

Enter SIR CHARLES and DRUGGET.

Sir C. It is all in vain, Sir, my resolution is taken.

Drug. Well, but consider, I am her father. Indulge me only till we hear what the girl has to say in her defence.

Sir C. She can have nothing to say; no excuse can palliate such behaviour.

Drug. Don't be too positive: there may be some mistake.

Sir C. No, Sir, no; there can be no mistake. Did not I see her, hear her myself?

Drug. Lack-a-day! then I am an unfortunate man.

Sir C. She will be unfortunate too: with all my heart. She may thank herself. She might have been happy, had she been so disposed.

Drug. Why truly, I think she might.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. I wish you would moderate your anger a little, and let us talk over this affair with temper. My daughter denies every tittle of your charge.

Sir C. Denies it! denies it!

Mrs. D. She does, indeed.

Sir C. And that aggravates her fault.

Mrs. D. She vows that you never found her out in any thing that was wrong.

Sir C. She does not allow it to be wrong then?—Madam, I tell you again, I know her thoroughly. I have found her out: I am now acquainted with her character. I am to be deceived no more.

Mrs. D. Then you are in opposite stories. She swears, my dear Mr. Drugget, the poor girl swears, she never was guilty of the smallest infidelity in her born days.

Sir C. And what then? What if she does say so?

Mrs. D. And if she says truly, it is hard her character should be blown upon without just cause.

Sir C. And is she therefore to behave ill in other respects? I never charged her with infidelity to me, Madam; there I allow her innocent.

Drug. And did not you charge her then?

Sir C. No, Sir, I never dreamt of such a thing.

Drug. Why then, if she is innocent, let me tell you, you are a scandalous person.

Mrs. D. Pr'ythee, my dear—

Drug. Be quiet: though he is a man of quality, I will tell him of it. Did not I fine for sheriff?—Yes, you are a scandalous person to defame an honest man's daughter.

Sir C. What have you taken into your head now?

Drug. You charged her with falsehood to your bed.

Sir C. No, never, never.

Drug. I say, you did.

Sir C. And I say, no, no.

Drug. But I say, you did; you called yourself a cuckold. Did not he, wife?

Mrs. D. Yes, lovey, I am witness.

Sir C. Absurd! I said no such thing.

Drug. But I aver you did.

Sir C. But I tell you no, positively no.

Drug. & Mrs. D. And I say, yes, positively yes.

Sir C. 'Sdeath, this is all madness.

Drug. You said that she followed the ways of most of her sex.

Sir C. I said so, and what then?

Drug. There, he owns it: owns that he called himself a cuckold, and without rhyme or reason into the bargain.

Sir C. I never owned any such thing.

Drug. You owned it even now, now, now, now.

Mrs. D. This very moment.

Sir C. No, no; I tell you, no.

Drug. This instant. Prove it; make your words good; show me your horns, and if you cannot, it is worse than suicide to call yourself a cuckold without proof.

Enter DIMITY, in a fit of laughter.

Dim. What do you think it was all about? Ha! ha! the whole secret is come out, ha, ha! It was all about a game of cards. Ho, ho, ho!

Drug. A game of cards!

Dim. [Laughing.] It was all about a club and a diamond. [Exit, laughing.]

Drug. And was that all, Sir Charles?

Sir C. And enough too, Sir.

Drug. And was that what you found her out in?

Sir C. I can't bear to be contradicted, when I am clear that I am in the right.

Drug. I never heard of such a heap of nonsense in all my life. Woodley shall marry Nancy.

Mrs. D. Don't be in a hurry, my love, this will all be made up.

Drug. Why does he not go and beg her pardon then?

Sir C. I beg her pardon! I won't debase myself to any of you. I sha'n't forgive her, you may rest assured. [Exit.]

Drug. Now, there, there's a pretty fellow for you!

Mrs. D. I'll step and prevail on my Lady Rackett to speak to him: all this will be set right. [Exit.]

Drug. A ridiculous fop! I am glad it is no worse, however.—He must go and talk scandal of himself, as if the town did not abound with people ready enough to take that trouble off his hands.

Enter NANCY.

Drug. So, Nancy,—you seem in confusion, my girl!

Nan. How can one help it, with all this noise in the house? And you are going to marry me as ill as my sister. I hate Mr. Lovelace!

Drug. Why so, child?

Nan. I know these people of quality despise us all out of pride, and would be glad to marry us out of avarice.

Drug. The girl's right.

Nan. They marry one woman, live with another, and love only themselves.

Drug. And then quarrel about a card.

Nan. I don't want to be a gay lady. I want to be happy.

Drug. And so you shall: don't frighten yourself, child. Step to your sister, bid her make herself easy; go, and comfort her, go.

Nan. Yes, Sir.

Drug. I'll step and settle the matter with Mr. Woodley, this moment.

[*Exit.*]

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Another Apartment.

SIR CHARLES, with a pack of cards, at a table.

Sir C. Never was any thing like her behaviour. I can pick out the very cards I had in my hand, and then 'tis as plain as the sun.—There—there—now—there—no—damn it—there it was—now let me see; they had four by honours, and we played for the odd trick,—damnation! honours were divided—ay!—honours were divided, and then a trump was led, and the other side had the—confusion!—this preposterous woman has put it all out of my head. [*Puts the cards into his pocket.*] Mighty well, Madam; I have done with you

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Sir Charles, let me prevail. Come with me and speak to her.

Sir C. I don't desire to see her face.

Mrs. D. If you were to see her all bathed in tears, I am sure it would melt your very heart.

Sir C. Madam, it shall be my fault if ever I am treated so again. I'll have nothing to say to her.—[*Going, stops.*] Does she give up the point?

Mrs. D. She does, she agrees to any thing.

Sir C. Does she allow that the club was the play?

Mrs. D. Just as you please; she is all submission.

Sir C. Does she own that the club was not the best in the house?

Mrs. D. She does; she is willing to own it.

Sir C. Then I'll step and speak to her. I never was clearer in any thing in my life. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. D. Lord love 'em, they'll make it up now, and then they'll be as happy as ever. [*Exit.*]

Enter NANCY.

Nan. Well! they may talk what they will of taste, and genteel life; I don't think it is natural. Give me Mr. Woodley.—La! that odious thing is coming this way.

Enter LOVELACE.

Love. My charming little innocent, I have not seen you these three hours.

Nan. I have been very happy these three hours.

Love. My sweet angel, you seem disconcerted, and you neglect your pretty figure. No matter, for the present; in a little time I shall make you appear as graceful and as genteel as your sister.

Nan. That is not what employs my thoughts, Sir.

Love. Ay! but my pretty little dear, that should engage your attention. To set off and adorn the charms that nature has given you, should be the business of your life.

Nan. But as I have something else to do, you'll excuse my leaving you. [*Exit.*]

Love. I must have her, notwithstanding this; for though I am not in love, I am most confoundedly in debt.

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. So, Mr. Lovelace! any news from above

stairs? Is this absurd quarrel at an end? Have they made it up?

Love. Oh! a mere bagatelle, Sir; these little fracas never last long, as you see; for here they come, in perfect good humour.

Enter SIR CHARLES RACKETT and LADY RACKETT.

Sir C. Mr. Drugget, I embrace you; you see me in the most perfect harmony of spirits.

Drug. What, all reconciled again?

Lady R. All made up, Sir. I knew how to bring the gentleman to a sense of his duty. This is the first difference, I think, we ever had, Sir Charles.

Sir C. And I'll be sworn it shall be the last.

Drug. I am happy, now, as happy as a fond father can wish. Sir Charles, I can spare you an image to put on the top of your house in London.

Sir C. Infinitely obliged to you.

Drug. Well, well, it's time to retire: I am glad to see you reconciled; and now I wish you a good night, Sir Charles. Mr. Lovelace, this is your way. Fare ye well both. I am glad your quarrels are at an end: this way, Mr. Lovelace.

[*Exeunt DRUG. and LOVE.*]

Lady R. Ah! you are a sad man, Sir Charles, to behave to me as you have done.

Sir C. My dear, I grant it: and such an absurd quarrel too—ha, ha!

Lady R. Yes, ha, ha!—about such a trifle.

Sir C. It is pleasant how we could both fall into such an error. Ha, ha!

Lady R. Ridiculous beyond expression; ha, ha!

Sir C. And then the mistake your father and mother fell into.

Lady R. That too is a diverting part of the story. Ha, ha!—But, Sir Charles, must I stay and live with my father till I grow as fantastical as his evergreens?

Sir C. Nay, prithee don't remind me of my folly.

Lady R. Ah! my relations were all standing behind counters, selling Whitechapel needles, while your family were spending great estates.

Sir C. Spare my blushes; you see I am covered with confusion.

Lady R. How could you say so indelicate a thing? I don't love you.

Sir C. It was indelicate, I grant it.

Lady R. Am I a vile woman?

Sir C. How can you, my angel?

Lady R. I sha'n't forgive you. I'll have you on your knees for this. [*Sings and plays with him.*] "Go, naughty man."—Ah, Sir Charles!

Sir C. The rest of my life shall aim at convincing you how sincerely I love you.

Lady R. [*Sings.*] "Go, naughty man, I can't abide you." Well, come, let us go to rest. [*Going.*] Ah, Sir Charles, now it's all over, the diamond was the play.

Sir C. Oh, no, no, no; now that one may speak, it was the club indeed.

Lady R. Indeed, my love, you are mistaken.

Sir C. You make me laugh; but I was not mistaken; rely upon my judgment.

Lady R. You may rely upon mine; you was wrong.

Sir C. [*Laughing.*] Po! no, no, no such thing.

Lady R. [*Laughing.*] But I say, yes, yes, yes.

Sir C. Oh! no, no; it is too ridiculous; don't say any more about it, my love.

Lady R. [*Toying with him.*] Don't you say any more about it; you had better give it up, you had indeed.

Enter FOOTMAN.

Foot. Your honour's cap and slippers.

Sir C. Lay down my cap, and here take these shoes off. [*He takes them off, and leaves them at a distance.*] Indeed, my Lady Rackett, you make me ready to expire with laughing. Ha, ha!

Lady R. You may laugh, but I am right notwithstanding.

Sir C. How can you say so?

Lady R. How can you say otherwise?

Sir C. Well, now mind me, Lady Rackett, we can now talk of this in good humour; we can discuss it coolly.

Lady R. So we can, and it is for that reason I venture to speak to you. Are these the ruffles I bought for you?

Sir C. They are, my dear.

Lady R. They are very pretty. But, indeed, you played the card wrong.

Sir C. No, no, listen to me; the affair was thus: Mr. Jenkins having never a club left—

Lady R. Mr. Jenkins finessed the club.

Sir C. [*Peevishly.*] How can you?

Lady R. And trumps being all out—

Sir C. And we playing for the odd trick—

Lady R. If you had minded your game—

Sir C. And the club being the best—

Lady R. If you had led your diamond—

Sir C. Mr. Jenkins would, of course, put on a spade.

Lady R. And so the odd trick was sure.

Sir C. Damnation! will you let me speak?

Lady R. Very well, Sir, fly out again.

Sir C. Look here now; here is a pack of cards. —Now you shall be convinced.

Lady R. You may talk till to-morrow, I know I am right. [*Walks about.*]

Sir C. Why then, by all that's perverse, you are the most headstrong—Can't you look here? here are the very cards.

Lady R. Go on; you'll find it out at last.

Sir C. Will you hold your tongue, or not? will you let me show you?—Po! it is all nonsense. [*Puts up the cards.*] Come, let us go to bed. [*Going.*] Only stay one moment. [*Takes out the cards.*] Now command yourself, and you shall have demonstration.

Lady R. It does not signify, Sir. Your head will be clearer in the morning. I choose to go to bed.

Sir C. Stay and hear me, can't you?

Lady R. No; my head aches. I am tired of the subject.

Sir C. Why then damn the cards. There, and there, and there. [*Throwing them about the room.*] You may go to bed by yourself. Confusion seize me if I stay here to be tormented a moment longer. [*Putting on his shoes.*]

Lady R. Take your own way, Sir.

Sir C. Now then, I tell you once more, you are a vile woman.

Lady R. Don't make me laugh again, Sir Charles. [*Walks and sings.*]

Sir C. Hell and the devil! Will you sit down quietly and let me convince you?

Lady R. I don't choose to hear any more about it.

Sir C. Why then may I perish if ever—a blockhead, an idiot, I was to marry. [*Walks about.*] Such provoking impertinence! [*She sits down.*] Damnation! I am so clear in the thing. She is not worth my notice. [*Sits down, turns his back, and looks uneasy.*] I'll take no more pains about it. [*Pauses for some time, then looks at her.*] Is it not strange, that you won't hear me?

Lady R. Sir, I am very ready to hear you.

Sir C. Very well then, very well; you remember how the game stood.

[*Draws his chair near her.*]
Lady R. I wish you would untie my necklace, it hurts me.

Sir C. Why can't you listen?

Lady R. I tell you it hurts me terribly.

Sir C. Death and confusion! [*Moves his chair away.*]—There is no bearing this. [*Looks at her angrily.*] It won't take a moment, if you will but listen. [*Moves towards her.*] Can't you see, that, by forcing the adversary's hand, Mr. Jenkins would be obliged to—

Lady R. [*Moving her chair away from him.*] Mr. Jenkins had the best club, and never a diamond left.

Sir C. [*Rising.*] Distraction! Bedlam is not so mad. Be as wrong as you please, Madam. May I never hold four by honours, may I lose every thing I play for, may fortune eternally forsake me, if I endeavour to set you right again.

[*Exit.*]

Enter MR. and MRS. DRUGGET, WOODLEY, and NANCY.

Mrs. D. Gracious! what's the matter now?

Lady R. Such another man does not exist. I did not say a word to the gentleman, and yet he has been raving about the room, and storming like a whirlwind.

Drug. And about a club again! I heard it all.—Come hither, Nancy; Mr. Woodley, she is yours for life.

Mrs. D. My dear, how can you be so passionate?

Drug. It shall be so. Take her for life, Mr. Woodley.

Wood. My whole life shall be devoted to her happiness.

Drug. Mr. Woodley, I recommend my girl to your care. I shall have nothing now to think of, but my greens, and my images, and my shrubbery. —Though, mercy on all married folks, say I; for these wranglings are, I am afraid, what they must all come to. [*Exeunt.*]

C A T O:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY JOSEPH ADDISON.

REMARKS.

*Envy itself is dumb, in wonder lost,
And factions strive who shall applaud his most.*

Pope, writing to Sir W. Trumbull, has well applied these words of our author, (on some other occasion,) to this tragedy, in allusion to the endeavours of both whigs and Tories of that period, to make it a party-play. So many presents were made by both parties to Mr. Booth, (who played Cato,) that Dr. Garth is recorded to have said, " 'Tis probable that Cato may have something to *live* on after he *dies*."—It is certain, however, that this excellent dramatic *poem* derived, from impassioned politics, much of the enthusiastic admiration which graced its earlier performance.—The deficiency of dramatic business is scarcely balanced by the poetical beauties of the diction and the noble sentiments of liberty that adorn it throughout. The characters, though strongly depicted, fail to excite either solicitude or affection; "But, (as the great moralist observes,) they are made the vehicles of such sentiments and such expression, that there is scarcely a scene in the play which the reader does not wish to impress on his memory."—*Johnson*.

In our own day, the virtuous and dignified Roman has been so transcendantly portrayed by Mr. Kemble, that Cato and his little senate have never failed to interest the public and reward the managers.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY LANE, 1713.		COVENT GARDEN, 1816.
CATO.....	<i>Mr. Booth</i>	<i>Mr. Kemble</i> .
PORTIUS.....	<i>Mr. Powell</i>	<i>Mr. Abbott</i> .
MARCUS.....	<i>Mr. Ryan</i>	<i>Mr. Hamerton</i> .
SEMPRONIUS.....	<i>Mr. Mills</i>	<i>Mr. Barrymore</i> .
JUBA.....	<i>Mr. Wilks</i>	<i>Mr. Conway</i> .
SYPHAX.....	<i>Mr. Cibber</i>	<i>Mr. Egerton</i> .
LUCIUS.....	<i>Mr. Keen</i>	<i>Mr. Murray</i> .
DECIUS.....	<i>Mr. Bowman</i>	<i>Mr. Creswell</i> .
JUNIUS.....		<i>Mr. King</i>
LUCIA.....	<i>Mrs. Cibber</i>	<i>Miss S. Booth</i> .
MARCIA.....	<i>Mrs. Mills</i>	<i>Mrs. Egerton</i> .

Mutineers, Guards, &c.

SCENE.—The Governor's Palace, in Utica.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. POPE.

To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
To raise the genius, and to mend the heart;
To make mankind, in conscious virtue bold,
Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold:

Vol. I. . . . 2 P

For this, the tragic muse first trod the stage,
Commanding tears to stream through every age;
Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
And foes to virtue wonder'd how they wept.
Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move
The hero's glory or the virgin's love;
In pitying love we but our weakness show,
And wild ambition well deserves its wo.

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Here tears shall flow from a more gen'rous cause,
 Such tears as patriots shed for dying laws:
 He bids your breasts with ancient ardour rise,
 And calls forth Rom'n drops from British eyes.
 Virtue confess'd, in human shape he draws,
 What Plato thought and godlike Cato was:
 No common object to your sight displays,
 But what with pleasure Heaven itself surveys;
 A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
 And greatly falling in a falling state!
 While Cato gives his little Senate laws,
 What bosom beats not in his country's cause?
 Who sees him act, but envies every deed?
 Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?
 E'en when proud Cæsar, 'midst triumphal cars,
 The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
 Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
 Show'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state.
 As her dead father's rev'rend image past,
 The pomp was darken'd and the day o'ercast,
 The triumph ceas'd—tears gush'd from every eye,
 The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by:
 Her last good man dejected Rome ador'd,
 And honour'd Cæsar's, less than Cato's sword.
 Britons, attend; be worth like this approv'd,
 And show you have the virtue to be mov'd.
 With honest scorn the first fam'd Cato view'd
 Rome learning arts from Greece, whom she subdu'd.
 Our scenes precariously subsist too long
 On French translation and Italian song:
 Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage;
 Be justly warm'd with your own native rage:
 Such plays alone should please a British ear,
 As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

Enter PORTIUS and MARCUS.

Por. The dawn is overcast, the morning lowers,
 And heavily in clouds brings on the day,
 The great, th' important day, big with the fate
 Of Cato and of Rome;—our father's death
 Would fill up all the guilt of civil war,
 And close the scene of blood. Already Cæsar
 Has ravag'd more than half the globe, and sees
 Mankind grown thin by his destructive sword:
 Should he go farther, numbers would be wanting
 To form new battles, and support his crimes.
 Ye gods, what havoc does ambition make
 Among your works!

Marc. Thy steady temper, Portius,
 Can look on guilt, rebellion, fraud, and Cæsar,
 In the calm lights of mild philosophy;
 I'm tortur'd e'en to madness, when I think
 On the proud victor: every time he's nam'd
 Pharsalia rises to my view—I see
 Th' insulting tyrant, prancing o'er the field
 Strew'd with Rome's citizens, and drench'd in
 slaughter;

His horses' hoofs wet with patrician blood!
 Oh, Portius! is not there some chosen curse,
 Some hidden thunder, in the stores of Heaven,
 Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man
 Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin?

Por. Believe me, Marcus, 'tis an impious great-

ness,
 And mix'd with too much horror to be envied.
 How does the lustre of our father's actions,
 Through the dark clouds of ills that cover him,

Break out, and burn with more triumphant bright-
 ness!

His sufferings shine, and spread a glory round
 Greatly unfortunate, he fights the cause
 Of honour, virtue, liberty, and Rome.

Marc. Who knows not this? But what can
 Cato do

Against a world, a base, degen'rate world,
 That courts the yoke and bows the neck to Cæsar?
 Pent up in Utica, he vainly forms

A poor epitome of Roman greatness,
 And, cover'd with Numidian guards, directs
 A feeble army and an empty senate;

Remnants of mighty battles fought in vain.
 By Heaven, such virtues, join'd with such success,
 Distract my very soul! our father's fortune
 Would almost tempt us to renounce his precepts.

Por. Remember what our father oft has told us:
 The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate;
 Puzzled in mazes, and perplex'd with errors,
 Our understanding traces them in vain,
 Lost and bewilder'd in the fruitless search;
 Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
 Nor where the regular confusion ends.

Marc. These are suggestions of a mind at ease.—
 Oh, Portius, didst thou taste but half the griefs
 That wring my soul, thou couldst not talk thus
 Passion unpitied, and successful love, [coldly.
 Plant daggers in my heart, and aggravate
 My other griefs.—Were but my Lucia kind—

Por. Thou seest not that thy brother is thy
 rival;

But I must hide it, for I know thy temper. [*Aside.*
 Now, Marcus, now thy virtue's on the proof,
 Put forth thy utmost strength, work every nerve,
 And call up all thy father in thy soul:—
 To quell the tyrant Love, and guard thy heart
 On this weak side, where most our nature fails,
 Would be a conquest worthy Cato's son.

Marc. Alas, the counsel which I cannot take,
 Instead of healing, but upbraids my weakness.
 Love is not to be reason'd down, or lost
 In high ambition and a thirst of greatness;
 'Tis second life, that grows into the soul,
 Warms every vein, and beats in every pulse:
 I feel it here: my resolution melts—

Por. Behold young Juba, the Numidian prince,
 With how much care he forms himself to glory,
 And breaks the fierceness of his native temper,
 To copy out our father's bright example.

He loves our sister Marcia, greatly loves her;
 His eyes, his looks, his actions, all betray it;
 But still the smother'd fondness burns within
 him;

When most it swells, and labours for a vent,
 The sense of honour, and desire of fame,
 Drive the big passion back into his heart.
 What, shall an African, shall Juba's heir,
 Reproach great Cato's son, and show the world
 A virtue wanting in a Roman soul?

Marc. Portius, no more! your words leave
 stings behind them.

Whene'er did Juba, or did Portius show
 A virtue that had cast me at a distance,
 And thrown me out in the pursuits of honour?

Por. Oh, Marcus! did I know the way to ease
 Thy troubled heart, and mitigate thy pains,
 Marcus, believe me, I could die to do it.

Marc. Thou best of brothers, and thou best of
 friends!

Pardon a weak, distemper'd, soul, that swells
 With sudden gusts, and sinks as soon in calms

The sport of passions. But Sempronius comes :
He must not find this softness hanging on me.

[*Exit.*]

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

Sem. Conspiracies no sooner should be form'd
Than executed. What means Portius here ?
I like not that cold youth. I must dissemble,
And speak a language foreign to my heart. [*Aside.*
Good morrow, Portius ; let us once embrace,
Once more embrace, while yet we both are free.
To-morrow, should we thus express our friend-
ship,

Each might receive a slave into his arms.
This sun, perhaps, this morning sun's the last,
That e'er shall rise on Roman liberty.

Por. My father has this morning call'd together
To this poor hall, his little Roman senate,
(The leavings of Pharsalia,) to consult
If he can yet oppose the mighty torrent
That bears down Rome and all her gods before it,
Or must at length give up the world to Cæsar.

Sem. Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence.
His virtues render our assembly awful,
They strike with something like religious fear,
And make even Cæsar tremble, at the head
Of armies flush'd with conquest. Oh, my Portius !
Could I but call that wondrous man my father,
Would but thy sister Marcia be propitious
To thy friend's vows, I might be bless'd indeed !

Por. Alas, Sempronius ! wouldst thou talk of
love

To Marcia, whilst her father's life 's in danger ?
Thou might'st as well court the pale, trembling
vestal,

When she beholds the holy flame expiring.

Sem. The more I see the wonders of thy race,
The more I'm charm'd. Thou must take heed,
my Portius ;

The world has all its eyes on Cato's son ;
Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,
And shows thee in the fairest point of light,
To make thy virtues or thy faults conspicuous.

Por. Well dost thou seem to check my ling'ring
here

On this important hour.—I'll straight away,
And while the fathers of the senate meet
In close debate, to weigh th' events of war,
I'll animate the soldiers' drooping courage
With love of freedom, and contempt of life ;
I'll thunder in their ears their country's cause,
And try to rouse up all that's Roman in them.
'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius ; we'll deserve it.

[*Exit.*]

Sem. Curse on the stripling ! how he apes his
sire !

Ambitiously sententious.—But I wonder
Old Syphax comes not ; his Numidian genius
Is well dispos'd to mischief, were he prompt
And eager on it ; but he must be spurr'd,
And every moment quicken'd to the course.
Cato has us'd me ill ; he has refus'd
His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows.
Besides, his baffled arms and ruin'd cause
Are bars to my ambition. Cæsar's favour,
That showers down greatness on his friends, will
raise me

To Rome's first honours. If I give up Cato,
I claim, in my reward, his captive daughter.
But Syphax comes—

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. Sempronius, all is ready ;
I've sounded my Numidians, man by man,
And find them ripe for a revolt : they all
Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,
And wait but the command to change their master

Sem. Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to
waste :

Even while we speak, our conqueror comes on,
And gathers ground upon us every moment.
Alas ! thou know'st not Cæsar's active soul,
With what a dreadful course he rushes on
From war to war. In vain has nature form'd
Mountains and oceans to oppose his passage ;
He bounds o'er all ;
One day more

Will set the victor thund'ring at our gates.
But, tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba ?
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar,
And challenge better terms.

Syph. Alas ! he's lost !
He's lost, Sempronius ; all his thoughts are full
Of Cato's virtues.—But I'll try once more
(For every instant I expect him here,)
If yet I can subdue those stubborn principles
Of faith and honour, and I know not what,
That have corrupted his Numidian temper,
And struck th' infection into all his soul.

Sem. Be sure to press upon him every motive.
Juba's surrender, since his father's death,
Would give up Afric into Cæsar's hands,
And make him lord of half the burning zone.

Syph. But is it true, Sempronius, that your
senate

Is call'd together ? Gods ! thou must be cautious ;
Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern
Our frauds, unless they're cover'd thick with art.

Sem. Let me alone, good Syphax, I'll conceal
My thoughts in passion ('tis the surest way ;)
I'll bellow out for Rome, and for my country,
And mouth at Cæsar, till I shake the senate.
Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device, [earnest,
A worn-out trick : wouldst thou be thought in
Clothe thy feign'd zeal in rage, in fire, in fury !

Syph. In troth, thou'rt able to instruct gray hairs,
And teach the wily African deceit.

Sem. Once more, be sure to try thy skill on Juba
Meanwhile I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,
Inflame the mutiny, and, underhand,
Blow up their discontents, till they break out
Unlook'd for, and discharge themselves on Cato.
Remember, Syphax, we must work in haste ;
Oh, think what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots, and their last fatal periods !
Oh, 'tis a dreadful interval of time,
Fill'd up with horror all, and big with death !
Destruction hangs on every word we speak,
On every thought, till the concluding stroke
Determines all, and closes our design. [*Exit.*]

Syph. I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason
This headstrong youth, and make him spurn at
Cato.

The time is short ; Cæsar comes rushing on us—
But hold ! young Juba sees me, and approaches !

Enter JUBA.

Juba. Syphax, I joy to meet thee thus alone,
I have observ'd of late thy looks are fallen,
O'ercast with gloomy cares and discontent ;
Then tell me, Syphax, I conjure thee, tell me,
What are the thoughts that knit thy brow in frowns,

And turn thine eye thus coldly on thy prince ?

Syph. 'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Or carry smiles and sunshine in my face,
When discontent sits heavy at my heart ;
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.

Juba. Why dost thou cast out such ungenerous terms

Against the lords and sov'reigns of the world ?
Dost thou not see mankind fall down before them,
And own the force of their superior virtue ?

Syph. Gods ! Where's the worth that sets these people up

Above your own Numidia's tawny sons ?
Do they with tougher sinews bend the bow ?
Or flies the jav'lin swifter to its mark,
Launch'd from the vigour of a Roman arm ?
Who like our active African instructs
The fiery steed, and trains him to his hand ?
Or guides in troops th' embattled elephant,
Laden with war ? These, these, are arts, my

prince,
In which your Zama does not stoop to Rome.

Juba. These all are virtues of a meaner rank ;
Perfections that are plac'd in bones and nerves.

A Roman soul is bent on higher views,
To make man mild, and sociable to man ;
To cultivate the wild, licentious, savage,
And break our fierce barbarians into men.
Turn up thy eyes to Cato ;

There may'st thou see to what a godlike height
The Roman virtues lift up mortal man.
While good, and just, and anxious for his friends,
He's still severely bent against himself :

And when his fortune sets before him all
The pomps and pleasures that his soul can wish,
His rigid virtue will accept of none. [can

Syph. Believe me, prince, there's not an Afri-
That traverses our vast Numidian deserts
In quest of prey, and lives upon his bow,
But better practises those boasted virtues.

Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chase ;
Amidst the running streams he slakes his thirst ;
Toils all the day, and at th' approach of night,
On the first friendly bank he throws him down,
Or rests his head upon a rock till morn ;
Then rises fresh, pursues his wonted game ;
And if the following day he chance to find
A new repast, or an untasted spring,
Blesses his stars, and thinks it luxury.

Juba. Thy prejudices, Syphax, wont discern
What virtues grow from ignorance and choice,
Nor how the hero differs from the brute.
Where shall we find the man that bears affliction,
Great and majestic in his griefs, like Cato ?
How does he rise against a load of woes,
And thank the gods that threw the weight upon him !

Syph. 'Tis pride, rank pride, and haughtiness
of soul ;

I think the Romans call it stoicism.

Had not your royal father thought so highly
Of Roman virtue, and of Cato's cause,
He had not fall'n by a slave's hand inglorious ;
Nor would his slaughter'd armies now have lain
On Afric's sands, disfigur'd with their wounds,
To gorge the wolves and vultures of Numidia.

Juba. Why dost thou call my sorrows up
afresh ?

My father's name brings tears into my eyes.

Syph. Oh, that you'd profit by your father's ills !

Juba. What wouldst thou have me do ?

Syph. Abandon Cato.

Juba. Syphax, I should be more than twice an orphan,
By such a loss.

Syph. Ay, there's the tie that binds you !
You long to call him father. Marcia's charms
Work in your heart unseen, and plead for Cato.
No wonder you are deaf to all I say.

Juba. Syphax, your zeal becomes importunate ;
I've hitherto permitted it to rave,
And talk at large ; but learn to keep it in.
Lest it should take more freedom than I'll give it.

Syph. Sir, your great father never us'd me thus.
Alas, he's dead ! but can you e'er forget
The tender sorrows,

And repeated blessings,
Which you drew from him in your last farewell ?
The good old king, at parting, wrung my hand ;
(His eyes brim full of fears,) then, sighing, cried,
Pr'ythee, be careful of my son !—His grief
Swell'd up so high, he could not utter more.

Juba. Alas ! thy story melts away my soul !

That best of fathers ! how shall I discharge
The gratitude and duty that I owe him ?

Syph. By laying up his counsels in your heart.

Juba. His counsels bade me yield to thy direction. [safety,

Syph. Alas ! my prince, I'd guide you to your

Juba. I do believe thou wouldst : but tell me how. [foes,

Syph. Fly from the fate that follows Cæsar's

Juba. My father scorn'd to do it.

Syph. And therefore died.

Juba. Better to die ten thousand thousand
Than wound my honour. [deaths,

Syph. Rather say, your love. [temper,

Juba. Syphax, I've promis'd to preserve my
Why wilt thou urge me to confess a flame
I long have stifled, and would fain conceal ?

Syph. Believe me, prince, though hard to conquer love,

'Tis easy to divert and break its force.

Absence might cure it, or a second mistress
Light up another flame, and put out this.
The glowing dames of Zama's royal court
Have faces flush'd with more exalted charms ;
Were you with these, my prince, you'd soon forget
The pale, unripen'd beauties of the north.

Juba. 'Tis not a set of features, or complexion
The tincture of a skin, that I admire :

Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,
Fades in his eye, and falls upon his sense.
The virtuous Marcia towers above her sex :
True, she is fair, (oh, how divinely fair !)
But still the lovely maid improves her charms
With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
And sanctity of manners ; Cato's soul
Shines out in every thing she acts or speaks,
While winning mildness and attractive smiles
Dwell in her looks, and, with becoming grace,
Softens the rigour of her father's virtue.

Syph. How does your tongue grow wanton in
her praise !

But, on my knees, I beg you would consider—

Juba. Ha ! Syphax, is't not she ?—She moves
this way,

And with her Lucia, Lucius' fair daughter.
My heart beats thick—I pr'ythee, Syphax, leave
me. [both !

Syph. Ten thousand curses fasten on them
Now will the woman, with a single glance,
Undo what I've been lab'ring all this while.

[*Erik.*

Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.

Juba. Hail, charming maid! how does thy beauty smooth

The face of war, and make even horror smile!
At sight of thee my heart shakes off its sorrows;
I feel a dawn of joy break in upon me,
And for awhile forget th' approach of Cæsar.

Marcia. I should be griev'd, young prince, to think my presence

Unbent your thoughts, and slacken'd them to arms,
While, warm with slaughter, our victorious foe
Threatens aloud, and calls you to the field.

Juba. Oh, Marcia, let me hope thy kind concerns

And gentle wishes follow me to battle!
The thought will give new vigour to my arm,
And strength and weight to my descending sword,
And drive it in a tempest on the foe.

Marcia. My prayers and wishes always shall attend

The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,
And men approv'd of by the gods and Cato.

Juba. That Juba may deserve thy pious cares,
I'll gaze for ever on thy godlike father,
Transplanting, one by one, into my life,
His bright perfections, till I shine like him.

Marcia. My father never, at a time like this,
Would lay out his great soul in words, and waste
Such precious moments.

Juba. Thy reproofs are just,
Thou virtuous maid: I'll hasten to my troops,
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue,
If e'er I lead them to the field, when all
The war shall stand rang'd in its just array
And dreadful pomp, then will I think on thee.
Oh, lovely maid! then will I think on thee;
And in the shock of charging hosts, remember
What glorious deeds should grace the man, who
hopes

For Marcia's love. [Exit.

Lucia. Marcia, you're too severe:
How could you chide the young, good-natur'd
prince,

And drive him from you with so stern an air;
A prince that loves and dotes on you to death?

Marcia. How, Lucia! wouldst thou have me
sink away

In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love,
When every moment Cato's life's at stake?

Lucia. Why, have not I this constancy of mind,
Who have so many griefs to try its force?
Sure, nature form'd me of her softest mould,
Enfeebled all my soul with tender passions,
And sunk me e'en below my own weak sex:
Pity and love, by turns, oppress my heart.

Marcia. Lucia, disburden all thy cares on me,
And let me share thy most retir'd distress.
Tell me, who raises up this conflict in thee?

Lucia. I need not blush to name them, when I
tell thee

They're Marcia's brothers, and the sons of Cato.

Marcia. But tell me whose address thou favour'st most?

I long to know, and yet I dread to hear it.

Lucia. Suppose 'twere Portius, could you blame
my choice?—

Oh, Portius, thou hast stolen away my soul!
Marcus is over warm; his fond complaints
Have so much earnestness and passion in them,
I hear him with a secret kind of horror,
And tremble at his vehemence of temper.

Marcia. Alas, poor youth!
How will thy coldness raise
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom?
I dread the consequence.

Lucia. You seem to plead
Against your brother Portius.

Marcia. Lucia, no:
Had Portius been the unsuccessful lover,
The same compassion would have fallen on him.

Lucia. Portius himself oft falls in tears before
As if he mourn'd his rival's ill success; [me,
Then bids me hide the motions of my heart,
Nor show which way it turns: so much he fears
The sad effect that it will have on Marcus.
Was ever virgin love distress'd like mine.

Marcia. Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows,

But to the gods submit th' event of things.
Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,
May still grow bright, and smile with happier
hours. [stains

So the pure, limpid stream, when foul with
Of rushing torrents and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and, as it runs, refines,
Till, by degrees, the floating mirror shines,
Reflects each flower that on the border grows,
And a new heaven in its fair bosom shows.

[Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Senate-House.

*Flourish; SEMPRONIUS, LUCIUS, and Senators
discovered.*

Sem. Rome still survives in this assembled
senate.

Let us remember we are Cato's friends,
And act like men who claim that glorious title.

[Trumpets.

Luc. Hark! he comes.

Trumpets. Enter CATO, PORTIUS, and MARCUS.

Cato. Fathers, we once again are met in council;
Cæsar's approach has summon'd us together,
And Rome attends her fate from our resolves.
How shall we treat this bold, aspiring man?
Success still follows him, and backs his crimes;
Pharsalia gave him Rome, Egypt has since
Receiv'd his yoke, and the whole Nile is Cæsar's.
Why should I mention Juba's overthrow,
And Scipio's death? Numidia's burning sands
Still smoke with blood. 'Tis time we should
decree

What course to take. Our foe, advances on us,
And envies us even Libya's sultry deserts.
Fathers, pronounce your thoughts: are they still
To hold it out, and fight it to the last? [fix'd
Or are your hearts subdu'd at length, and wrought,
By time and ill success, to a submission?
Sempronius, speak.

Sem. My voice is still for war.
Gods! can a Roman senate long debate
Which of the two to choose, slav'ry or death?
No; let us rise at once, gird on our swords,
And, at the head of our remaining troops,
Attack the foe, break through the thick array
Of his throng'd legions, and charge home upon
him.

Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest,
May reach his heart, and free the world from
bondage.

Rise, fathers, rise! 'tis Rome demands your help;
Rise, and revenge her slaughter'd citizens,
Or share their fate;—
To battle!

Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow,
And Scipio's ghost walks unreveng'd amongst us.

Cato. Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal
Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason;
True fortitude is seen in great exploits,
That justice warrants, and that wisdom guides;
All else is towering frenzy and distraction.
Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion.

Luc. My thoughts, I must confess, are turn'd
on peace.

Already have we shown our love to Rome,
Now let us show submission to the gods.
We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves,
But free the commonwealth; when this end fails,
Arms have no further use. Our country's cause,
That drew our swords, now wrests them from
our hands,

And bids us not delight in Roman blood,
Unprofitably shed. What men could do,
Is done already: Heaven and earth will witness,
If Rome must fall, that we are innocent.

Cato. Let us appear nor rash nor diffident;
Immoderate valour swells into a fault;
And fear, admitted into public councils,
Betrays like treason. Let us shun them both.
Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs
Are grown thus desperate: we have bulwarks
round us;

Within our walls are troops inur'd to toil
In Afric's heat, and season'd to the sun;
Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us,
Ready to rise at its young prince's call.
While there is hope, do not disturb the gods;
But wait at least till Cæsar's near approach
Force us to yield. 'Twill never be too late
To sue for chains, and own a conqueror.
Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time?
No, let us draw her term of freedom out
In its full length, and spin it to the last,
So shall we gain still one day's liberty:
And let me perish, but, in Cato's judgment,
A day, an hour, of virtuous liberty,
Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

Enter JUNIUS.

Mar. Fathers, e'en now a herald is arriv'd
From Cæsar's camp, and with him comes old
Decius,

The Roman knight: he carries in his looks
Impatience, and demands to speak with Cato.

Cato. By your permission, fathers—bid him
enter. *[Exit JUNIUS.]*

Decius was once my friend, but other prospects
Have loos'd those ties, and bound him fast to
Cæsar.

His message may determine our resolves.

Enter DECIVS.

Dec. Cæsar sends health to Cato—

Cato. Could he send it

To Cato's slaughter'd friends, it would be welcome.
Are not your orders to address the senate?

Dec. My business is with Cato; Cæsar sees
The straits to which you're driven: and, as he
knows

Cato's high worth, is anxious for your life.

Cato. My life is grafted on the fate of Rome.
Would he save Cato, bid him spare his country.

Tell your dictator this; and tell him, Cato
Disdains a life which he has power to offer.

Dec. Rome and her senators submit to Cæsar,
Her gen'ral and her consuls are no more,
Who check'd his conquests, and denied his
triumphs.

Why will not Cato be this Cæsar's friend? *[It.*

Cato. These very reasons thou hast urg'd forbid

Dec. Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues,
And therefore sets this value on your life.

Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship,
And name your terms.

Cato. Bid him disband his legions,
Restore the commonwealth to liberty,

Submit his actions to the public censure,
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate.

Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.

Dec. Cato, the world talks loudly of your wis-
dom—

Cato. Nay, more; though Cato's voice was
ne'er employ'd

To clear the guilty, and to varnish crimes,
Myself will mount the rostrum in his favour,
And strive to gain his pardon from the people.

Dec. A style like this becomes a conqueror.

Cato. Decius, a style like this becomes a
Roman.

Dec. What is a Roman, that is Cæsar's foe?

Cato. Greater than Cæsar: he's a friend to
virtue.

Dec. Consider, Cato, you're in Utica,
And at the head of your own little senate:

You don't now thunder in the capitol,
With all the mouths of Rome to second you.

Cato. Let him consider that, who drives us
hither.

'Tis Cæsar's sword has made Rome's senate little,
And thinn'd its ranks. Alas! thy dazzled eye
Beholds this man in a false, glaring light, [him;
Which conquest and success have thrown upon
Didst thou but view him right, thou'dst see him
black

With murder, treason, sacrilege, and crimes
That strike my soul with horror but to name them.
I know thou lookest on me as a wretch
Beset with ills, and cover'd with misfortunes;
But, by the gods I swear, millions of worlds
Should never buy me to be like that Cæsar.

Dec. Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar,
For all his gen'rous cares and proffer'd friendship?

Cato. His cares for me are insolent and vain:
Presumptuous man! the gods take care of Cato.
Would Cæsar show the greatness of his soul,
Bid him employ his care for these my friends,
And make good use of his ill-gotten power,
By shelt'ring men much better than himself.

Dec. Your high, unconquer'd heart makes you
forget

You are a man. You rush on your destruction.

But I have done. When I relate hereafter

The tale of this unhappy embassy,

All Rome will be in tears. *[Exit, attended.]*

Sem. Cato, we thank thee.

The mighty genius of immortal Rome
Speaks in thy voice; thy soul breathes liberty.
Cæsar will shrink to hear the words thou utter'st,
And shudder in the midst of all his conquests.

Luc. The senate owns its gratitude to Cato,
Who with so great a soul consults its safety,
And guards our lives, while he neglects his own.

Sem. Sempronius gives no thanks on this ac-
count.

Lucius seems fond of life; but what is life?
'Tis not to stalk about, and draw fresh air
From time to time, or gaze upon the sun;—
'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone,
Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish.
Oh, could my dying hand but lodge a sword
In Cæsar's bosom, and revenge my country,
By Heaven I could enjoy the pangs of death,
And smile in agony!

Luc. Others perhaps

May serve their country with as warm a zeal,
Though 'tis not kindled into so much rage.

Sem. This sober conduct is a mighty virtue
In luke-warm patriots.

Cato. Come, no more, Sempronius;
All here are friends to Rome, and to each other.
Let us not weaken still the weaker side
By our divisions.

Sem. Cato, my resentments
Are sacrific'd to Rome—I stand reprov'd.

Cato. Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.

Luc. Cato, we all go into your opinion:
Cæsar's behaviour has convinc'd the senate,
'We ought to hold it out till terms arrive.

Sem. We ought to hold it out till death; but,
Cato,

My private voice is drown'd amidst the senate's.

Cato. Then let us rise, my friends, and strive
to fill

This little interval, this pause of life
(While yet our liberty and fates are doubtful.)
With resolution, friendship, Roman bravery,
And all the virtues we can crowd into it;
That Heaven may say, it ought to be prolong'd.
Fathers, farewell.—The young Numidian prince
Comes forward, and expects to know our counsels.

[*Exeunt Senators.*]

Enter Juba.

Juba, the Roman senate has resolv'd
Till time give better prospects, still to keep
The sword unsheath'd, and turn its edge on
Cæsar.

Juba. The resolution fits a Roman senate.
But, Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,
And condescend to hear a young man speak.
My father, when, some days before his death,
He order'd me to march for Utica,
(Alas! I thought not then his death so near!)
Wept o'er me, press'd me in his aged arms;
And, as his griefs gave way, "My son," said

he,
"Whatever fortune shall befall thy father,
Be Cato's friend; he'll train thee up to great
And virtuous deeds; do but observe him well,
Thou'lt shun misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to
bear them."

Cato. Juba, thy father was a worthy prince,
And merited, alas! a better fate;
But Heaven thought otherwise.

Juba. My father's fate,
In spite of all the fortitude that shines
Before my face in Cato's great example,
Subdues my soul, and fills my eyes with tears.

Cato. It is an honest sorrow, and becomes
thee.

Juba. His virtues drew respect from foreign
climes:

The kings of Afric sought him for their friend;
Kings far remote, that rule, as fame reports,
Behind the hidden sources of the Nile,

In distant worlds, on t'other side the sun;
Oft have their black ambassadors appear'd,
Loaden with gifts, and fill'd the courts of Zama.

Cato. I am no stranger to thy father's greatness.

Juba. I do not mean to boast his power and
greatness,

But point out new alliances to Cato.

Had we not better leave this Utica,
To arm Numidia in our cause, and court
Th' assistance of my father's powerful friends?
Did they know Cato, our remotest kings
Would pour embattled multitudes about him;
Their swarthy hosts would darken all our plains
Doubling the native horror of the war,
And making death more grim.

Cato. And canst thou think

Cato will fly before the sword of Cæsar!
Reduc'd, like Hannibal, to seek relief
From court to court, and wander up and down
A vagabond in Afric?

Juba. Cato, perhaps

I'm too officious; but my forward cares
Would fain preserve a life of so much value.
My heart is wounded, when I see such virtue
Afflicted by the weight of such misfortunes.

Cato. Thy nobleness of soul obliges me.

But know, young prince, that valour soars above
What the world calls misfortune and affliction.
These are not ills; else would they never fall
On Heaven's first fav'rites, and the best of men.
The gods, in bounty, work up storms about us,
That give mankind occasion to exert
Their hidden strength, and throw out into prac-
tice

Virtues which shun the day, and lie conceal'd
In the smooth seasons and the calm of life.

Juba. I'm charm'd whene'er thou talk'st; I
pant for virtue;

And all my soul endeavours at perfection.

Cato. Dost thou love watchings, abstinence,
and toil,

Laborious virtues all? Learn them from Cato:
Success and fortune must thou learn from Cæsar.

Juba. The best good fortune that can fall on
Juba,

The whole success at which my heart aspires,
Depends on Cato.

Cato. What does Juba say?

Thy words confound me.

Juba. I would fain retract them.

Give them me back again: they aim'd at no-
thing.

Cato. Tell me thy wish, young prince; make
not my ear

A stranger to thy thoughts.

Juba. Oh! they're extravagant;
Still let me hide them.

Cato. What can Juba ask,
That Cato will refuse?

Juba. I fear to name it.

Marcia—inherits all her father's virtues.

Cato. What wouldst thou say?

Juba. Cato, thou hast a daughter.

Cato. Adieu, young prince; I would not hear
a word

Should lessen thee in my esteem. Remember
The hand of fate is over us, and Heaven
Exact severity from all our thoughts.
It is not now a time to talk of aught
But chains, or conquest; liberty, or death.

[*Exit.*]

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. How's this, my prince? What, cover'd with confusion?

You look as if you stern philosopher Had just now chid you.

Juba. Syphax, I'm undone!

Syph. I know it well.

Juba. Cato thinks meanly of me.

Syph. And so will all mankind.

Juba. I've open'd to him

The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia.

Syph. Cato's a proper person to intrust A love tale with!

Juba. Oh, I could pierce my heart, My foolish heart!

Syph. Alas, my prince, how are you chang'd of late!

I've known young Juba rise before the sun, To beat the thicket where the tiger slept, Or seek the lion in his dreadful haunts.

I've seen you,

Even in the Libyan dog-days hunt him down,

Then charge him close,

And, stooping from your horse,

Rivet the panting savage to the ground.

Juba. Pr'ythee, no more.

Syph. How would the old king smile, To see you weigh the paws, when tipp'd with gold,

And throw the shaggy spoils about your shoulders!

Juba. Syphax, this old man's talk, though honey flow'd

In every word, would now lose all its sweetness.

Cato's displeas'd, and Marcia lost for ever.

Syph. Young prince, I yet could give you good advice;

Marcia might still be yours.

Juba. As how, dear Syphax?

Syph. Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops, Mounted on steeds unus'd to the restraint

Of curbs or bits, and fleetier than the winds:

Give but the word, we snatch this damsel up,

And bear her off.

Juba. Can such dishonest thoughts

Rise up in man! Wouldst thou seduce my youth

To do an act that would destroy mine honour?

Syph. Gods, I could tear my hair, to hear you talk!

Honour's a fine imaginary notion,

That draws in raw and inexperienc'd men

To real mischiefs, while they hunt a shadow.

Juba. Wouldst thou degrade thy prince into a ruffian? [men,

Syph. The boasted ancestors of these great Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians.

This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,

That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds

All under Heav'n, was founded on a rape;

Your Scipios, Cæsars, Pompeys, and your Catos,

(The gods on earth,) are all the spurious blood

Of violated maids, of ravish'd Sabines.

Juba. Syphax, I fear that hoary head of thine Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles.

Syph. Indeed, my prince, you want to know the world.

Juba. If knowledge of the world makes men perfidious,

May Juba ever live in ignorance!

Syph. Go, go; you're young.

Juba. Gods, must I tamely bear

This arrogance unanswer'd! thou'rt a traitor,

A false old traitor!

Syph. I have gone too far.

[*Aside.*

Juba. Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.

Syph. I must appease this storm, or perish in it.

[*Aside.*

Young prince, behold these locks, that are grown white

Beneath a helmet in your father's battles.

Juba. Those locks shall ne'er protect thy insolence.

Syph. Must one rash word, the infirmity of age, Throw down the merit of my better years?

This is the reward of a whole life of service!—

Curse on the boy! how steadily he hears me!

[*Aside.*

Juba. Is it because the throne of my forefathers

Still stands unfill'd, and that Numidia's crown

Hangs doubtful yet whose head it shall enclose,

Thou thus presum'st to treat thy prince with scorn?

Syph. Why will you rive my heart with such expressions?

Does not old Syphax follow you to war?

What are his aims? to shed the slow remains,

His last poor ebb of blood, in your defence?

Juba. Syphax, no more! I would not hear you talk.

Syph. Not hear me talk! what, when my faith to Juba,

My royal master's son, is call'd in question?

My prince may strike me dead, and I'll be dumb;

But whilst I live I must not hold my tongue,

And languish out old age in his displeasure.

Juba. Thou know'st the way too well into my heart.

I do believe thee loyal to thy prince.

Syph. What greater instance can I give? I've offer'd

To do an action which my soul abhors,

And gain you whom you love, at any price.

Juba. Was this thy motive? I have been too hasty.

Syph. And 'tis for this my prince has call'd me traitor. [se.

Juba. Sure thou mistak'st; I did not call thee

Syph. You did indeed, my prince, you call'd me traitor.

Nay, further, threaten'd you'd complain to Cato.

Of what, my prince, would you complain to Cato?

That Syphax loves you, and would sacrifice

His life, nay more, his honour, in your service?

Juba. Syphax, I know thou lov'st me; but indeed

Thy zeal for Juba carried thee too far.

Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,

The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,

That aids and strengthens virtue where it meets her,

And imitates her actions where she is not:

It ought not to be sported with.

Syph. Believe me, prince, you make old Syphax weep

To hear you talk—but 'tis with tears of joy.

If e'er your father's crown adorn your brows,

Numidia will be bless'd by Cato's lectures.

Juba. Syphax, thy hand; we'll mutually forget

The warmth of youth, and frowardness of age.

Thy prince esteems thy worth, and loves thy person.

If e'er the sceptre come into my hand,

Syphax shall stand the second in my kingdom.

Syph. Why will you o'erwhelm my age with kindness ?
My joy grows burdensome, I sha'n't support it.

Juba. Syphax, farewell, I'll hence, and try to find

Some bless'd occasion, that may set me right
In Cato's thoughts. I'd rather have that man
Approve my deeds, than worlds for my admirers.

[*Exit.*

Syph. Young men soon give, and soon forget affronts ;

Old age is slow in both—A false old traitor !—
These words, rash boy, may chance to cost thee dear.

My heart had still some foolish fondness for thee,
But hence, 'tis gone ; I'll give it to the winds :
Cæsar, I'm wholly thine.

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

All hail, Sempronius !

Well, Cato's senate is resolv'd to wait
The fury of a siege, before it yields.

Sem. Syphax, we both were on the verge of fate ;

Lucius declar'd for peace, and terms were offer'd
To Cato, by a messenger from Cæsar.

Syph. But, how stands Cato ?

Sem. Thou hast seen mount Atlas ;
Whilst storms and tempests thunder on its brows,
And oceans break their billows at its feet,
It stands unmov'd, and glories in its height :
Such is that haughty man ; his towering soul,
Midst all the shocks and injuries of fortune,
Rises superior, and looks down on Cæsar.

Syph. But what's this messenger ?

Sem. I've practis'd with him,
And found a means to let the victor know,
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.
But let me now examine in my turn ;
Is Juba fix'd ?

Syph. Yes—but it is to Cato.
I've tried the force of every reason on him,
Sooth'd and caress'd ; been angry, sooth'd again ;
Laid safety, life, and interest, in his sight ;
But all are vain, he scorns them all for Cato.

Sem. Well, 'tis no matter ; we shall do without him.

Syphax. I now may hope, thou hast forsook
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.

Syph. May she be thine as fast as thou wouldst have her.

But, are thy troops prepar'd for a revolt ?
Does the sedition catch from man to man,
And run among the ranks ?

Sem. All, all is ready ;
The factious leaders are our friends, that spread
Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers ;
They count their toilsome marches, long fatigues,
Unusual fastings, and will bear no more
This medley of philosophy and war.

Within an hour they'll storm the senate-house.

Syph. Meanwhile I'll draw up my Numidian troops

Within the square, to exercise their arms,
And, as I see occasion, favour thee.
I laugh to see how the unshaken Cato
Will look aglath, while unforeseen destruction
Pours in upon him thus from every side.
So, where our wide Numidian wastes extend,
Sudden th' impetuous hurricanes descend ;
Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.

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The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,
Sees the dry desert all around him rise,
And, smother'd in the dusty whirlwind, dies.
[*Exeunt*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter MARCUS and PORTIUS.

Marc. Thanks to my stars, I have not rang'd about

The wilds of life, ere I could find a friend ;
Nature first pointed out my Portius to me,
And early taught me, by her secret force,
To love thy person, ere I knew thy merit ;
Till what was instinct, grew up into friendship.

Por. Marcus, the friendships of the world are oft

Confederacies in vice, or leagues of pleasure ;
Ours, has severest virtue for its basis,
And such a friendship ends not but with life.

Marc. Portius, thou know'st my soul in all its weakness ;

Then, pr'ythee, spare me on its tender side ;
Indulge me but in love, my other passions
Shall rise and fall by virtue's nicest rules.

Por. When love's well tim'd, 'tis not a fault to love :

The strong, the brave, the virtuous, and the wise,
Sink in the soft captivity together.

Marc. Alas, thou talk'st like one that never felt
Th' impatient throbs and longings of a soul,
That pants and reaches after distant good !
A lover does not live by vulgar time :

Believe me, Portius, in my Lucia's absence,
Life hangs upon me, and becomes a burden ;
And yet, when I behold the charming maid,
I'm ten times more undone ; while hope, and fear,
And grief, and rage, and love, rise up at once,
And, with variety of pain, distract me.

Por. What can thy Portius do to give thee help ?

Marc. Portius, thou oft enjoy'st the fair one's presence ;

Then undertake my cause, and plead it to her
With all the strength and heat of eloquence
Fraternal love and friendship can inspire.

Tell her thy brother languishes to death,
And fades away, and withers in his bloom ;
That he forgets his sleep, and loathes his food ;
That youth, and health, and war, are joyless to him ;

Describe his anxious days, and restless nights,
And all the torments that thou see'st me suffer.

Por. Marcus, I beg thee give me not an office
That suits with me so ill. Thou know'st my temper.

Marc. Wilt thou behold me sinking in my woes,
And wilt thou not reach out a friendly arm
To raise me from amidst this plunge of sorrows ?

Por. Marcus, thou canst not ask what I'd refuse ;

But here, believe me, I've a thousand reasons.—

Marc. I know thou'lt say my passion's out of season,

That Cato's great example and misfortunes
Should both conspire to drive it from my thoughts.
But what's all this to one that loves like me ?

O, Portius, Portius, from my soul I wish
Thou didst but know thyself what 'tis to love !
Then wouldst thou pity and assist thy brother

Por. What shall I do? If I disclose my passion,
Our friendship 's at an end; if I conceal it,
The world will call me false to friend and brother.

[*Aside.*

Marc. But see, where Lucia, at her wonted hour,
Amid the cool of yon high marble arch,
Enjoys the noon-day breeze! Observe her, Portius;
That face, that shape, those eyes, that heaven of
beauty!

Observe her well, and blame me if thou canst.

Por. She sees us, and advances.

Marc. I'll withdraw,
And leave you for awhile. Remember, Portius,
Thy brother's life depends upon thy tongue.

[*Exit.*

Enter LUCIA.

Lucia. Did not I see your brother Marcus here?
Why did he fly the place, and shun my presence?

Por. Oh, Lucia, language is too faint to show
His rage of love; it preys upon his life;
He pines, he sickens, he despairs, he dies!

Lucia. How wilt thou guard thy honour, in
the shock

Of love and friendship? Think betimes, my *Por.*
Think how the nuptial tie, that might ensure
Our mutual bliss, would raise to such a height

Thy brother's griefs, as might perhaps destroy him.

Por. Alas, poor youth! What dost thou think,
my Lucia?

His generous, open, undesigning heart,
Has begg'd his rival to solicit for him!
Then do not strike him dead with a denial.

Lucia. No, Portius, no; I see thy sister's tears,
Thy father's anguish, and thy brother's death,
In the pursuit of our ill-fated loves;
And, Portius, here I swear, to Heaven I swear,
To Heaven, and all the powers that judge mankind,
Never to mix my plighted hands with thine,
While such a cloud of mischief hangs upon us;
But to forget our loves, and drive thee out
From all my thoughts—as far as I am able.

Por. What hast thou said!—I'm thunder-
struck—

Recall those hasty words, or I am lost for ever.

Lucia. Has not the vow already pass'd my lips?
The gods have heard it, and 'tis seal'd in Heaven.
May all the vengeance that was ever pour'd
On perjur'd heads, o'erwhelm me if I break it!

Por. Fix'd in astonishment, I gaze upon thee,
Like one just blasted by a stroke from Heaven,
Who pants for breath, and stiffens, yet alive,
In dreadful looks; a monument of wrath!

Lucia. Think, Portius, think thou see'st thy
dying brother

Stabb'd at his heart, and all besmear'd with blood,
Storming at Heaven and thee! Thy awful sire
Sternly demands the cause, th' accursed cause,
That robs him of his son:—farewell, my Portius!
Farewell, though death is in the word—for ever!

Por. Thou must not go; my soul still hovers
o'er thee,

And can't get loose.

Lucia. If the firm Portius shake,
To hear of parting, think what Lucia suffers!

Por. 'Tis true, unrufl'd and serene, I've met
The common accidents of life; but here
Such an unlook'd-for storm of ills falls on me,
It beats down all my strength, I cannot bear it.
We must not part.

Lucia. What dost thou say? Not part!
Hast thou forgot the vow that I have made?

Are not there heavens, and gods, that thunder
o'er us?

But see, thy brother Marcus bends his way;
I sicken at the sight. Once more, farewell,
Farewell, and know thou wrong'st me, if thou
think'st,

Ever was love, or ever grief, like mine. [*Exit.*

Enter MARCUS.

Marc. Portius, what hopes? How stands she?
am I doom'd
To life or death?

Por. What wouldst thou have me say?

Marc. Thy downcast looks, and thy disorder'd
thoughts,

Tell me my fate. I ask not the success
My cause has found.

Por. I'm griev'd I undertook it.

Marc. What, does the barbarous maid insult
my heart,

My aching heart, and triumph in my pains?

Por. Away, you're too suspicious in your griefs;
Lucia, though sworn never to think of love,
Compassionates your pains and pities you.

Marc. Compassionates my pains, and pities me!
What is compassion when 'tis void of love?

Fool that I was to choose so cold a friend

To urge my cause!—Compassionates my pains!

Pr'ythee, what art, what rhet'ric, didst thou use

To gain this mighty boon?—She pities me!

To one that asks the warm returns of love,

Compassion's cruelty, 'tis scorn, 'tis death.—

Por. Marcus, no more; have I deserv'd this
treatment?

Marc. What have I said? Oh, Portius, oh
forgive me!

A soul, exasperate in ills, falls out

With every thing—its friend, itself—but, ha!

[*Shouts and trumpets.*

What means that shout, big with the sounds of
war?

What new alarm?

[*Shouts and trumpets repeated.*

Por. A second, louder yet,

Swells in the wind, and comes more full upon us.

Marc. Oh, for some glorious cause to fall in
battle!

Lucia, thou hast undone me: thy disdain

Has broke my heart: 'tis death must give me
ease.

Por. Quick let us hence. Who knows if
Cato's life

Stands sure? Oh, Marcus, I am warm'd; my heart

Leaps at the trumpet's voice, and burns for glory.

[*Exeunt; trumpets and shouting.*

SCENE II.—Before the Senate-House.

*Enter SEMPRONIUS, with the LEADERS of the
Mutiny.*

Sem. At length the winds are rais'd, the storm
blows high!

Be it your care, my friends, to keep it up

In all its fury, and direct it right,

Till it has spent itself on Cato's head.

Meanwhile, I'll herd among his friends, and seem

One of the number, that, whate'er arrive,

My friends and fellow-soldiers may be safe. [*Exit.*

1 Lead. We are all safe; Sempronius is our
friend. [*Trumpets.*

But, hark, Cato enters. Bear up boldly to him;

Be sure you beat him down, and bind him fast;

This day will end our toils,
Fear nothing, for Sempronius is our friend.

*Trumpets. Re-enter SEMPRONIUS, with CATO,
LUCIUS, PORTIUS, MARCUS, and Guards.*

Cato. Where are those, bold intrepid sons of war,

That greatly turn their backs upon the foe,
And, to their general, send a brave defiance?

Sem. Curse on their dastard souls, they stand
astonish'd!

Cato. Perfidious men! And will you thus
dishonour

Your past exploits, and sully all your wars?

Why could not Cato fall

Without your guilt? Behold, ungrateful men,
Behold my bosom naked to your swords,

And let the man that's injur'd strike the blow.

Which of you all suspects that he is wrong'd,

Or thinks he suffers greater ills than Cato?

Am I distinguish'd from you but by toils,
Superior toils, and heavier weight of cares?

Painful pre-eminence!

Sem. Confusion to the villains! all is lost!

Cato. Hence, worthless men! hence! and
complain to Cæsar,

You could not undergo the toil of war,

Nor bear the hardships that your leader bore.

Luc. See, Cato, see the unhappy men! they
weep!

Fear and remorse, and sorrow for their crime,
Appear in every look, and plead for mercy.

Cato. Learn to be honest men, give up your
leaders,

And pardon shall descend on all the rest.

Sem. Cato, commit these wretches to my care:

First let them each be broken on the rack,

Then with what life remains, impal'd, and left

To writhe at leisure, round the bloody stake;

There let them hang, and taint the southern wind.

The partners of their crime will learn obedience.

Cato. Forbear, Sempronius!—see they suffer
death,

But, in their deaths, remember they are men;
Lucius, the base degen'rate age requires
Severity.

When, by just vengeance, guilty mortals perish,
The gods behold the punishment with pleasure,
And lay th' uplifted thunderbolt aside.

Sem. Cato, I execute thy will with pleasure.

Cato. Meanwhile we'll sacrifice to liberty.

Remember, O, my friends! the laws the rights,

The generous plan of power, deliver'd down

From age to age by your renown'd forefathers,

(So dearly bought, the price of so much blood:)

Oh, let it never perish in your hands!

But piously transmit it to your children.

Do thou, great liberty! inspire our souls,

And make our lives in thy possession happy,

Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence.

[*Exeunt CATO, &c.*

1 Lead. Sempronius, you have acted like your-
self: [earnest.

One would have thought you had been half in

Sem. Villain, stand off; base, grov'ling, worth-
less wretches,

Mongrels in faction, poor faint-hearted traitors!

2 Lead. Nay, now you carry it too far, Sem-
pronius!

Throw off the mask, there are none here but
friends.

Sem. Know, villains, when such paltry slaves
presume

To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
They're thrown neglected by; but, if it fails,
They're sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.
Here, take these factious monsters, drag them
To sudden death.

1 Lead. Nay, since it comes to this—

Sem. Dispatch them quick, but first pluck out
their tongues,

Lest with their dying breath they sow sedition.

[*Exeunt Guards, with the Leaders of the
Mutiny.*

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. Our first design, my friend, has prov'd
abortive;

Still there remains an after-game to play.

My troops are mounted;

Let but Sempronius head us in our flight,

We'll force the gate where Marcus keeps his
guard,

And hew down all that would oppose our passage.

A day will bring us into Cæsar's camp. [pose:

Sem. Confusion! I have fail'd of half my pur-
Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind!

Syph. How! will Sempronius turn a woman's
slave?

Sem. Think not thy friend can ever feel the soft
Unmanly warmth and tenderness of love.

Syphax, I long to clasp that haughty maid,

And bend her stubborn virtue to my passion:

When I have gone thus far, I'd cast her off.

Syph. What hinders, then, but that thou find
her out,

And hurry her away by manly force?

Sem. But how to gain admission? For access
is given to none but Juba and her brothers.

Syph. Thou shalt have Juba's dress and Juba's
guards;

The doors will open, when Numidia's prince
Seems to appear before the slaves that watch them.

Sem. Heavens, what a thought is there! Mar-
cia's my own!

How will my bosom swell with anxious joy,
When I behold her struggling in my arms,

With glowing beauty, and disorder'd charms,

While fear and anger, with alternate grace,

Pant in her breast, and vary in her face!

So Pluto seiz'd off Proserpine, convey'd

To hell's tremendous gloom th' affrighted maid;

There grimly smil'd, pleas'd with the beauteous
prize,

Nor envied Jove his sunshine and his skies.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

Enter LUCIA and MARCIA.

Lucia. Now tell me, Marcia, tell me from thy
If thou believ'st 'tis possible for woman [soul,
To suffer greater ills than Lucia suffers?

Marcia. Oh, Lucia, Lucia, might my big swoln
heart

Vent all its griefs, and give a loose to sorrow,

Marcia could answer thee in sighs, keep pace

With all thy woes, and count out tear for tear.

Lucia. I know thou'rt doom'd alike to be belov'd

By Juba, and thy father's friend, Sempronius:

But which of these has power to charm, like Portius?

Marcia. Still I must beg thee not to name Sempronius.

Lucia, I like not that loud, boisterous man.
Juba, to all the bravery of a hero,
Adds softest love and sweetness: he, I own,
Might make indeed the proudest woman happy.

Lucia. But should this father give you to Sempronius?

Marcia. I dare not think he will: but if he should—

Why wilt thou add, to all the griefs I suffer,
Imaginary ills and fancied tortures?
I hear the sound of feet! They march this way,
Let us retire, and try if we can drown
Each softer thought in sense of present danger:
When love once pleads admission to our hearts,
In spite of all the virtues we can boast,
The woman that deliberates is lost. [Exeunt.]

Enter SEMPRONIUS, dressed like JUBA, with Numidian Guards.

Sem. The deer is lodg'd, I've track'd her to her covert.

Be sure you mind the word, and, when I give it,
Rush in at once, and seize upon your prey.
How will the young Numidian rave, to see
His mistress lost! If aught could glad my soul,
Beyond th' enjoyment of so bright a prize,
'T would be to torture that young, gay barbarian.
—But hark! what noise! Death to my hopes!

'Tis he,
'Tis Juba's self! there is but one way left—
He must be murder'd, and a passage cut
Through those his guards.

Enter JUBA, with Guards.

Juba. What do I see? Who's this that dares usurp

The guards and habits of Numidia's prince?

Sem. One that was born to scourge thy arrogance,
Presumptuous youth!

Juba. What can this mean? Sempronius!

Sem. My sword shall answer thee. Have at thy heart.

Juba. Nay, then, beware thy own, proud, barbarous man.

[They fight; SEMPRONIUS falls.]

Sem. Curse on my stars! Am I then doom'd to fall

By a boy's hand disfigur'd in a vile
Numidian dress, and for a worthless woman?
Gods, I'm distracted! this my close of life!
Oh, for a peal of thunder, that would make
Earth, sea, and air, and heaven, and Cato tremble!

Juba. With what a spring his furious soul broke loose. [Dies.]

And left the limbs still quivering on the ground!
Hence, let us carry off those slaves to Cato,
That we may there at length unravel all
This dark design, this mystery of fate.

[Exit JUBA; his Guards taking those of SEMPRONIUS as prisoners.]

Enter LUCIA and MARCIA.

Lucia. Sure 'twas the clash of swords; my troubled heart

Is so cast down, and sunk amidst its sorrows,
It throbs with fear, and aches at every sound.
Oh, Marcia, should thy brothers, for my sake—
I die away with horror at the thought!

Marcia. See, Lucia, see! here's blood! here's blood and murder!

Ha! a Numidian! Heaven preserve the prince!
The face lies muffled up within the garment,
But, ah! death to my sight! a diadem,
And royal robes! O gods! 'tis he, 'tis he!
Juba lies dead before us!

Lucia. Now, Marcia, now call up to thy assistance
Thy wonted strength and constancy of mind;
Thou canst not put it to a greater trial.

Marcia. Lucia, look there, and wonder at my patience;

Have I not cause to rave, and beat my breast,
To rend my heart with grief, and run distracted?

Lucia. What can I think, or say, to give thee comfort?

Marcia. Talk not of comfort; 'tis for lighter ills:
Behold a sight that strikes all comfort dead.

Enter JUBA unperceived.

I will indulge my sorrows, and give way
To all the pangs and fury of despair;
That man, that best of men, deserv'd it from me.

Juba. What do I hear? and was the false Sempronius

That best of men? Oh, had I fallen like him,
And could have been thus mourn'd, I had been happy. [Aside.]

Marcia. 'Tis not in fate to ease my tortured breast.

Oh, he was all made up of love and charms!

Whatever maid could wish, or man admire

Delight of every eye; when he appear'd,

A secret pleasure gladden'd all that saw him.

Oh, Juba, Juba!

Juba. What means that voice? Did she not call on Juba? [Aside.]

Marcia. He's dead, and never knew how much I lov'd him!

Lucia, who knows but his poor, bleeding heart,
Amidst its agonies, remember'd Marcia,

And the last words he utter'd call'd me cruel!

Alas! he knew not, hapless youth he knew not,
Marcia's whole soul was full of love and Juba!

Juba. Where am I? Do I live? or am indeed
What Marcia thinks? All is Elysium round me! [Aside.]

Marcia. Ye dear remains of the most lov'd of men,

Nor modesty nor virtue here forbid
A last embrace, while thus—

Juba. See, Marcia, see,
[Throwing himself before her.]

The happy Juba lives! he lives to catch
That dear embrace, and to return it, too,

With mutual warmth and eagerness of love.

Marcia. With pleasure and amaze I stand transported!

If thou art Juba, who lies there?

Juba. A wretch
Disguis'd like Juba on a curs'd design.

I could not bear
To leave thee in the neighbourhood of death,

But flew, in all the haste of love, to find thee;
I found thee weeping, and confess this once
Am rapt with joy, to see my Marcia's tears.

Marcia. I've been surpris'd in an unguarded hour,

But must not now go back; the love, that lay
Half-smother'd in my breast, has broke through all

Its weak restraints, and burns in its full lustre
I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.

Juba. My joy, my best lov'd, my only wish!
How shall I speak the transport of my soul?

Marcia. Lucia, thy arm. Lead to my apartment.

Oh, prince! I blush to think what I have said,
But fate has wrested the confession from me;
Go on, and prosper in the paths of honour.
Thy virtue will excuse my passion for thee,
And make the gods propitious to our love.

[*Exeunt MARCIA and LUCIA.*]

Juba. I am so bless'd, I fear 'tis all a dream.
Fortune, thou now hast made amends for all
Thy past unkindness: I absolve my stars.
What though Numidia add her conquer'd towns
And provinces to swell the victor's triumph,
Juba will never at his fate repine:
Let Cæsar have the world, if Marcia's mine.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Before the Palace.—A March at a distance.*

Enter CATO and LUCIUS.

Luc. I stand astonish'd! What, the bold Sempronius,

That still broke foremost through the crowd of patriots,
As with a hurricane of zeal transported,
And virtuous e'en to madness—

Cato. Trust me, Lucius,
Our civil discords have produc'd such crimes,
Such monstrous crimes, I am surpris'd at nothing.
—Oh, Lucius, I am sick of this bad world!
The daylight and the sun grow painful to me.

Enter PORTIUS.

But see where Portius comes: what means this haste?

Why are thy looks thus chang'd?

Por. My heart is griev'd:

I bring such news as will afflict my father.

Cato. Has Cæsar shed more Roman blood?

Por. Not so.

The traitor Syphax, as within the square
He exercis'd his troops, the signal given,
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse
To the south gate, where Marcus holds the watch;
I saw, and call'd to stop him, but in vain:
He toss'd his arm aloft, and proudly told me,
He would not stay and perish like Sempronius.

Cato. Perfidious man! But haste, my son,
and see

Thy brother Marcus acts a Roman's part.

[*Exit PORTIUS.*]

—Lucius, the torrent bears too hard upon me:
Justice gives way to force: the conquer'd world
Is Cæsar's! Cato has no business in it.

Luc. While pride, oppression, and injustice reign,

The world will still demand her Cato's presence,
In pity to mankind submit to Cæsar,
And reconcile thy mighty soul to life.

Cato. Would Lucius have me live to swell the number

Of Cæsar's slaves, or by a base submission
Give up the name of Rome, and own a tyrant?

Luc. The victor never will impose on Cato
Ungenerous terms. His enemies confess
The virtues of humanity are Cæsar's.

Cato. Curse on his virtues! they've undone his country.

Such popular humanity is treason—

But see young Juba; the good youth appears,
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects!

Luc. Alas, poor prince! his fate deserves compassion.

Enter JUBA.

Juba. I blush, and am confounded to appear
Before thy presence, Cato.

Cato. What's thy crime?

Juba. I'm a Numidian.

Cato. And a brave one too. Thou hast a Roman soul. [men?]

Juba. Hast thou not heard of my false country—
Cato. Alas, young prince!

Falsehood and fraud shoot up in every soil,

The product of all climes—Rome has its Cæsars.

Juba. 'Tis generous thus to comfort the distress'd.

Cato. 'Tis just to give applause where 'tis deserved.

Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,
Like purest gold, that, tortur'd in the furnace,
Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight.

Enter PORTIUS.

Por. Misfortune on misfortune! grief on grief!
My brother Marcus—

Cato. Ha! what has he done?

Has he forsook his post? Has he given way?

Did he look tamely on, and let them pass?

Por. Scarce had I left my father, but I met him
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,
Breathless and pale, and cover'd o'er with wounds.
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,
He stood the shock of a whole host of foes,
Till, obstinately brave, and bent on death,
Oppress'd with multitudes, he greatly fell.

Cato. I'm satisfied.

Por. Nor did he fall, before
His sword had pierc'd through the false heart of Syphax.

Yonder he lies, I saw the hoary traitor
Grin in the pangs of death, and bite the ground.

Cato. Thanks to the gods, my boy has done his duty.

—Portius, when I'm dead, be sure you place
His urn near mine.

Por. Long may they keep asunder!

Luc. Oh, Cato, arm thy soul with all its patience!
See where the corpse of thy dead son approaches!
The citizens and senators, alarm'd,
Have gather'd round it, and attend it, weeping.

Dead march. CATO meets the corpse. LUCIUS, Senators, Guards, &c. attending.

Cato. Welcome, my son! Here lay him down,
my friends,

Full in my sight, that I may view at leisure
The bloody corse, and count those glorious wounds.

—How beautiful is death, when earn'd by virtue!
Who would not be that youth? What pity is it

That we can die but once to serve our country!—
Why sits this sadness on your brows, my friends?

I should have blush'd if Cato's house had stood
Secure, and flourish'd in a civil war.

Portius, behold thy brother, and remember

Thy life is not thy own, when Rome demands it.

When Rome demands?—But Rome is now no more.

Oh, liberty! oh, virtue! oh, my country! [eyes]

Juba. Behold that upright man! Rome fills his
With tears, that flow'd not o'er his own dear son.

[*Aside*]

Cato. Whate'er the Roman virtue has subdu'd,
The sun's whole course, the day and year, are
Cæsar's:

For him the self-devoted Decii died,
The Fabii fell, and the great Scipio's conquer'd:
Even Pompey fought for Cæsar. Oh, my friends!
How is the toil of fate, the work of ages,
The Roman empire, fallen! Oh, curs'd ambition!
Fallen into Cæsar's hands! Our great forefathers
Had left him nought to conquer but his country.

Juba. While Cato lives, Cæsar will blush to see
Mankind enslav'd, and be asham'd of empire.

Cato. Cæsar asham'd! Has he not seen Pharsalia?

Luc. 'Tis time thou save thyself and us.

Cato. Lose not a thought on me; I'm out of danger:

Heaven will not leave me in the victor's hand.
Cæsar shall never say, he conquer'd Cato.
But oh, my friends! your safety fills my heart
With anxious thoughts; a thousand secret terrors
Rise in my soul. How shall I save my friends?
'Tis now, O Cæsar, I begin to fear thee!

Luc. Cæsar has mercy, if we ask it of him.

Cato. Then ask it, I conjure you! let him know

Whate'er was done against him, Cato did it.
Add, if you please, that I request it of him—
That I myself, with tears, request it of him—
The virtue of my friends may pass unpunish'd.
Juba, my heart is troubled for thy sake.
Should I advise thee to regain Numidia,
Or seek the conqueror?—

Juba. If I forsake thee

Whilst I have life, may Heaven abandon Juba!

Cato. Thy virtues, prince, if I foresee aright,
Will one day make thee great; at Rome, hereafter,
'Twill be no crime to have been Cato's friend.
Portius, draw near:—my son, thou oft has seen
Thy sire engag'd in a corrupted state,
Wrestling with vice and faction: now thou seest me
Spent, overpower'd, despairing of success;
Let me advise thee to retreat betimes
To thy paternal state, the Sabine field;
Where the great Censor toil'd with his own hands,
And all our frugal ancestors were bless'd
In humble virtues, and a rural life;
There live retir'd, pray for the peace of Rome;
Content thyself to be obscurely good.

When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a private station.

Por. I hope my father does not recommend
A life to Portius; that he scorns himself.

Cato. Farewell, my friends! If there be any of you

Who dare not trust the victor's clemency,
Know there are ships prepar'd, by my command,
That shall convey you to the wish'd-for port.
Is there aught else, my friends, I can do for you?
The conqueror draws near. Once more, farewell!
If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet
In happier climes, and on a safer shore,
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.

[*Pointing to his dead son.*
There the brave youth, with love of virtue fir'd,
Who greatly in his country's cause expir'd,
Shall know he conquer'd. The firm patriot
there,

Who made the welfare of mankind his care,
Though still by faction, vice, and fortune cross'd,
Shall find the generous labour was not lost.

[*Dead march; exeunt in funeral procession.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

CATO, solus, sitting in a thoughtful posture; in his hand, Plato's Book on the Immortality of the Soul; a drawn sword on the table, by him.

Cato. It must be so—Plato, thou reason'st well—
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, this inward horror,
Of falling into nought! Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untried being, [pass?
Through what new scenes and changes, must we
The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me:
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a power above us
(And that there is, all Nature cries aloud
Through all her works,) he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in must be happy,
But when, or where?—This world was made for
Cæsar.

I'm weary of conjectures;—this must end them.

[*Laying his hand on his sword.*
Thus am I doubly arm'd: my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me.
This in a moment brings me to an end;
But this informs me I shall never die.
The soul, secur'd in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years,
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.
What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?
This lethargy that creeps through all my senses?
Nature, oppress'd and harrass'd out with care,
Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favour her,
That my awaken'd soul may take her flight,
Renew'd in all her strength, and fresh with life,
An offering fit for Heaven. Let guilt or fear
Disturb man's rest, Cato knows neither of them,
Indifferent in his choice, to sleep or die.

Enter PORTIUS.

But, ha! who's this? my son! Why this intrusion?

Were not my orders that I would be private?

Why am I disobey'd?

Por. Alas, my father!

What means this sword, this instrument of death?
Let me convey it hence.

Cato. Rash youth, forbear.

Por. Oh, let the prayers, th' entreaties of your friends,

Their tears, their common danger, wrest it from
Cato. Wouldst thou betray me? Wouldst thou
give me up

A slave, a captive, into Cæsar's hands?

Retire and learn obedience to a father,
Or know, young man—

Por. Look not thus sternly on me;
You know, I'd rather die than disobey you.

Cato. 'Tis well! again I'm master of myself.

Now, Cæsar, let thy troops beset our gates,
And bar each avenue; thy gathering fleets
O'erspread the sea, and stop up every port;

Cato snall open to himself a passage,
And mock thy hopes.—

Por. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, Sir, forgive your son,
Whose grief hangs heavy on lum. Oh, my father!
How am I sure it is not the last time
I e'er shall call you so? Be not displeas'd,
Oh, be not angry with me whilst I weep,
And, in the anguish of my heart, beseech you
To quit the dreadful purpose of your soul!

Cato. Thou hast been ever good and dutiful.
[*Embracing him.*]

Weep not, my son, all will be well again;
The righteous gods, whom I have sought to please,
Will succour Cato, and preserve his children.

Por. Your words give comfort to my drooping
heart. [duct:]

Cato. Portius, thou may'st rely upon my con-
Thy father will not act what misbecomes him.
But go, my son, and see if aught be wanting
Among thy father's friends; see them embark'd,
And tell me if the winds and seas befriend them.
My soul is quite weigh'd down with care, and asks
The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep.

Por. My thoughts are more at ease, my heart
revives— [Exit CATO.]

Enter MARCIA.

Oh, Marcia! Oh, my sister! still there's hope
Our father will not cast away a life
So needful to us all, and to his country.
He is retir'd to rest, and seems to cherish [hence
Thoughts full of peace.—He has despatch'd me
With orders that bespeak a mind compos'd,
And studious for the safety of his friends.
Marcia, take care that none disturb his slumbers.

Marcia. Oh, ye immortal powers, that guard
the just,
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose,
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul
With easy dreams; remember all his virtues,
And show mankind that goodness is your care!

Enter LUCIA.

Lucia. Where is your father, Marcia, where is
Cato?

Marcia. Lucia, speak low, he is retired to rest.
Lucia, I feel a gentle dawning hope
Rise in my soul—we shall be happy still.

Lucia. Alas, I tremble when I think on Cato!
In every view, in every thought, I tremble!
Cato is stern and awful as a god;
He knows not how to wink at human frailty,
Or pardon weakness, that he never felt.

Marcia. Though stern and awful to the foes
of Rome,

He is all goodness, Lucia, always mild;
Compassionate and gentle to his friends;
Fill'd with domestic tenderness, the best,
The kindest father; I have ever found him
Easy and good, and bounteous to my wishes.

Lucia. 'Tis his consent alone can make us
bless'd.

But who knows Cato's thoughts?
Who knows how yet he may dispose of Portius,
Or how he has determined of thyself? [Heaven.

Marcia. Let him but live, commit the rest to

Enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man!
Oh, Marcia, I have seen thy godlike father;
Some power invisible supports his soul,

And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.
A kind, refreshing sleep is fallen upon him:
I saw him stretch'd at ease; his fancy lost
In pleasing dreams; as I drew near his couch,
He smil'd, and cried, Cæsar, thou canst not hurt
me.

Marcia. His mind still labours with some dread-
ful thought.

Enter JUBA.

Juba. Lucius, the horsemen are return'd from
viewing
The number, strength, and posture of our foes,
Who now encamp within a short hour's march;
On the high point of yon bright western tower
We ken them from afar; the setting sun
Plays on their shining arms and burnish'd helmets,
And covers all the field with gleams of fire.

Luc. Marcia, 'tis time we should awake thy
father.

Cæsar is still dispos'd to give us terms,
And waits at distance till he hears from Cato.

Enter PORTIUS

Portius, thy looks speak somewhat of importance.
What tidings dost thou bring? Methinks I see
Unusual gladness sparkle in thy eyes.

Por. As I was hasting to the port, where now
My father's friends, impatient for a passage,
Accuse the lingering wind, a sail arriv'd
From Pompey's son, who, through the realms of
Spain,

Calls out for vengeance on his father's death,
And rouses the whole nation up to arms.
Were Cato at their head, once more might Rome
Assert her rights, and claim her liberty.

[A groan is heard.
But, hark! what means that groan?—Oh, give
me way,

And let me fly into my father's presence! [Exit.

Luc. Cato, amidst his slumbers, thinks on Rome,
And, in the wild disorder of his soul,
Mourns o'er his country.—Ha! a second groan—
Heaven guard us all!

Marcia. Alas, 'tis not the voice
Of one who sleeps; 'tis agonizing pain—
'Tis death is in that sound—

Re-enter PORTIUS.

Por. Oh, sight of wo!
Oh, Marcia, what we fear'd is come to pass!
Cato has fallen upon his sword—

Luc. Oh, Portius,
Hide all the horrors of thy mournful tale,
And let us guess the rest.

Por. I've raised him up,
And plac'd him in his chair; where, pale and faint,
He gasps for breath, and, as his life flows from
him, [ing,
Demands to see his friends. His servants, weep-
Obsequious to his order, bear him hither!—

Marcia. Oh, Heaven! assist me in this dread-
ful hour,
To pay the last sad duties to my father!

CATO brought on in a chair.

Juba. These are thy triumphs, thy exploits, O
Cæsar!

Luc. Now is Rome fall'n indeed!

Cato. Here set me down—

Portius, come near me.—Are my friends embark'd?
Can any thing be thought of for their service?

Whilst I yet live, let me not live in vain—
 Oh, Lucius, art thou here?—Thou art too good—
 Let this our friendship live between our children—
 Make Portius happy in thy daughter Lucia.
 Marcia, my daughter—
 Oh, bend me forward!—Juba loves thee, Marcia.
 A senator of Rome, while Rome surviv'd,
 Would not have match'd his daughter with a
 king— [tion—
 But Cæsar's arms have thrown down all distinc-
 I'm sick to death—Oh, when shall I get loose
 From this vain world, th' abode of guilt and sorrow!
 And yet, methinks, a beam of light breaks in
 On my departing soul. Alas, I fear
 I've been too hasty!—Oh, ye powers, that search
 The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
 If I have done amiss, impute it not—
 The best may err, but you are good, and—Oh!

[Dies.

Luc. There fled the greatest soul that ever
 warm'd

A Roman breast.—Oh, Cato! oh, my friend!
 Thy will shall be religiously observ'd.
 But let us bear this awful corpse to Cæsar,
 And lay it in his sight, that it may stand
 A fence betwixt us and the victor's wrath:
 Cato, though dead, shall still protect his friends.

From hence, let fierce contending nations know,
 What dire effects from civil discord flow:
 'Tis this that shakes our country with alarms,
 And gives up Rome a prey to Roman arms;
 Produces fraud, and cruelty, and strife,
 And robs the guilty world of Cato's life. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY DR. GARTH.

WHAT odd fantastic things we women do!
 Who would not listen when young lovers woo?
 But die a maid, yet have the choice of two!

Ladies are often cruel to their cost:
 To give you pain, themselves they punish most.
 Vows of virginity should well be weigh'd;
 Too oft they're cancell'd, though in convents
 made.

Would you revenge such rash resolves—you
 may

Be spiteful—and believe the thing we say,
 We hate you when you're easily said nay.
 How needless, if you knew us, were your fears!
 Let love have eyes, and beauty will have ears.
 Our hearts are form'd as you yourselves would
 choose,

Too proud to ask, too humble to refuse:
 We give to merit, and to wealth we sell:
 He sighs with most success that settles well.
 The woes of wedlock with the joys we mix:
 'Tis best repenting in a coach and six.

Blame not our conduct, since we but pursue
 Those lively lessons we have learn'd from you.
 Your breasts no more the fire of beauty warms,
 But wicked wealth usurps the power of charms.
 What pains to get the gaudy things you hate,
 To swell in show, and be a wretch in state.
 At plays you ogle, at the ring you bow;
 E'en churches are no sanctuaries now:
 There, golden idols all your vows receive,
 She is no goddess that has nought to give.
 Oh, may once more the happy age appear,
 When words were artless, and the thoughts sin-
 cere:

When gold and grandeur were unenvied things,
 And courts less coveted than groves and springs:
 Love then shall only mourn when truth com-
 plains,

And constancy feel transport in its chains:
 Sighs with success their own soft anguish tell,
 And eyes shall utter what the lips conceal:
 Virtue again to its bright station climb,
 And beauty fear no enemy but time;
 The fair shall listen to desert alone,
 And every Lucia find a Cato's son.

FORTUNE'S FROLIC:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY JOHN TILL ALLINGHAM, Esq.

REMARKS.

This excellent farce turns on the circumstance of an honest peasant succeeding to the title and estate of an lord, and on the use that he makes of his unexpectedly-acquired wealth; being thus enabled to evince feelings that would confer honour on the noblest hereditary rank. "Proud wealth!" exclaims Frank, "look here for an example!"—The proudest, indeed, need not be ashamed to follow it.

This after-piece continues, as it well deserves to be, a favourite with the theatrical part of the public.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY LANE, 1814.
ROBIN ROUGHHEAD,.....*Mr. Tokely.*
SNACKS,.....*Mr. Maddocks.*
MR. FRANK,.....*Mr. Cooke.*
RATTLE,.....*Mr. J. Wallack.*
CLOWN,.....*Mr. Chatterley.*
SERVANT,.....*Mr. J. West.*

DRURY LANE, 1814.
VILLAGER,.....*Mr. Webb*
MISS NANCY,.....*Mrs. Scott.*
DOLLY,.....*Mrs. Orger.*
MARGERY,.....*Mrs. Sparks*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Hall in the Castle.

Enter MR. FRANK.

Frank. To what humiliation has my bad fortune reduced me, when it brings me here an humble suppliant to my base oppressor!

Enter SNACKS, speaking.

Snacks. A letter for me by express! What can it be about? Something of great consequence from my lord, I suppose.—Frank here! What the devil can he want?—Come a begging though, I dare say.

Frank. Good morning to you, Mr. Snacks.

Snacks. Good morning. [*Coldly.*]

Frank. I'm come, Sir, to—I say, Sir, I'm come to—

Snacks. Well, Sir, I see you are come; and what then? What are you come for, Sir?

Frank. The termination of the lawsuit which you have so long carried on against me, owing to my entire inability to prosecute it any further, has thrown me into difficulties which I cannot surmount without your kind assistance.

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Snacks. Very pretty, indeed! You are a very modest man, Mr. Frank: you've spent your last shilling in quarrelling with me, and now you want me to help you.

Frank. The farm called Hundred Acres is at present untenanted—I wish to rent it.

Snacks. You wish to rent it, do you? And pray, Sir, where's your money? And what do you know about farming?

Frank. I have studied agriculture; and, with care, have no doubt of being able to pay my rent regularly.

Snacks. But I have a great doubt about it.—No, no, Sir; do you think I'm so unmindful of his lordship's interest as to let his land to a poor novice like you? It won't do, Mr. Frank; I can't think of it—Good day, friend; good day.

[*Showing him the door.*]

Frank. My necessities, Sir—

Snacks. I have nothing to do with your necessities, Sir; I have other business—Good day—There's the door.

Frank. Unfeeling wretch!

Snacks. What!

Frank. But what could I expect? Think not

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thou sordid man, 'tis for myself I sue—my wife, my children—'tis for them I ask your aid, or else my pride had never stooped so low! my honest poverty is no disgrace: your ill-gotten gold gives you no advantage over me; for I had rather feel my heart beat freely, as it does now, than know that I possessed your wealth, and load it with the crimes entailed upon it. *[Exit.]*

Snacks. A mighty fine speech, truly! I think I'll try if I can't lower your tone a little, my fine, blustering fellow: I'll have you laid by the heels before night for this. Proud as you are, you'll have time to reflect in a jail, and bring down your spirit a little. But come, let me see what my letter says. What a deal of time I've lost with that beggar! *[Reads.]*

Sir,—This is to inform you that my Lord Lackwit died—an heir to his estate—his lordship never acknowledged her as his wife—son called Robin Roughead—Robin is the legal heir to the estate—to put him in immediate possession, according to his lordship's last will and testament. Yours to command,

KIT CODICIL, Attorney at law.

Here's a catastrophe! Robin Roughead a lord! My stewardship has done pretty well for me already, but I think I shall make it do better now. I know this Robin very well; he's devilish cunning, I'm afraid; but I'll tickle him. He shall marry my daughter—then I can do as I please. To be sure I have given my promise to Rattle; but what of that? he hasn't got it under my hand. I think I had better tell Robin this news at once; it will make him mad—and then I shall do as I please with him. Ay, ay, I'll go. How unfortunate that I did not make friends with him before! He has no great reason to like me; I never gave him any thing but hard words.—*[RATTLE sings without.]* Confound it, here's that fellow Rattle coming.

Enter RATTLE.

Rat. Ah, my old daddy! how are you?—What! have you got the mumps—can't you speak?

Snacks. I wish you had the mumps, and could not speak. What do you old daddy me for?

Rat. Why, father-in-law: curse me but you are most conceitedly crusty to-day; what's the matter with you? why you are as melancholy as a lame duck.

Snacks. The matter is—that I am sick.

Rat. What's your disorder?

Snacks. A surfeit: I've had too much of you.

Rat. Oh! you'll soon get the better of that; for when I've married your daughter, curse me if I shall trouble you much with my company!

Snacks. But you haven't married her yet.

Rat. Oh, but I shall soon; I have got your promise, you know.

Snacks. Can't remember any such thing.

Rat. No! your memory's very short then.

Snacks. A short memory's very convenient, sometimes.

Rat. And so is a short stick; and I've a great mind to try the utility of it now. I tell you what, Snacks,—I always thought you was a damned old rascal, but now I'm sure of it: it's no matter, though: I'll marry your daughter notwithstanding.

Snacks. You will—will you?

Rat. Yes, Snacks, I will; for I love her. I wonder how the devil such a pretty girl ever came to have such a queer, little, shrivelled, old mopstick

as you for a father. Snacks, your wife most certainly made a cuckold of you; it could not be else.

Snacks. Impudent rascal!

Rat. But it signifies not who her father is; Miss Nancy is lovely, and I'll marry her. Let me see—five thousand pounds you promised; yes, you shall give her that on the wedding-day. You have been a steward a long time; that sum must be a mere flea-bite to you.

Snacks. I rather think I shall never give her a farthing if she marries such a paltry fellow as you.

Rat. Why lookye; I'm a lively spark, with a good deal of fire in me, and it is not a little matter that will put me out: where others sink, I rise; and this opposition of yours will only serve to blow me into a blaze that will burn you up to cinder. I'm up to your gossip; I'm not to be had.

Snacks. No, nor my daughter's not to be had, Mr. Banker's Clerk; so I sha'n't waste any more time with you: go, and take in the flats in Lombard-street; it wont do here. *[Exit.]*

Rat. Oh! what he has mizzled, has he? I fancy you'll find me the most troublesome blade you ever settled an account with, old Raise-rent. I'll astonish you some how or other. I wonder what has changed him so!

Enter MISS NANCY.

Ah, my sweet, little, rural angel! How fares it with you? You smile like a May morning.

Nan. The pleasure of seeing you always makes me—

Rat. Indeed! give me a kiss then. I love you well enough to marry you without a farthing; but I think I may as well have the five thousand pounds, if it's only to tease old Long-purse.

Nan. Oh, you know you have his promise for that.

Rat. Yes, but he says he has forgot all about that, though it was no longer ago than yesterday; and he says I sha'n't have you.

Nan. Does he, indeed?

Rat. Yes; but never mind that.

Nan. I thought you said you loved me?

Rat. And so I do, better than all the gold in Lombard-street.

Nan. Then why are you not sorry that my father wont give his consent?

Rat. His consent! I have got yours and my own, and I'll soon manage him. Don't you remember how I frightened him one night, when I came to visit you by stealth, dressed like a ghost, which he thinks haunts the castle? Oh! I'll turn that to account. I know he's very superstitious, and easily frightened into any thing. Come, let's take a walk, and plot how I, your knight-errant, shall deliver you from this haunted castle. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—A Corn-field.

ROBIN ROUGHEAD discovered, binding up a sheaf.

Rob. Ah! work, work, work, all day long, and no such thing as stopping a moment to rest! for there's old Snacks the steward, always upon the look out; and if he sees one, slap he has it down in his book, and then there's sixpence gone plump. *[Coming forward.]* I do hate that old chap, and that's the truth on't. Now, if I was lord of this place, I'd make one rule—there should be no such thing as work; it should be one long holiday all the year round. Your great folks have strange whims in their heads, that's for sartin. I

don't know what to make of 'un, not I. Now there's all you great park there, kept for his lordship to look at; and his lordship has not seen it these twelve years—Ah! if it was mine, I'd let all the villagers turn their cows in there, and it should not cost 'em a farthing; then, as the parson said last Sunday, I should be as rich as any in the land, for I should have the blessings of the poor. Dang it! here comes Snacks.' Now I shall get a fine jobation, I suppose.

Enter SNACKS, bowing very obsequiously; ROBIN takes his hat off, and stands staring at him.

Rob. I be main tired, Master Snacks; so I stopt to rest myself a little; I hope you'll excuse it.—I wonder what the dickens he's grinning at.

[Aside.] Snacks. Excuse it! I hope your lordship's infinite goodness and condescension will excuse your lordship's most obsequious, devoted, and very humble servant, Timothy Snacks, who is come into the presence of your lordship for the purpose of informing your lordship—

Rob. Lordship! he, he, he! Ecod! I never knew as I nad a hump before. Why, Master Snacks, you grow funny in your old age.

Snacks. No, my lord, I know my duty better; I should never think of being funny with a lord.

Rob. What lord? Oh, you mean the Lord Harry, I suppose. No, no, must not be too funny with him, or he'll be after playing the very devil with you.

Snacks. I say, I should never think of jesting with a person of your lordship's dignified character.

Rob. Did—dig—What! Why now I look at you, I see how it is: you are mad. I wonder what quarter the moon's in. Lord! how your eyes roll! I never saw you so before.—How came they to let you out alone?

Snacks. Your lordship is most graciously pleased to be facetious.

Rob. Why, what gammon are you at?—Don't come near me, for you have been bit by a mad dog; I'm sure you have.

Snacks. If your lordship, will be so kind as to read this letter, it would convince your lordship—Will your lordship condescend?

Rob. Why, I would condescend, but for a few reasons, and one of 'em is, that I can't read.

Snacks. I think your lordship is perfectly right; for these pursuits are too low for one of your lordship's nobility.

Rob. Lordship, and lordship again! I'll tell you what, Master Snacks—let's have no more of your fun, for I won't stand it any longer, for all you be steward here: my nome's Robin Roughead, and if you don't choose to call me by that name, I sha'n't answer you, that's flat.—*[Aside.]* I don't like him well enough to stand his jokes.

Snacks. Why then, Master Robin, be so kind as to attend whilst I read this letter. *[Reads.]*

Sir,—This is to inform you, that my Lord Lackwit died this morning, after a very short illness; during which he declared that he had been married, and had an heir to his estate: the woman he married was commonly called, or known by the name of Roughead: she was poor and illiterate, and, through motives of shame, his lordship never acknowledged her as his wife: she has been dead some time since, and left behind her a son called Robin Roughead: now this said Robin is the legal heir to the estate. I have

therefore sent you the necessary writings to put him into immediate possession, according to his lordship's last will and testament. Yours to command, KIR CODICIL, Attorney at Law.

Rob. What!—What all mine? the houses, the trees, the fields, the hedges, the ditches, the gates, the horses, the dogs, the cats, the cocks and the hens, and the cows and the bulls, and the pigs and the—What! are they all mine? and I, Robin Roughead, am the rightful lord of all this estate!—Don't keep me a minute now, but tell me it is so—Make haste, tell me—quick, quick!

Snacks. I repeat it, the whole estate is yours.

Rob. Huzza! Huzza! *[Catches off SNACKS' hat and wig.]* Set the bells a ringing; set the ale a running; make every body drunk—if there's a sober man to be found any where to-day he shall be put in the stocks. Go get my hat full of guineas to make a scramble with; call all the tenants together. I'll lower the rents—I'll—

Snacks. I hope your lordship will do me the favour to—

Rob. Why, that may be as it happens; I can't tell. *[Carelessly.]*

Snacks. Will your lordship dine at the castle to-day?

Rob. Yes.

Snacks. What would your lordship choose for dinner?

Rob. Beef-steaks and onions, and plenty of 'em.

Snacks. Beef-steaks and onions! What a dish for a lord!—He'll be a savoury bit for my daughter, though. *[Aside.]*

Rob. What are you at there, Snacks? Go, get me the guineas—make haste; I'll have the scramble, and then I'll go to Dolly, and tell her the news.

Snacks. Dolly! Pray, my lord, who's Dolly?

Rob. Why Dolly, is to be my lady, and your mistress, if I find you honest enough to keep you in my employ.

Snacks. He rather smokes me.—I have a beauteous daughter, who is allowed to be the very pink of perfection.

Rob. Damn your daughter! I have got something else to think of: don't talk to me of your daughter; stir your stumps, and get the money.

Snacks. I am your lordship's most obsequious

—Zounds! what a peer of the realm.

[Aside; exit.]

Rob. Ha, ha, ha! What work I will make in the village!—Work! no, there shall be no such a thing as work: it shall be all play.—Where shall I go? I'll go to—No, I won't go there; I'll go to Farmer Hedgestake's, and tell him—No, I'll not go there;—I'll go to—Damn it, I'll go no where; yes, I will; I'll go every where; I'll be neither here, nor there, nor any where else. How pleased Dolly will be when she hears—

Enter VILLAGERS, shouting.

Dick, Tom, Jack, how are you, my lads?—Here's news for you! Come stand round, make a ring, and I'll make a bit of a speech to you, *[They all get round him.]* First of all, I suppose Snacks has told you that I'm your landlord?

Vil. We are all glad of it.

Rob. So am I; and I'll make you all happy: I'll lower all your rents.

All. Huzza! Long live Lord Robin!

Rob. You sha'n't pay no rent at all.

All. Huzza! huzza! long live Lord Robin!

Rob. I'll have no poor people in the parish, for

I'll make 'em all rich; I'll have no widows, for I'll marry 'em all. [*Women shout.*] I'll have no orphan children, for I'll father 'em all myself; and if that's not doing as a lord should do, then I say I know nothing about the matter—that's all.

All. Huzza! Huzza!

Enter SNACKS.

Snacks. I have brought your lordship the money.—He means to make 'em fly, so I have taken care the guineas shall be all light. [*Aside.*

Rob. Now then, young and old, great and small, little and tall, merry men all, here's among you—[*Throws the money; they scramble.*] Now you've got your pockets filled, come to the castle, and I'll fill all your bellies for you.

[*Villagers carry him off, shouting; SNACKS follows.*

SCENE III.—Inside of a neat Cottage; table spread for Dinner.

MARGERY AND DOLLY discovered.

Dol. There now, dinner's all ready, and I wish Robin would come. Do you think I may take up the dumplings, mother?

Mar. Ay, take 'em up; I warrant him he'll soon be here—he's always in pudding-time.

Dol. And well he may, for I'm sure you keep him sharp set enough.

Mar. Hold your tongue, you baggage! He pays me but five shillings a week for board, lodging, and washing—I suppose he's not to be kept like a lord for that, is he? I wonder how you'll keep him when you get married, as you talk of!

Dol. Oh, we shall contrive to make both ends meet! and we shall do very well, I dare say: for Robin loves me, and I loves Robin dearly.

Mar. Yes; but all your love wont keep the pot boiling, and Robin's as poor as Job.

Dol. La, now, mother, don't be so cross!—Oh dear, the dinner will get cold, and the dumplings will be quite spoiled; I wish Robin would come. [*Robin sings without.*] Oh, here he comes, in one of his merry humours.

Enter ROBIN; he cools himself with his hat, then sings and dances.

Why, Robin, what's the matter with you?

Rob. What! you haven't heard then? Oh, I'm glad of that! for I shall have the fun of telling you.

Dol. Well, sit down then, and eat your dinner; I have made you some nice hard dumplings.

Rob. Dumplings! Damn dumplings.

Dol. Damn dumplings—La, mother, he damns dumplings.—Oh, what a shame! Do you know what you are saying, Robin?

Rob. Never talk to me of dumplings.

Mar. But I'll talk of dumplings though, indeed, I should'n't have thought of such behaviour: dumplings are very wholesome food, quite good enough for you, I'm sure. [*Very angry.*

Rob. Are they, mother Margery? [*Upsets the table, and dances on the plates, &c. and sings.*] Tol derol lol.

Mar. Oh dear! the boy's mad; there's all my crockery gone! [*Picking up the pieces.*

Dol. [*Crying.*] I did not think you could have used us so; I am quite ashamed of you, Robin!

Rob. Now doantye cry now, Dolly; doantye cry.

Dol. I will cry, for you behave very ill.

Rob. No, doantye, Dolly, doantye, now.—

[*Shows a purse.*

Dol. How did you come by that, Robin?

Mar. What, a purse of gold? let me see.

[*Snatches it, and sits down to count the money.*

Dol. What have you been about Robin?

Rob. No, I have not been about robbing; I have been about being made a lord of, that's all.

Dol. What are you talking about? Your head's turn'd, I'm sure.

Rob. Well, I know it's turn'd; it's turned from a clown's head to a lord's. I say, Dolly, how should you like to live in that nice place at the top of the hill yonder?

Dol. Oh, I should like it very much, Robin; it is a nice cottage.

Rob. Doant talk to me of cottages, I mean the castle!

Dol. Why, what is your head running upon?

Mar. Every one golden guineas, as I'm a var-tuous woman. Where did you get 'em, Robin?

Rob. Why, where there's more to be had.

Mar. Ay, I always said Robin was a clever lad.—I'll go and put these by. [*Exit.*

Dol. Now, do tell me what you've been about. Where did you find all that money?

Rob. Dolly, Dolly, gee'us a buss, and I'll tell thee all about it.

Dol. Twenty, an' you pleasen, Robin.

Rob. First then, you must know that I am the cleverest fellow in all these parts.

Dol. Well, I know'd that afore.

Rob. But I'll tell you how it is—it's because I am the richest fellow in all these parts; and if I haven't it here, I have it here—[*Pointing to his head and his pocket.*] That castle's mine, and all these fields, up to the very sky.

Dol. No, no; come, Robin, that wont do.

Rob. Wont it?—I think it will do very well.

Dol. No, no; you are running your rigs—I know you are, Robin.

Rob. It's all true, Dolly, as sure as the devil's in Lunnun.

Dol. What! are you in right down arnest?

Rob. Yes, I am—his lordship's dead, and he has left word as how that my mother was his wife, and I his son.

Dol. What!

Rob. Yes, Dolly, and you shall be my lady.

Dol. No! Shall I?

Rob. Yes, you shall.

Dol. Ecod, that will be fine fun—my lady—

Rob. Now, what do you think on't?

Dol. My lady—Lady Routhead—

Rob. Why, Dolly!

Dol. Lady Routhead! How it sounds!—Ha, ha, ha! [*Laughs immoderately.*

Rob. 'Gad I believe she's going into a high strike—Dolly! Dolly! [*Slapping her hands.*

Dol. Ha, ha, ha!

Rob. Doantye laugh so; I don't half like it. [*Shakes her.*] Dolly!

Dol. Oh, my dear Robin, I can't help laughing to think of Lady Routhead.

Rob. The wench will go beside herself to a sartainty.

Dol. But now is it true in arnest?

Rob. Ay, as sure as you are there. But come, what shall we do? where shall we go? Oh! we'll go and see old mother Dickens; you know she took my part, and was very kind to me when poor mother died; and now she's very ill, and I'll go and give her something to comfort her old soul. Lord! Lord! I have heard people say as riches

wont make a body happy ; but while it gives me the power of doing so much good, I'm sure I shall be the happiest dog alive. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Road to the Castle.*

Enter MR. FRANK.

Frank. Well, then, to the house of wo I must return again. And can I take no comfort with me ? nothing to cheer my loving wife and helpless children ? What misery to see them want !

Enter ROBIN, unobserved by FRANK.

Rob. Want ! No, there shall be no such thing as want where I am—Who talks of want ?

Frank. My own distress I could bear well, very well ; but to see my helpless innocents enduring all the woes poverty brings with it, is more than I can bear.

Rob. And more than I can bear too.

[Throws his hat upon the ground, and takes money out of his pocket, which he throws into it.]

Frank. To-day I almost fear they have not tasted food.

Rob. And I ha' been stuffing my damned guts enough to make 'em burst.

[Drops more money into his hat.]

Frank. How happy once my state ! Where'er I turned my eyes, good fortune smiled upon me ; then, did the poor e'er tell a tale of wo without relief ? Were not my doors open to the unfortunate ?

Rob. How glad I be as I be—a lord. Hey, what ! Yes it is ; Mr. Frank. Lord, Sir, I'm very glad as I met with you.

Frank. Why so, my friend ?

Rob. Because you be mortal poor, and I be mortal rich ; and I'll share my last farthing with you.

Frank. Thank you my kind lad. But what reason have you ?

Rob. What reason have I ? Why, you gave me when I wanted it.

Frank. I can't remember.

Rob. Mayhap not ; but that's no reason as I should forget it ; it's a long time ago, too ; but it made such a mark here, that time wont rub it out. It's now fourteen years sin' poor mother died ; she was very ill one day when you happened to come by our cottage, and saw me stand blubbering at the door ; I was then about this high. You took me by the hand ; and I shall never forget the look you gave me, when you axed me what was the matter with me ; and when I told you, you ealled me a good lad, and went in and talked to mother. From that time you came to see her every day, and gave her all the help as you could ; and when she died, poor soul ! you buried her ; and if ever I forget such kindness, I hope good luck will for ever forget me !

Frank. Tell me your name ; it will remind me.

Rob. Robin Roughhead, your honour ; to-day I be come to be lord of all this estate ; and the first good I find of it is, that I am able to make you happy—*[Stuffing the money into his pockets.]* Come up to the castle, and I'll give you as much money as you can carry away in a sack.

Frank. Proud wealth, look here for an example ! My generous heart, how shall I thank you ?

Rob. Lord ! Lord ! doant think of thanking a

man for paying his debts. Besides, if you only knowed how I feel all o'er me—it's a kind of a—I could cry for joy.

Frank. What sympathy is in that honest bosom ! But how has this good fortune come to you ?

Rob. Why, that poor woman as you buried was wife to his lordship ; he has owned it on his death-bed, and left word as I'm his son.

Frank. How strange are the vicissitudes of life !

Rob. Now, Sir, I am but a simple lad, as a body may say ; and if you will but be so good as to help we with your advice, I shall take it very kind of you, Sir.

Frank. I thank you for the good opinion you have of me ; and as far as my poor abilities go, they shall be at your service.

Rob. Thank ye, Sir, thank ye ! But pray what bad luck made you so devilish poor ?

Frank. It would take a long time to tell you the story of my misfortunes ; but I owe them to the oppression of Mr. Snacks, the steward.

Rob. Snacks ! Oh, damn un ! I'll do for him soon ; he's rotten here, Master Frank ; I do think as how he's a damned old rogue.

Frank. Judge not too harshly.

Rob. Come, Sir, will you go up to the castle ?

Frank. Excuse me ; the relief which you have so generously given me, enables me to return to my family.

Rob. Well, but you'll come back ?

Frank. To-morrow.

Rob. No—to-night—Doo'e favour me ; I want to speak to you.

Frank. I have a long way to walk, and it will be very late before I can return ; but I will refuse you nothing.

Rob. Thank ye, Sir ; you're very kind ; I shall stay till you come, if it's all night. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter RATTLER.

Rat. Well, every thing's prepared for my attack on the castle to-night ; and I dont much fear but I shall find means to terrify the enemy, and make him surrender at discretion—Yes, yes, Master Snacks, I shall soon be with you. *[Shouting, music, and ringing of bells without.]* What a damned racket here is in the village to-day !—I wonder what it's all about ?

Enter ROBIN.

Holloa, there ! Stop, my fine fellow. Pray can you tell me what all this uproar is about in the village ?

Rob. Why, you be Master Rattle from Lunnun.

Rat. Well, I don't want to be told that.

Rob. Gee us your hand, Rattle, thou bee'st a damned honest fellow, and I like thee ; I do indeed.

Rat. Very familiar, upon my word.

Rob. I liked you ever sin' you let old Toppin have the three pounds to pay his rent with ; ana now whilst I think on't, here 'tis again—take it, for I wont let any body give away money here but myself.

Rat. Why, what in the name of wonder is all this ? What are you at ? I think I'll open a shop here for the sale of bad debts.

Rob. Here, take the money.

Rat. Put it up, my fine fellow ! you'll want it, perhaps.

Rob. Me want money ! Shall I lend you an odd thousand, and set you up in a shop !

Rat. Why, who the devil are you ?

Rob. Why doan't you know ? I be Robin.

Rat. Robin, are you ? 'Egad, I think you sing like a goldfinch.

Rob. Very well, Rattle, that's a good joke.

Rat. Why, curse me, if I am up to you, Master Robin ; you are queering me, I believe.

Rob. Well, I shall be glad to see thee at the castle, Rattle. You see, I'm not ashamed of my old acquaintance, as some folks are.

Rat. Not ashamed of his old acquaintance ! Why, what do you mean ?

Rob. I can't stop to talk to you any longer—Good by, Rattle ; thou bee'st an honest fellow ; and I shall be glad to see thee at the castle. [*Exit.*]

Rat. I declare I'm quite dumb-founded.—And have I lived all my days in Lombard-street for this—to be hummed by a clown ? [*Laughing, music, ringing of bells, &c. without.*] I believe the people are all mad to-day ; I can't think what they are at.

Enter CLOWN, in a hurry.

Here, here, Hob ! I want to speak with you.

Clown. You mun meak heast then, for I be going to dine wi' my lord, and I shall be too late.

Rat. Weugh ! What, are you drunk ?

Clown. Noa, noa, but I soon shall be, I take it, for there's plenty o'yeale to be gotten.

Rat. Plenty o'yeale to be gotten, is there ?

Clown. Ees, I shall have a rare swig at it.

Rat. Pray, my fine fellow, can you tell me what the bells are ringing for ?

Clown. Ees, to be sure I con.

Rat. Well, what is it ?

Clown. Why, it's bekeas they do pull the ropes, I tell thee.—[*Gets round.*] Dinner will all get yeaton up whilst I stond here talking wi' you.

[*Runs off ; RATTLE runs after him, and brings him back.*]

Rat. You are a very communicative young fellow, indeed—I have learned one thing from you, however—that there's plenty of eating and drinking going on ; so I'll try if I can't be in at the death. Now, start fair, and the devil take the hindmost. [*They run off.*]

SCENE II.—A Hall in the Castle. A door leading to an inner apartment.

Enter SNACKS, speaking.

Snacks. Tell her to come this way. A young woman wanting Robin!—This must be his sweetheart Dolly, that he talks so much about ; they must not come together ; if they do, it will knock up all my plan.—What shall I do with her ? if I could but get her into room, she'd be safe enough—here she is.

Enter DOLLY and MARGERY.

Are you the young woman that wanted to speak with his lordship ?

Dol. Yes, Sir.

Snacks. And pray what might you want with him ?

Mar. She wants to settle some matters of her own with him.

Dol. Yes, that's all, Sir.

Snacks. I dare say ! But I must know what these matters are.

[*MARGERY feels herself of great importance, and is particularly noisy through the*

whole of this scene. SNACKS is alarmed lest ROBIN should hear her.

Mar. Such matters as concern nobody but themselves, and you must not meddle with them.

Snacks. Curse that old devil, what a tongue she has ! I shall never be able to manage her.

[*Aside.*] You can't see his lordship, he's engaged. [*To DOLLY.*]

Dol. Yes, I know his lordship's engaged, for he promised me a long while ago.

Snacks. Oh, then you are the poor unfortunate young woman that—

Mar. [*Very angry.*] No, Sir : she is the lucky young woman that is to be my lady ; and I'd have you to know that I'm her mother.

Snacks. Ah, poor soul ! I pity her, I do indeed, from the bottom of my heart.

Mar. But she is not to be pitied ; I shouldn't have thought of that !—pity, indeed !

Snacks. Poor dear creature ! it's a sad job, but it can't be helped : his lordship is going to be married to-morrow to another woman.

Dol. What !

Snacks. It's true, indeed ; I am very sorry.

Mar. And she is not to be my lady, after all !

Snacks. No, poor girl !

Dol. And Robin has quite forgot me ! [*Crying.*] Oh dear, oh dear !—I was afraid how it would be when he came to be a lord—and has he quite forgot me ?

Snacks. Yes, he told me to tell you that he has done with you.

Mar. [*Very noisy.*] But I have not done with him though—pretty work indeed ; but I'll ring a peal in his ears, that shall bring him to his senses, I warrant ; I'll teach him to use my daughter ill—he's a rogue, a rascal, a scapegallows, a vagabond ; I'll find him out—I'll—

Snacks. [*Trying to appease her.*] Hush ! hush

Mar. I'll raise the dead, I will.

Snacks. Be cool, be cool !—Robin will certainly hear this old bell-weather, and I shall be blown. [*Aside*]

Mar. I'll make him down on his knees, I will ; I'd have him to know, that though he is a lord, he shall remember his promise ; I'll play the very devil with him, if I can find him. I'm in such a passion, I could tear his eyes out : oh, if I can but see him ! [*Going ; SNACKS stops her.*]

Snacks. Here, here ; stop, stop—I'll go and bring him to you.—Curse her old throat ! [*Aside.*] Only just walk in here a moment, I'll talk to him myself ; I will indeed ; perhaps I shall bring him round, my dear.

Dol. Thank ye, Sir ; tell him I'll kill myself if he doesn't marry me. [*Goes in.*]

Mar. And tell him I'll kill him if he doesn't marry her. [*Goes in.* SNACKS locks the door.

Snacks. Well, they are safe for the present—I wish they were out of the house though. If I can but bring this marriage to bear, I'm a made man. I have been very careful of the old lord's money, and I should like to take care of a little of the young lord's money : if I can but marry the girl and him, I'll soon double the twenty-six thousand pounds I have in the five per cents. sacked from my old master.

Rat. [*Without, in a hollow voice.*] Villanous robber !

Snacks. O Lord ! what's that ?—[*Pauses.*] It has put me in such a fright ;—that ghost's abroad again—What else could it be ? I am afraid to

open my eyes for fear he should stare me in the face: I confess I've been a rogue, but it's never too late to mend. Say no more, and I'll make amends, indeed I will. [*Gets near the door.*]—Upon my soul, I will—upon the word of an honest man, I will. [*Sneaks off.*]

Enter RATTLE.

Rat. Ha, ha, ha! I think I gave his conscience a kick there; twenty-six thousand pounds in the five per cents.—let me remember that—I'm up to your tricks, Mr. Snacks; but you sha'n't carry on your scheme much longer, if I have any skill—If I don't quicken your memory a little, I'll give over conjuring, and set up a chandler's shop. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A handsome Apartment in the Castle. A table with wines, &c.

ROBIN and SNACKS discovered.

Rob. [*Rather tipsy.*] Well, Snacks, this is very good stuff. I don't know as ever I drank any before; what do you call this, Snacks?

Snacks. Port wine, an't please your lordship.

Rob. Yes, Port wine pleases his lordship—I wonder where this comes from!—Oh! from the Red Sea, I suppose.

Snacks. No, my lord: there's plenty of spirits there, but not wine, I believe.

Rob. Well, one more thing full; only one, because you know, now I am a lord, I must not make a beast of myself—that's not like a nobleman, you know.

Snacks. Your lordship must do as your lordship pleases.

Rob. Must I? then give us t'other sup.

Snacks. I think his lordship is getting rather forward—I'll bring my daughter upon the carpet presently. [*Aside.*]

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Please you, Master Snacks, here's John the carter says he's so lame he can't walk, and he hopes you'll let him have a pony, to-morrow, to ride by the waggon.

Snacks. Can't walk, can't he?—lame, is he?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Snacks. And what does he mean by being lame at this busy time?—tell him he must walk; it's my will.

Rob. You, Sir, bring me John's whip, will you? [*Exit SERVANT.*] That's right, Snacks; damn the fellow, what business has he to be lame!

Snacks. Oh, please your lordship, it's as much as I can do to keep these fellows in order.

Rob. Oh, they are sad dogs—not walk, indeed! I never heard of such impudence.

Snacks. Oh, shameful, shameful! if I was behind him, I'd make him walk.

Enter a Servant, with a whip, which he gives to ROBIN.

Rob. Come, Snacks, dance me a hornpipe.

Snacks. What?

Rob. A hornpipe.

Snacks. A hornpipe!—I can't dance my lord.

Rob. Come none of your nonsense; I know you can dance; why, you was made for dancing—there's a leg and foot—Come, begin!

Snacks. Here's no music.

Rob. Isn't there? then I'll soon make some—Lookye, here's my fiddlestick; how d'ye like it?

—Come, Snacks, you must dance; it's my will. *Snacks.* Indeed I'm not able.

Rob. Not able! Oh, shameful, shameful! Come, come, you must dance; it's my will. [*Whips him.*]

Snacks. Must I?—Then here goes— [*Hops about.*]

Rob. What, d'ye call that dancing fit for a lord? Come, quicker, quicker—[*Whips Snacks round the stage, who roars out.*]—There, that will do; now go and order John the carter the pony—will you?

Snacks. What a cunning dog it is!—he's up to me now, but I think I shall be down upon him by and by— [*Aside; exit.*]

Rob. Ha, ha, ha! how he hopped about and halloo'd—but I'll work him a little more yet.

Re-enter SNACKS.

Well, Snacks, what d'ye think of your dancing-master?

Snacks. I hope your lordship wont give me any more lessons at present; for, to say the truth, I don't much like the accompaniment.

Rob. You must have a lesson every day, or you'll forget the step.

Snacks. No.—your lordship has taken care that I sha'n't forget it for some time.

Rob. I can't think where Dolly is; I told her to come to me.

Snacks. Oh, don't think of her.

Rob. Not think of her!—why, pray?

Snacks. Oh, she's a—

Rob. A what?—Take care, or I shall make you dance another hornpipe.

Snacks. I only mean to say, that she's too low for your lordship.

Rob. Too low! why, what was I just now?—if I thought riches would make me such a rascal as to use the poor girl ill—a fig for 'em all; I'd give 'em up, and be plain Robin, honest Robin, again. No.—I've given Dolly my promise, and I'll never break it.

Snacks. My daughter's very beautiful.

Rob. Dang it, you talk a great deal:—come, we'll go and have a look at her. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE IV.—A Chamber, with a picture hanging over a closet-door.

Enter RATTLE and MISS NANCY.

Rat. Well, you see I've gained admission, notwithstanding your father's order to the contrary.

Nan. Yes; but how do you mean to get his consent to—

Rat. Why, as to his consent, I don't value it a button: but then five thousand pounds is a sum not to be sneezed at. I have given the old boy a bit of a hint to-night that he didn't much relish.

Nan. I expect my father here every minute, with his new-made lordship.

Rat. Indeed! then only hide me in this room, and the business is done.

Nan. That I will, where nobody can find you, I'm sure;—I have a closet behind this picture of the old lord, made, I believe, to hide the family plate and jewels in; but it's quite forgotten now. [*Opens it.*]

Rat. Oh, it was made on purpose for me: I'll put a jewel into it presently—Here [*Gives a paper.*]—let this lie carelessly on the table; it's worth five thousand pounds.

Snacks. [*Without.*] This way, this way, my lord.

Rat. O, damn it! here they come; tell him you've been frightened by a ghost; and if he signs the paper, give a loud cough.

[*Puts the paper on the table, and exit into the closet.*]

Enter SNACKS and ROBIN.

Snacks. There, there she is—isn't she a beauty? What do you say now?

Rob. Why, I say she is not fit to hold a candle to my Dolly.

Nan. Pretty courtship, indeed.

Snacks. Ah, you'll alter your mind soon; I know you will. Come, let's sit down and talk of it.

Nan. [*To SNACKS.*] Oh, my dear Sir, I've been so frightened—Do you know I think I've seen the very ghost that alarmed you so once.

Snacks. A what? a ghost?—O Lord, I hope not. I hate the very sight of 'em:—It's very odd; but—[*Starting.*] didn't I hear a noise?

Nan. Oh, Sir, that's a very common thing in this part of the castle; I have been most terribly frightened lately.

Rob. Why, what frightened you?—We are all good people here; they wont hurt us—will they, Snacks?

Snacks. No, no—they—that is— [*Alarmed.*]

Rat. [*From behind.*] Hear!

Rob. What?

Rat. Hear!

Snacks. Lord ha' mercy upon me! [*Kneels.*]

Rat. Offspring of mine, listen not to the advice of that wretch.

Rob. I doan't intend it.

Rat. He'll betray you; your intended bride he has imprisoned in the yellow chamber: go, set her at liberty.

Rob. What! my Dolly?—has he imprisoned her in the yellow chamber?—Oh, dang your old head! [*Knocks SNACKS down, and exit.*]

Rat. Wretch restore your ill-gotten wealth—twenty-six thousand pounds in the five per cents.

Snacks. I'll do anything that you command.

Rat. Sign the paper before you.

[*SNACKS signs the paper. NANCY coughs, RATTLE jumps out of the closet, and takes the paper.*]

Rat. How do you do? how are you?

Snacks. Give me the paper.

Rat. Not a word—twenty-six thousand pounds in the five per cents.—Now, dear Nancy, you are mine, and five thousand pounds.

Snacks. You to rebel against me too, you baggage.

Mar. [*Without.*] Only let me catch hold of him, I'll give it him—an old, abominable—

Enter MARGERY.

Oh, you are there, are you?—You wicked wretch—let me get at him—[*Runs after SNACKS, and beats him.*—A pretty pack of lies you have told; you old ragamuffin, you.

Enter ROBIN and DOLLY.

Rob. What! are you there, Rattle?

Rat. Yes, I'm the ghost—Hear!

Rob. Why you frightened old Honesty a little.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Please you, Master Snacks, the bailiff ha' gotten Mr. Frank, and are bringing him here.

Rob. What! the bailiffs got him?—Oh, you old rascal! [*To SNACKS.*]—Let him come here in a moment! [*Exit SERVANT.*]—Oh, Snacks, I'm sorry for you; for I'm sure you can't be happy:—a man as does so much harm, and so little good, never can be happy, I'm sure:—

Enter MR. FRANK.

I be very sorry as they used you so, Mr. Frank, but I couldn't—

Frank. I know your heart too well to think you could.

Rob. I have a great favour to ask you, Mr. Frank: you see we've rather found Snacks out!—now, will you—dang it, will you take care of me, and come and live in the castle with me, and give me your advice?—you know how I mean;—teach me a bit, you know.

Frank. You are too generous: but I accept your proffered kindness; and, by my care and attention to your welfare, will repay a small part of the debt I owe you.

Rob. Now, then, I am happy, with such a friend as Mr. Frank—Dolly, we shall know how to take care of ourselves and our neighbours—and I'll take care that poor folks shall bless the day as made me a lord. [*Exeunt.*]

THE PADLOCK:

A COMIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

REMARKS.

This pleasing entertainment was set to music by the late Mr. Charles Dibdin, who also played the part of Mungo, in so capital and original a style, as to contribute greatly to the very uncommon success of this piece which was acted fifty-three nights during its first season. The plot is principally taken from a Spanish novel, by Cervantes, called, "The Jealous Husband."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON DIEGO,.....	<i>Mr. Bellamy.</i>
LEANDER,.....	<i>Mr. Taylor.</i>
MUNGO,.....	<i>Mr. Blanchard.</i>
LEONORA,.....	<i>Miss Bolton.</i>
URSULA,.....	<i>Mrs. Davenport.</i>

Scholars, &c.

SCENE.—Salamanca.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Garden belonging to DON DIEGO's House.

Enter DON DIEGO, musing.

ATR.—DIEGO.

Thoughts to council—let me see—
Hum—to be or not to be—

A husband, is the question.
A cuckold! must that follow?

Say what men will,
Wedlock's a pill,
Bitter to swallow,
And hard of digestion.

But fear makes the danger seem double:
Say, Hymen, what mischief can trouble
My peace, should I venture to try you?

My doors shall be lock'd,
My windows be block'd;
No male in my house,
Not so much as a mouse;

Then horns, horns I defy you.

Diego. Ursula!

Enter URSULA.

Urs. Here, an't please your worship.
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Diego. Where is Leonora?

Urs. In her chamber, Sir.

Diego. There is the key of it; there the key of the best hall; there the key of the door upon the first flight of stairs; there the key of the door upon the second; this double locks the hatch below; and this the door that opens into the entry.

Urs. I am acquainted with every ward of them.

Diego. You know, Ursula, when I took Leonora from her father and mother, she was to live in the house with me three months; at the expiration of which time, I entered into a bond of four thousand pistoles, either to return her to them spotless, with half that sum for a dowry, or make her my true and lawful wife.

Urs. And, I warrant you, they came secretly to inquire of me whether they might venture to trust your worship. "Lord!" said I, "I have lived with the gentleman nine years and three quarters, come Lammas, and never saw any thing uncivil by him in my life;" nor no more I ever did; and, to let your worship know, if I had, you would have mistaken your person; for I bless Heaven, though I'm poor, I'm honest, and would not live with any man alive that should want to handle me unlawfully.

Diego. Ursula, I do believe it; and you are particularly happy, that both your age and your person exempt you from any such temptation. But be this as it will, Leonora's parents, after some little difficulty, consented to comply with my proposal; and, being fully satisfied with their daughter's temper and conduct, which I wanted to be acquainted with, this day being the expiration of the term, I am resolved to fulfil my bond, by marrying her to-morrow.

Urs. Heaven bless you together.

Diego. During the time she has lived with me, she has never been a moment out of my sight: and now, tell me, Ursula, what have you observed in her?

Urs. All meekness and gentleness, your worship: and yet I warrant you, shrewd and sensible, 'egad, when she pleases, she can be as sharp as a needle.

Diego. You have not been able to discover any particular attachments?

Urs. Why, Sir, of late I have observed——

Diego. Eh! how! what?

Urs. That she has taken greatly to the young kitten.

Diego. O! is that all?

Urs. Ay, by my faith, I don't think she's fond of any thing else.

Diego. Of me, Ursula?

Urs. Ay, ay, of the kitten, and your worship, and her birds, and going to mass. I have taken notice of late, that she is mighty fond of going to mass, as your worship lets her early of a morning.

Diego. Well! I am now going to her parents, to let them know my resolution; I will not take her with me, because, having been used to confinement, and it being the life I am determined she shall lead, it will be only giving her a bad habit. I shall return with the good folks to-morrow morning; in the meantime, Ursula, I confide in your attention; and take care, as you would merit my favour.

Urs. I will, indeed, your worship; nay, if there is a widow gentelwoman in all Salamanca fitter to look after a young maiden——

Diego. Go, and send Leonora to me.

AIR.—URSULA.

I know the world, Sir, though I say't:

I'm cautious and wise,
And they who surprise
My prudence nodding
Must sit up late.

Never fear, Sir,
Your safety's here, Sir;
Yes, yes,
I'll answer for Miss.

Let me alone,
I warrant my care
Shall weigh to a hair,
As much as your own.

[Exit.]

Diego. I dreamed last night that I was going to church with Leonora, to be married, and that we were met on the road by a drove of oxen—oxen—I don't like oxen! I wish it had been a drove of sheep.

[Retires.]

Enter LEONORA, with a Bird on her finger, which she holds in the other hand by a string.

AIR.—LEONORA.

Say, little, foolish, fluttering thing,
Whither, ah! whither would you wing
Your airy flight?
Stay here, and sing,
Your mistress to delight.

No, no, no,
Sweet Robin, you shall not go:
Where, you wanton, could you be,
Half so happy as with me?

Diego. [Coming forward.] Leonora.

Leon. [Putting the Bird into the cage.] Here I am.

Diego. Look me in the face, and listen to me attentively.

Leon. There.

Diego. I am going this evening to your father and mother, and I suppose you are not ignorant of the cause of my journey. Are you willing to be my wife?

Leon. I am willing to do whatever you and my father and mother please.

Diego. But that's not the thing; do you like me?

Leon. Y—es.

Diego. What do you sigh for?

Leon. I don't know.

Diego. When you came hither, you were taken from a mean little house, ill situated, and worse furnished; you had no servants, and were obliged, with your mother, to do the work yourself.

Leon. Yes; but when we had done, I could look out at the window, or go a walking into the fields.

Diego. Perhaps, you dislike confinement?

Leon. No, I don't, I am sure.

Diego. I say, then, I took you from that mean habitation and hard labour, to a noble building, and this fine garden; where, so far from being a slave, you are absolute mistress; and, instead of wearing a mean stuff gown, look at yourself, I beseech you; the dress you have on is fit for a princess.

Leon. It's very fine, indeed.

Diego. Well, Leonora, you know in what manner you have been treated since you have been my companion; ask yourself again now, whether you can be content to lead a life with me according to the specimen you have had!

Leon. Specimen!

Diego. Ay, according to the manner I have treated you—according——

Leon. I'll do whatever you please.

Diego. Then, my dear, give me a kiss.

Leon. Good bye to you.

Diego. Here, Ursula.

AIR.

By some I am told
That I'm wrinkled and old,
But I will not believe what they say;
I feel my blood mounting,
Like streams in a fountain,
That merrily sparkle and play.

For love I have will
And ability still;

Odsbobs, I can scarcely refrain!

My diamond, my pearl—

Well, be a good girl,

Until I come to you again.

[*Exit.*]

Leon. Heigho! He's very good to me, to be sure, and it's my duty to love him, because we ought not to be ungrateful; but I wish I was not to marry him for all that, though I'm afraid to tell him so. Fine feathers, they say, make fine birds; but I'm sure they don't make happy ones; a sparrow is happier in the fields, than a goldfinch in a cage. There is something makes me mighty uneasy. While he was talking to me, I thought I never saw any thing so ugly in my life—O dear now, why did I forget to ask leave to go to mass to-morrow? I suppose, because he's abroad, Ursula won't take me—I wish I had asked leave to go to mass.

AIR.

Was I a shepherd maid, to keep
On yonder plains a flock of sheep,
Well-pleas'd, I'd watch the live-long day,
My ewes at feed, my lambs at play.

Or would some bird that pity brings,
But for a moment lend its wings,
My parents then might rave and scold,
My guardian strive my will to hold;
Their words are harsh, his walls are high,
But spite of all away I'd fly.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Street in Salamanca.

Enter LEANDER and two SCHOLARS, in their University gowns.

Leand. His name is Don Diego, there's his house, like another monastery, or rather prison; his servants are an ancient duenna, and a negro slave—

1 Schol. And after having lived fifty years a bachelor, this old fellow has picked up a young thing of sixteen, whom he by chance saw in a balcony!

2 Schol. And are you in love with the girl?

Leand. To desperation; and I believe I am not indifferent to her; for, finding that her jealous guardian took her to the chapel of a neighbouring convent every morning before it was light, I went there in the habit of a pilgrim, planting myself as near her as I could; I then varied my appearance, continuing to do so from time to time, till I was convinced she had sufficiently remarked, and understood my meaning.

1 Schol. Well, Leander, I'll say that for you, there is not a more industrious lad in the university of Salamanca, when a wench is to be ferreted.

2 Schol. But prythee, tell us now how did you get information?

Leand. First from report, which raised my curiosity; and afterwards from the negro I just now mentioned; I observed that, when the family was gone to bed, he often came to air himself at yonder grate; you know I am no bad chanter, nor a very scurvy minstrel; so, taking a guitar, clapping a black patch on my eye, and a swathe upon one of my legs, I soon scraped acquaintance with my friend Mungo. He adores my songs and sarabands; and, taking me for a poor cripple, often repays me with a share of his allowance; which I accept, to avoid suspicion.

1 Schol. And so—

Leand. And so, Sir, he hath told me all the secrets of his family; and one worth knowing; for he informed me last night, that his master will this evening take a short journey into the country, from whence he proposes not to return till to-morrow, leaving his young wife, that is to be, behind him.

2 Schol. Sounds! let's scale the wall.

Leand. Fair and softly; I will this instant go and put on my disguise, watch for the Don's going out, attack my negro afresh, and try, if by his means, I cannot come into the house, or at least get a sight of my charming angel.

1 Schol. Angel! is she then so handsome?

Leand. It is time for us to withdraw: come to my chambers, and there you shall know all you can desire.

SCENE III.—The outside of DON DIEGO'S House; which appears with windows barred up, and an iron grate before an entry.

Enter DON DIEGO from the house, having first unlocked the door, and removed two or three bars which assisted in fastening it.

Diego. With the precautions I have taken, I think I run no risk in quitting my house for a short time; Leonora has never shown the least inclination to deceive me; besides, my old woman is prudent and faithful; she has all the keys, and will not part with them from herself; but suppose—suppose—by the rood of St. Francis, I will not leave it in her power to do mischief; a woman's not having it in her power to deceive you, is the best security for her fidelity, and the only one a wise man will confide in; fast bind, safe bind, is an excellent proverb. I'll e'en lock her up with the rest; there is a hasp to the door, and I have a padlock within, which shall be my guarantee; I will wait till the negro returns with the provisions he is gone to purchase; and clapping them all up together, make my mind easy by having the key they are under in my pocket.

[*Retires.*]

Enter MUNGO, with a hamper.

Mun. Go, get you down, you damn hamper, you carry me now. Curse my old massa, sending me always here and dere for one something to make me tire like a mule—curse him impurance—and him damn insurance.

Diego. How now?

Mun. Ah, massa! bless your heart.

Diego. What's that you are muttering, sirrah?

Mun. Noting, massa, only me say you very good massa.

Diego. What do you leave your load down there for?

Mun. Massa, me lily tire.

Diego. Take it up, rascal.

Mun. Yes, bless your heart, massa.

Diego. No, lay it down: now I think on't, come hither.

Mun. What you say, massa?

Diego. Can you be honest?

Mun. Me no savee, massa, you never ax me before.

Diego. Can you tell truth?

Mun. What you give me, massa?

Diego. There's a pistorre for you; now tell me, do you know of any ill going on in my house?

Mun. Ah, massa, a damn deal.

Diego. How! that I'm a stranger to?

Mun. No, massa, you lick me every day with your rattan; I'm sure, massa, that's mischief enough for poor neger man.

Diego. So, so.

Mun. La, massa, how could you have a heart to lick poor neger man, as you lick me last Thursday?

Diego. If you have not a mind I should chastise you now, hold your tongue.

Mun. Yes, massa, if you no lick me again.

Diego. Listen to me, I say.

Mun. You know, massa, me very good servant—

Diego. Then you will go on?

Mun. And ought to be use kine—

Diego. If you utter another syllable—

Mun. And I'm sure, massa, you can't deny but I worky worky—I dress a victuals, and run a errands, and wash a house, and make a beds, and scrub a shoes, and wait a table.

Diego. Take that. [*Strikes him.*] Now will you listen to me?

Mun. La, massa, if ever I saw—

Diego. I am going abroad, and shall not return till to-morrow morning. During this night I charge you not to sleep a wink, but be watchful as a lynx, and keep walking up and down the entry, that if you hear the least noise you may alarm the family. Stay here, perverse animal, take care that nobody approaches the door; I am going in, and shall be out again in a moment. [*Exit.*]

Mun. So, I must be stay in a cold all night, and have no sleep, and get no tanks neither; then him call me tief, and rogue, and rascal, to tempt me.

AIR.

Dear heart, what a terrible life am I led!

A dog has a better, that's shelter'd and fed:

Night and day 'tis de same,

My pain is dere game:

Me wish to de Lord me was dead.

Whate'er's to be done,

Poor blacky must run;

Mungo here, Mungo dere,

Mungo every where;

Above and below,

Sirrah, come; sirrah, go;

Do so, and do so,

Oh! oh!

Me wish to de Lord me was dead. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter DON DIEGO, with URSULA, who, after the Negro goes in, appears to bolt the door on the inside: then DON DIEGO, unseen by them, puts on a large Padlock and goes off. After which, LEANDER enters disguised.

Leand. So—my old Argus is departed, and the evening is as favourable for my design as I could wish. Now to attract my friend Mungo; if he is within hearing of my guitar, I am sure he will quickly make his appearance.

Mun. [*Appears at the window.*] Who goes dere?—Hip! hollo!

Leand. Heaven bless you, my worthy master, will your worship's honour have a little music this evening?

Mun. Stay you little—I come down.

[*Comes down to the grate.*]

Leand. I have got a bottle of delicious cordial here, given me by a charitable monk of a convent hard by, if your grace will please to taste it.

Mun. Give me a sup tro a grate; come closee, man, don't be fear, old massa gone out, as I say last night, and he no come back before to-morrow; come, trike moosic, and give us song.

Leand. I'll give your worship a song I learned in Barbary, when I was a slave among the Moors.

Mun. Ay, do.

Leand. There was a cruel and malicious Turk, who was called Heli Abdallah Mahomet Sciah, who had fifty wives and three hundred concubines.

Mun. Poor man! what did he do wid 'em all?

Leand. Now this wicked Turk had a fair Christian slave named Jezebel, who not consenting to his beastly desires, he draws out his sabre, and is going to cut off her head; here's what he says to her. [*Sings and plays.*] Now you shall hear the slave's answer. [*Sings and plays.*] Now you shall hear how the wicked Turk, being greatly enraged, is again going to cut off the fair slave's head. [*Sings and plays again.*] Now you shall hear—

Mun. What signify me hear?—Me no understand.

Leand. Oh, you want something you understand? If your honour had said that—

Urs. [*Appears at the window above.*] Mungo! Mungo!

Mun. Some one call dere—

Urs. Mungo, I say.

Mun. What devil you want?

Urs. What lewd noise is that?

Mun. Lewd yourself, no lewd here; play away, never mind her.

Urs. I shall come down, if you go on.

Mun. Ay, come along, more merrier: nothing here but poor man; he sing for bit of bread.

Urs. I'll have no poor man near our door; harkye, fellow, can you play the Forsaken Maid's Delight, or Black Bess of Castile? Ah, Mungo, if you had heard me sing when I was young.

Mun. 'Gad, I am sure I hear your voice often enough now you old.

Urs. I could quaver like any blackbird.

Mun. And now you halloo like a screech-owl.—Come, throw a poor soul a penny, he play a tune for you.

Urs. How did you lose the use of your leg?

Leand. In the wars, my good dame: I was taken by a Barbary corsair, and carried into Saltee, where I lived eleven years and three-quarters upon cold water and the roots of the earth, without having a coat on my back, or laying my head on a pillow: an infidel bought me for a slave: he gave me the strappado on my shoulders, and the bastinado on the soles of my feet: now, as I said before, this infidel Turk had fifty-three wives, and one hundred and twelve concubines.

Urs. Then he was an unreasonable villain.

Leon. [*Appears at another window.*] Ursula!

Urs. Odds my life, what's here to do! Go back, go back; fine work we shall have indeed! good man, good bye.

Leon. I could not stay any longer by myself; pray let me take a little air at the grate.

Leand. Do, worthy Madam; let the young gentlewoman stay: I'll play her a love song for nothing.

Urs. No, no, none of your love-songs here; if

you could play a saraband indeed, and there was room for one's motion—

Leand. I am but a poor man, but if your ladyship will let me in as far as the hall or the kitchen, you may all dance, and I sha'n't ask any thing.

Urs. Why, if it was not on my master's account, I should think no harm in a little innocent recreation.

Mun. Do, and let us dance.

Leand. Has Madam the keys then?

Urs. Yes, yes, I have the keys.

Leand. Have you the key of this padlock too, Madam? Here 's a padlock upon the door, Heaven help us, large enough for a state prison.

Urs. Eh—how—what, a padlock!

Mun. Here it is, I feel it? adod, it's a tumber.

Urs. He was afraid to trust me then.

Mun. And if de house was a fire, we none of us get out to save ourselves.

Leand. Well, Madam, not to disappoint you and the young lady, I know the back of your garden wall, and I'll undertake to get up at the outside of it, if you can let me down on the other.

Urs. Do you think you could with your lame leg?

Leand. O yes, Madam, I am very sure.

Urs. Then by my faith you shall, for now I'm set on't—A padlock! Mungo, come with me into the garden.

[MUNGO and URSULA going off, LEANDER and LEONORA are left together. The first part of the quartetto is sung by them in duet; then MUNGO and URSULA return one after another to the stations they had quitted.]

Leon. Pray, let me go with you.

Leand. Stay, charming creature: why will you fly the youth that adores you?

Leon. Oh, Lord, I'm frightened out of my wits!

Leand. Have you not taken notice, beauteous Leonora, of the pilgrim who has so often met you at church? I am that pilgrim; one who would change shapes as often as Proteus, to be blessed with a sight of you.

QUARTETT.—LEANDER, LEONORA, URSULA, and MUNGO.

Leand. O thou, whose charms enslave my heart!

In pity hear a youth complain:

Leon. I must not hear—dear youth, depart—I'm certain I have no desert.

A gentleman like you to gain.

Leand. Then do I seek your love in vain?

Leon. It is another's right;

Leand. And he,

Distracting thought! must happy be,
While I am doom'd to pain.

Urs. Come round, young man, I've been to try.

Mun. And so have I.

I'm sure the wall is not too high.

If you please,

You'll mount with ease.

Leand. Can you to aid my bliss deny?

Shall it be so?

If you say no,

I will not go.

Leon. I must consent, however loth;

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But whenever we desire,
Make him promise to retire.

Urs. Nay, marry, he shall take his oath.

Leand. By your eyes of heavenly blue,
By your lips' ambrosial dew;
Your cheeks, where rose and lily blend:
Your voice, the music of the spheres—

Mun. Lord o' mercy, how he swears!

He makes my hairs

All stand an end!

Urs. Come, that's enough, ascend, ascend,

Let's be happy while we may:

Now the old one's far away,

Laugh, and sing, and dance, and play;

Harmless pleasure, why delay?

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Hall in DON DIEGO'S House, with folding-doors, which open in the back scene.

On one side a staircase, leading to an apartment, by which the characters pass up and down; on the other, a door leading to a cellar, which is so contrived, that a bottle and glass, two candles, a guitar, and LEANDER'S disguise, may be placed upon it.

Enter URSULA, followed by LEANDER in a rich habit.

Urs. Oh, shame! out upon't, Sir, talk to me no more; I that have been famed throughout all Spain, as I may say, for virtue and discretion; the very flower and quintessence of duennas! you have cast a blot upon me, a blot upon my reputation, that was as fair as a piece of white paper; and now I shall be reviled, pointed at; nay, men will call me filthy names upon your account.

Leand. What filthy names will they call you?

Urs. They'll say I'm an old procuress.

Leand. Fie, fie, men know better things—besides, though I have got admittance into your house, be assured I shall commit no outrage here; and if I have been guilty of any indiscretion, let love be my excuse.

Urs. Well, as I live, he's a pretty young fellow.

Leand. You, my sweet Ursula, have known what it is to be in love, and I warrant have had admirers often at your feet; your eyes still retain fire enough to tell me that.

Urs. They tell you no lie; for, to be sure, when I was a young woman, I was greatly sought after; nay, it was reported that a youth died for love of me; one Joseph Perez, a tailor by trade, of the grayhound make, lank; and, if my memory fail me not, his right shoulder about the breadth of my hand higher than his left: but he was upright as an arrow, and, by all accounts, one of the finest workmen at a button-hole.

Leand. But where is Leonora?

Urs. Where is she? by my troth, I have shut her up in her chamber, under three bolts and a double lock.

Leand. And will you not bring us together?

Urs. Who, I?—How can you ask me such a question? Really, Sir, I take it extremely unkind.

Leand. Well, but you misapprehend—

Urs. I told you just now, that if you mentioned that to me again, it would make me sick; and so it has, turned me upside down as it were.

Leand. Indeed, my best friend—

Urs. Oh, oh, hold me, or I shall fall.

Leand. I will hold you.

Urs. And do you feel any compassion for me?

Leand. I do.

Urs. Why truly you have a great deal to answer for, to bring tears into my eyes at this time o' day; I am sure they are the first I have shed since my poor husband's death.

Leand. Nay, don't think of that now.

Urs. For you must understand, Sir, to play a trick upon a grave, discreet matron—And yet, after all, by my faith, I don't wonder you should love the young thing under my care; for it is one of the sweetest conditioned souls that ever I was acquainted with; and between ourselves, our donnee is too old for such a babe.

Leand. Ursula, take this gold.

Urs. For what, Sir?

Leand. Only for the love of me.

Urs. Nay, if that be all, I won't refuse it; for I love you, I assure you; you put me so much in mind of my dear husband; he was a handsome man; I remember he had a mole between his eyebrows, about the bigness of a hazel nut; but I must say you have the advantage in the lower part of the countenance.

Leand. The old beldam grows amorous—

[*Aside.*

Urs. Lord love you, you're a well-looking young man.

Leand. But Leonora—

Urs. Ha, ha, ha! but to pretend you were lame—I never saw a finer leg in my life.

Leand. Leonora!

Urs. Well, Sir, I'm going.

Leand. I shall never get rid of her. [*Aside.*

Urs. Sir—

Leand. How now?

Urs. Would you be so kind, Sir, as to indulge me with the favour of a salute?

Leand. Ugh!

[*Salutes her.*

Urs. Gad-a-mercy, your cheek—Well, well, I have seen the day; but no matter, my wine's upon the lees now; however, Sir, you might have had the politeness when a gentlewoman made the offer.

[*Exit.*

Enter MUNGO

Mun. Ah! massa—You brave massa, now; what you do here wid de old woman?

Leand. Where is your young mistress, Mungo?

Mun. By Gog, she lock her up. But why you no tell me before time you a gentleman?

Leand. Sure I have not given the purse for nothing.

Mun. Purse! what, you given her money den?—curse her imperance, why you no give it me?—you give me something as well as she. You know, massa, you see me first.

Leand. There, there; are you content?

Mun. Me get supper ready, and now me go to de cellar—But I say, massa, ax de old man now, what good him watching do, him bolts and him bars, him walls and him padlock?

Leand. Hist! Leonora comes.

Mun. But, massa, you say you teach me play.

AIR.

Let me, when my heart a sinking,
Hear de sweet guitar a clinking;

When a string speak,
Such moosic he make,
Me soon am cur'd of tinkin'.

Wid de toot, toot, toot,

Of a merry flute,

And cymbalo,

And tymbalo

To boot,

We dance and we sing,

Till we make a house ring,

And, tied in his garters, old massa may swing. [*Exit.*

Re-enter LEONORA, with URSULA.

Leand. Oh, charming Leonora, how shall I express the rapture of my heart upon this occasion? I almost doubt the kindness of that chance which has brought me thus happily to see you, to speak to you without restraint.

Urs. Well, but it must not be without restraint, it can't be without restraint, it can't, by my faith—now you are going to make me sick again.

Leon. La, Ursula, I durst to say the gentleman doesn't want to do me any harm—do you, Sir? I'm sure I would not hurt a hair of his head, nor nobody's else, for the lucre of the whole world.

Urs. Come, Sir, where is your lute? You shall see me dance a saraband; or if you'd rather have a song—or the child and I will have a minuet, if you choose grace before agility.

Leand. This fulsome harriidan—I wish she was at the devil. [*Aside.*

Leon. Ursula, what's the matter with you?

Urs. What's the matter with me! Marry come up, what's the matter with you? Signor Diego can't show such a shape as that; well, there is nothing I like better than to see a young fellow with a well made leg.

Leand. Pr'ythee, let us go away from her

Leon. I don't know how to do it, Sir.

Leand. Nothing more easy; I will go with, my guitar into the garden; 'tis moonlight; take an opportunity to follow me there; I swear to you, beautiful and innocent creature, you have nothing to apprehend.

Leon. No, Sir, I am certain of that, with a gentleman such as you are; and that have taken so much pains to come after me; and I should hold myself very ungrateful, if I did not do any thing to oblige you, in a civil way.

Leand. Then you'll come?

Leon. I'll do my best endeavours, Sir.

Leand. And may I hope that you love me?

Urs. Come, come, what colloquing's here? I must see how things are going forward; besides, Sir, you ought to know that it is not manners to be getting into corners, and whispering before company.

Leand. Pshaw!

Urs. Ay, you may say your pleasure, Sir, but I'm sure what I say is the right thing; I should hardly choose to venture in a corner with you myself; nay, I would not do it, I protest and vow.

Leand. Beautiful Leonora, I find my being depends upon the blessing of your good opinion; do you desire to put an end to my days?

Leon. No, indeed, indeed, I don't.

Leand. But then—

AIR.

In vain you bid your captive live,
While you the means of life deny;

Give me your smiles, your wishes give
To him who must without you die.

Shut from the sun's enlivening beam.

Bid flowers retain their scent and hue:

Its source dried up, bid flow the stream,
And me exist, depriv'd of you. [Exit.

Urs. Let me sit down a little: come hither, child, I am going to give you good advice, therefore listen to me, for I have more years over my head than you.

Leon. Well, and what then?

Urs. What then!—Marry, then you must mind what I say to you—as I said before—but I say—what was I saying?

Leon. I'm sure, I don't know.

Urs. You see the young man that is gone out there; he has been telling me that he's dying for love of you; can you find in your heart to let him expire?

Leon. I'm sure I won't do any thing bad.

Urs. Why, that's right; you learned that from me; have I not said to you a thousand times, never do any thing bad? have I not said it? answer me that.

Leon. Well, and what then?

Urs. Very well, listen to me; your guardian is old, and ugly, and jealous, and yet he may live longer than a better man.

Leon. He has been very kind to me for all that, Ursula, and I ought to strive to please him.

Urs. There again; have I not said to you a thousand times that he was very kind to you, and you ought to strive to please him? It would be a hard thing to be preaching from morning till night without any profit.

Leon. Well, Ursula, after all, I wish this gentleman had never got into the house; Heaven send no ill comes of it.

Urs. Ay, I say so too; Heaven send it; but I'm cruelly afraid; for how shall we get rid of him? he'll never be able to crawl up the inside of the wall, whatever he did the out.

Leon. O Lord! won't he?

Urs. No, by my conscience, wont he; and when your guardian comes in, if we had fifty necks a piece, he'd twist them every one, if he finds him here; for my part, the best I expect, is to end my old days in a prison.

Leon. You don't say so?

Urs. I do, indeed; and it kills me to think of it; but every one has their evil day, and this has been mine.

Leon. I have promised to go with him into the garden.

Urs. Nay, you may do any thing now, for we are undone; though I think if you could persuade him to get up the chimney, and stay on the roof of the house until to-morrow night, we might then steal the keys from your guardian; but I'm afraid you won't be able to persuade him.

Leon. I'll go down upon my knees.

Urs. Find him out, while I step up stairs.

Leon. Pray for us, dear Ursula.

Urs. I will, if I possibly can.

AIR.—LEONORA.

Oh me, oh me, what shall we do?

The fault was all along of you:

You brought him in, why did you so?

'Twas not by my desire you know.

We have but too much cause to fear
My guardian, when he comes to hear
We've had a man with us, will kill
Me, you, and all; indeed, he will.
No penitence will pardon procure,
He'll kill us every soul, I'm sure. [Exeunt

The Stage becomes dark; enter DON DIEGO, groping his way, with the Padlock in his hand.

Diego. All dark, all quiet; gone to bed and fast asleep, I warrant them; however, I am not sorry that I altered my first intention of staying out the whole night; and meeting Leonora's father on the road was at any rate a lucky incident. I will not disturb them; but, since I have let myself in with my master-key, go softly to bed; I shall be able to strike a light, and then I think I may say my cares are over. Good Heavens! what a wonderful deal of uneasiness may mortals avoid by a little prudence! I doubt not now, there are some men who would have gone out in my situation, and, trusting to the goodness of fortune, left their house and their honour in the care of an inexperienced girl, or the discretion of a mercenary servant. While he is abroad, he is tormented with fears and jealousies; and when he returns home, he probably finds disorder, and perhaps shame. But what do I do? I put a padlock on my door, then all is safe.

Enter MUNGO, from the Cellar, with a flask in one hand, and a candle in the other.

Mun. Tol, lol, lol, lol.

Diego. Hold; didn't I hear a noise?

Mun. Hola!

Diego. Heaven and earth! what do I see?

Mun. Where are you, young massy and mis-sy? Here wine for supper.

Diego. I'm thunderstruck!

Mun. My old massa little tink we be so merry—hic—hic—What's the matter with me? the room turn round.

Diego. Wretch, do you know me?

Mun. Know you?—damn you.

Diego. Horrid creature! what makes you here at this time of night? 'Is it with a design to surprise the innocents in their beds, and murder them sleeping?

Mun. Hush, hush—make no noise—hic—hic.

Diego. The slave is intoxicated.

Mun. Make no noise, I say; dere's young gentleman wid young lady; he play on guitar, and she like him better dan she like you. Fal, lal, lal.

Diego. Monster, I'll make an example of you.

Mun. What you call me names for, you old dog?

Diego. Does the villain dare to lift his hand against me?

Mun. Will you fight?

Diego. He's mad.

Mun. Dere's one in de house, you little tink. 'Gad, he do you business.

Diego. Go, lie down in your sty, and sleep.

Mun. Sleep! sleep you self; you drunk—ha, ha, ha! Look, a padlock: you put a padlock on a door again, will you?—Ha, ha, ha!

Diego. Didn't I hear music?

Mun. Hic—hic—

Diego. Was it not the sound of a guitar?

Mun. Yes, he play on the guitar rarely.—Give me hand; you're old rascal,—an't you?

Diego. What dreadful shock affects me? a mist comes over my eyes, and my knees knock together as if I had got a fit of the shaking palsy.

Mun. I tell you a word in your ear.

Diego. Has any stranger broke into my house?

Mun. Yes, by—hic—a fine young gentleman, he now in a next room with missy.

Diego. Holy St. Francis! is it possible?

Mun. Go you round softly—you catch them together.

Diego. Confusion! Distraction! I shall run mad. [Exit.

Re-enter URSULA.

Urs. O shame, monstrous! you drunken swab, you have been in the cellar, with a plague to you.

Mun. Let me put my hands about your neck—

Urs. Oh, I shall be ruin'd! Help, help! ruin, ruin!

Re-enter LEANDER and LEONORA.

Leon. Goodness me, what's the matter?

Urs. Oh, dear child, this black villain has frightened me out of my wits; he has wanted—

Mun. Me! curse a heart, I want nothing wid her—what she say I want for—

Leon. Ursula, the gentleman says he has some friends waiting for him at the other side of the garden wall, that will throw him over a ladder made of ropes, which he got up by.

DUET.—LEANDER and LEONORA.

Leand. Then must I go?

Leon. Yes, good Sir, yes.

Leand. A parting kiss!

Leon. No, good Sir, no.

Leand. It must be so.

By this, and this,
Here I could for ever grow.
'Tis more than mortal bliss.

Leon. Well, now good night;
Pray, ease our fright:
You're very bold, Sir,
Let loose your hold, Sir;
I think you want to scare me quite.

Leand. Oh fortune's spite!

Leon. Good night, good night.

Hark! the neighb'ring convent's bell
Tolls, the vesper hour to tell;
The clock now chimes;
A thousand times,
A thousand times, farewell!

Re-enter DON DIEGO.

Diego. Stay, Sir, let nobody go out of the room.
Urs. [Falling down.] Ah! ah! a ghost! a ghost!

Diego. Woman, stand up.

Urs. I wont, I wont: murder! don't touch me.

Diego. Leonora, what am I to think of this?

Leon. Oh, dear Sir, don't kill me.

Diego. Young man, who are you, who have thus clandestinely, at an unseasonable hour, broke into my house? Am I to consider you as a robber, or how?

Leand. As one whom love has made indiscreet; of one whom love taught industry and art to compass his designs. I love the beautiful Leonora, and she me; but, further than what you hear and see, neither one nor the other have been culpable.

Mun. Hear him, hear him.

Leand. Don Diego, you know my father well,

Don Alphonso de Luna: I am a scholar of this university, and am willing to submit to whatever punishment he, through your means, shall inflict; but wreak not your vengeance here.

Diego. Thus then my hopes and cares are at once frustrated: possessed of what I thought a jewel, I was desirous to keep it for myself; I raised up the walls of this house to a great height; I barred up my windows toward the street; I put double bolts on my doors; I banished all that had the shadow of man or male kind; and I stood continually sentinel over it myself, to guard my suspicion from surprise: thus secured, I left my watch for one little moment, and in that moment—

Leon. Pray, pray, guardian, let me tell you the story, and you'll find I am not to blame.

Diego. No, child, I only am to blame, who should have considered that sixteen and sixty agree ill together. But, though I was too old to be wise, I am not too old to learn; and so, I say, send for a smith directly, beat all the grates from my windows, take the locks from my doors, and let egress and regress be given freely.

Leon. And will you be my husband, Sir?

Diego. No, child, I will give you to one that will make you a better husband: here, young man, take her: if your parents consent, to-morrow shall see you joined in the face of the church; and the dowry which I promised her, in case of failure on my side of the contract, shall now go with her, as a marriage portion.

Leand. Signior, this is so generous—

Diego. No thanks; perhaps I owe acknowledgments to you; but you, Ursula, have no excuse, no passion to plead, and your age should have taught you better. I'll give you five hundred crowns, but never let me see you more.

Mun. And what you give me, massa?

Diego. Bastinadoes, for your drunkenness and infidelity. Call in my neighbours and friends. Oh, man! man! how short is your foresight; how ineffectual your prudence; while the very means you use are destructive of your ends!

FINALE.

Diego. Go, forge me fetters, that shall bind
The rage of the tempestuous wind;
Sound with a needle-full of thread
The depth of ocean's steepy bed;
Snap like a twig the oak's tough tree;
Quench Etna with a cup of tea;—
In these manœuvres show your skill,
Then hold a woman if you will.

Chor. In these manœuvres, &c.

Urs. Permit me to put in a word:
My master here is quite absurd:
That men should rule our sex is meet,
But art, not force, must do the feat;
Remember what the fable says,—
Where the sun's warm and melting
rays

Soon bring about what wind and rain,
With all their fuss, attempt in vain.

Chor. Soon bring about, &c.

Mun. And, massa, be not angry pray,
If neger man a word should say;
Me have a fable pat as she,
Which wid dis matter will agree:
An owl once took it in his head,
Wid some young pretty bird to wed;

But when his worship came to woo,
He could get none but de cuckoo.

Chor. But when his worship, &c.

Leon. Ye youth select, who wish to taste
The joys of wedlock pure and chaste,
Ne'er let the mistress and the friend
In abject slave, and tyrant, end.
While each with tender passion burns,
Ascend the throne of rule by turns;
And place (to love, to virtue, just)
Security in mutual trust.

Chor. And place, &c.

Leand. To sum up all you now have heard,
Young men and old peruse the bard
A female trusted to your care,
His rule is pithy, short, and clear;
Be to her faults a little blind;
Be to her virtues very kind;
Let all her ways be unconfin'd;
And clap your padlock on her mind.

Chor. Be to her faults, &c. [*Exeunt.*]

The following AIRS are usually omitted in the representation.

AIR.—LEANDER.

Hither, Venus, with your doves,
Hither, all ye little loves;
Round me light your wings display,
And bear a lover on his way.
Oh, could I but, like Jove of old,
Transform myself to showery gold;
Or in a swan my passion shroud,
Or wrap it in an orient cloud;

What locks, what bars, should then im-
pede,
Or keep me from my charming maid!

AIR.—URSULA.

When a woman's front is wrinkled,
And her hairs are sprinkled
With gray,
Lack-a-day!
How her lovers fall away!
Like fashions past
Aside she's cast,
No one respect will pay:
Remember,
Lasses, remember
And while the sun shines make hay
You must not expect, in December,
The flowers you gather'd in May.

AIR.—DIEGO.

Oh, wherefore this terrible flurry?
My spirits are all in a hurry!
And above and below,
From my top to my toe,
Are running about, hurry scurry.

My heart in my bosom a bumping,
Goes thumping,
And jumping,
And thumping;
Is't a spectre I see?
Hence, vanish.—Ah me!
My senses deceive me;
Soon reason will leave me;
What a wretch am I destin'd to be!

THE REVENGE:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY DR. YOUNG.

REMARKS.

THIS tragedy is the dramatic master-piece of its valuable author, but at first was not so successful as *Busiris* and his other plays. Though similar, in some degree, to the story of Shakspeare's *Othello*, the motives for resentment in Zanga are of a more noble and consistent nature, and the credulous object of his deadly hatred more excusable and more pitied in yielding to its subtlety.

There is great scope for talent in the character of Zanga; but the whining nonsense of Alonzo and Carlos would tire in any hands.

We have inserted at the foot of the page,* a narrative of an event said to have really happened in Spain a few years before this piece was written; it is so nearly followed by Dr. Young, in his admirable *Revenge*, as to leave no doubt of having formed its ground-work.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN, 1814.		COVENT GARDEN, 1814.	
DON ALONZO,.....	<i>Mr. Conway.</i>	OFFICERS,.....	<i>Messrs. Brown, Grant, &c</i>
DON CARLOS,.....	<i>Mr. Hamerton.</i>	LEONORA,.....	<i>Mrs. Egerton.</i>
DON ALVAREZ,.....	<i>Mr. Murray.</i>	ISABELLA,.....	<i>Miss Logan</i>
DON MANUEL,.....	<i>Mr. Cresswell.</i>		
ZANGA,.....	<i>Mr. Young.</i>		SCENE.—Spain.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Battlements, with a sea prospect.*

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Whether first nature, or long want of peace,

Has wrought my mind to this, I cannot tell;
But horrors now are not displeasing to me:

[*Thunder.*

I like this rocking of the battlements.

Rage on, ye winds; burst, clouds, and, waters,
roar!

* Mr. Hughes, in his criticism on *Othello*, introduces the following narrative, to which allusion is made in our remarks.—“The short story I am going to tell is a just warning to those of jealous honour to look about them, and begin to possess their souls as they ought: for no man of spirit knows how terrible a creature he is, till he comes to be provoked.

“Don Alonzo, a Spanish nobleman, had a beautiful and virtuous wife, with whom he had lived some years in great tranquillity. The gentleman, however, was not free from the faults usually imputed to his nation; he was proud, suspicious, and impetuous. He kept a Moor in his house, whom, on a complaint from his lady, he had punished for a small offence with the utmost severity. The slave vowed revenge, and communicated his resolution to one of the lady's women with whom he had lived in a criminal way. This creature also hated her mistress, for she feared she was observed by her; she therefore undertook to make Don Alonzo jealous, by insinuating that the gardener was often admitted to his lady in private, and promising to make him an eye witness of it. At a proper time, agreed on between her and the Morisco, she sent a message to the gardener, that his lady, having some hasty orders to give him, would have him come that moment to her in her chamber. In the mean time she had placed Alonzo privately in an outer room, that he might observe who passed that way. It was not long before he saw the gardener appear. Alonzo had not patience, but following him into the apartment, struck him at one blow with a dagger to the heart; then dragging his lady by the hair, without inquiring further, he instantly killed her.

“Here he paused, looking on the dead bodies with all the agitations of a demon of revenge; when the wench who had occasioned these terrors, distracted with remorse, threw herself at his feet, and in a voice of lamentation, without sense of the consequence, repeated all her guilt. Alonzo was overwhelmed with the violent passions at one instant, and uttered the broken voices and motions of each of them for a moment; till at last he recollected himself enough to end his agony of love, anger, disdain, revenge, and remorse, by murdering the maid, the Moor and himself.”

You bear a just resemblance of my fortune,
And suit the gloomy habit of my soul.

Enter ISABELLA.

Who's there? My love!

Isa. Why have you left my bed?

Your absence more affrights me than the storm.

Zan. The dead alone in such a night can rest,
And I indulge my meditation here.

Woman, away. I choose to be alone.

Isa. I know you do, and therefore will not leave
you;

Excuse me, Zanga, therefore dare not leave you.

Is this is a night for walks of contemplation?

Something unusual hangs upon your heart,

And I will know it: by our loves, I will.

Ask I too much to share in your distress?

Zan. In tears? thou fool! then hear me, and
be plung'd

In hell's abyss, if ever it escape thee.

To strike thee with astonishment at once—

I hate Alonzo. First recover that,

And then thou shalt hear further.

Isa. Hate Alonzo!

I own, I thought Alonzo most your friend,

And that he lost the master in that name.

Zan. Hear then. 'Tis twice three years since
that great man

(Great let me call him, for he conquer'd me)

Made me the captive of his arm in fight.

He slew my father, and threw chains o'er me,

While I with pious rage pursued revenge.

I then was young; he plac'd me near his person,

And thought me not dishonour'd by his service.

One day (may that returning day be night,

The stain, the curse, of each succeeding year!)

For something, or for nothing, in his pride

He struck me. (While I tell it, do I live?)

He smote me on the cheek—I did not stab him,

For that were poor revenge—E'er since, his folly

Has strove to bury it beneath a heap

Of kindnesses, and thinks it is forgot.

Insolent thought! and like a second blow!

Affronts are innocent, where men are worthless;

And such-alone can wisely drop revenge.

Isa. But with more temper, Zanga, tell your
story;

To see your strong emotions startles me.

Zan. Yes, woman, with the temper that befits it.

Has the dark adder venom? So have I

When trod upon. Proud Spaniard, thou shalt
feel me!

For from that day, the day of my dishonour,

From that day have I curs'd the rising sun,

Which never fail'd to tell me of my shame.

From that day have I bless'd the coming night,

Which promis'd to conceal it; but in vain;

The blow return'd for ever in my dream.

Yet on I toil'd, and groan'd for an occasion

Of ample vengeance; none has yet arrived.

Howe'er, at present, I conceive warm hopes

Of what may wound him sore in his ambition,

Life of his life, and dearer than his soul.

By nightly march he purpos'd to surprise

The Moorish camp; but I have taken care

They shall be ready to receive his favour.

Failing in this, a cast of utmost moment,

Would darken all the conquests he has won.

Isa. Just as I enter'd, an express arriv'd.

Zan. To whom?

Isa. His friend, Don Carlos.

Zan. Be propitious,

O, Mahomet! on this important hour,
And give at length my famish'd soul revenge!
What is revenge, but courage to call in
Our honour's debts, and wisdom to convert
Others' self-love into our own protection?
But see, the morning dawn breaks in upon us;
I'll seek Don Carlos, and inquire my fate.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE II.—The Palace.

Enter DON MANUEL and DON CARLOS.

Man. My lord Don Carlos, what brings your
express?

Car. Alonzo's glory, and the Moor's defeat.
The field is strew'd with twice ten thousand slain,
Though he suspects his measures were betray'd.
He'll soon arrive. Oh, how I long t' embrace
The first of heroes, and the best of friends!

I lov'd fair Leonora long before

The chance of battle gave me to the Moors,

From whom so late Alonzo set me free;

And while I groan'd in bondage, I deputed

This great Alonzo, whom her father honours,

To be my gentle advocate in love,

To stir her heart, and fan its fires for me.

Man. And what success?

Car. Alas, the cruel maid—

Indeed her father, who, though high in court,

And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart

To heal his devastations from the Moors.

Knowing I'm richly freighted from the east,

My fleet now sailing in the sight of Spain,

(Heaven guard it safe through such a dreadful

storm!)

Caresses me, and urges her to wed.

Man. Her aged father, see,

Leads her this way.

Car. She looks like radiant truth,

Brought forward by the hand of hoary time—

You to the port with speed; 'tis possible

Some vessel is arriv'd. Heaven grant it bring

Tidings which Carlos may receive with joy!

[*Exit DON MANUEL.*]

Enter DON ALVAREZ and LEONORA.

Alv. Don Carlos, I am labouring in your favour

With all a parent's soft authority,

And earnest counsel.

Car. Angels second you!

For all my bliss or mis'ry hangs on it.

Alv. Daughter, the happiness of life depends

On our discretion, and a prudent choice.

Look into those they call unfortunate,

And, closer view'd, you'll find they are unwise:

Some flaw in their own conduct lies beneath.

Don Carlos is of ancient, noble blood,

And then his wealth might mend a prince's for-

tune.

For him the sun is lab'ring in the mines,

A faithful slave, and turning earth to gold:

His keels are freighted with that sacred power,

By which e'en kings and emperors are made.

Sir, you have my good wishes, and I hope

My daughter is not indispos'd to hear you.

[*Exit.*]

Car. Oh, Leonora! why art thou in tears?

Because I am less wretched than I was?

Before your father gave me leave to woo you,

Hush'd was your bosom, and your eye serene.

Leon. Think you my father too indulgent to me,

That he claims no dominion o'er my tears?

A daughter sure may be right dutiful,

Whose tears alone are free from a restraint.

Car. Had I known this before, it had been well:
I had not then solicited your father
To add to my distress;
Have I not languish'd prostrate at thy feet?
Have I not liv'd whole days upon thy sight?
Have I not seen thee where thou hast not been?
And, mad with the idea, clasp'd the wind,
And doted upon nothing?

Leon. Court me not,
Good Carlos, by recounting of my faults,
And telling how ungrateful I have been.
Alas, my lord, if talking would prevail,
I could suggest much better arguments
Than those regards you throw away on me;
Your valour, honour, wisdom, prais'd by all.
But bid physicians talk our veins to temper,
And with an argument new-set a pulse;
Then think, my lord, of reasoning into love.

Car. Must I despair then? do not shake me thus:

My temper-beaten heart is cold to death.
Ah, turn, and let me warm me in thy beauties.
Heavens! what a proof I gave, but two nights past,

Of matchless love! To fling me at thy feet,
I slighted friendship, and I flew from fame;
Nor heard the summons of the next day's battle:
But darting headlong to thy arms, I left
The promis'd fight, I left Alonzo too,
To stand the war, and quell a world alone.

[*Trumpets.*

Leon. The victor comes. My lord, I must withdraw.

[*Exit.*

Enter DON ALONZO.

Car. Alonzo!

Alon. Carlos!—I am whole again;
Clasp'd in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.

Car. Whom dare I thus embrace? The conquer of Afric.

Alon. Yes, much more—Don Carlos' friend.
The conquest of the world would cost me dear,
Should it beget one thought of distance in thee.
I rise in virtues to come nearer to thee.
I conquer with Don Carlos in mine eye,
And thus I claim my victory's reward.

[*Embraces him.*

Car. A victory indeed! your godlike arm
Has made one spot the grave of Africa;
Such numbers fell; and the survivors fled
As frighted passengers from off the strand,
When the tempestuous sea comes roaring on them.

Alon. 'Twas Carlos conquer'd, 'twas his cruel chains

Inflam'd me to a rage unknown before,
And threw my former actions far behind.

Car. I love fair Leonora. How I love her!
Yet still I find (I know not how it is)
Another heart, another soul, for thee.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Manuel, my lord, returning from the port,
On business both of moment and of haste,
Humbly begs leave to speak in private with you.

Car. In private!—Ha!—Alonzo, I'll return;
No business can detain me long from thee.

[*Exit.*

Zan. My lord Alonzo, I obeyed your orders.

Alon. Will the fair Leonora pass this way?

Zan. She will, my lord, and soon.

Alon. Come near me, Zanga;

For I dare open all my heart to thee.
Never was such a day of triumph known!—
There's not a wounded captive in my train,
That slowly follow'd my proud chariot wheels,
With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
But is a god to me: I am most wretched.—
In his captivity, thou know'st, Don Carlos,
My friend (and never was a friend more dear)
Deputed me his advocate in love,
To talk to Leonora's heart, and make
A tender party in her thoughts for him.
What did I do?—I lov'd myself. Indeed,
One thing there is might lessen my offence
(If such offence admits of being lessen'd;)
I thought him dead; for (by what fate I know not)
His letters never reach'd me.

Zan. Thanks to Zanga,
Who thence contriv'd that evil which has happen'd.

[*Aside.*

Alon. Yes, curs'd of Heaven! I lov'd myself,
and now,

In a late action, rescu'd from the Moors,
I have brought home my rival in my friend.

Zan. We hear, my lord, that in that action too,
Your interposing arm preserv'd his life.

Alon. It did—with more than the expense of mind:

For, oh, this day is mention'd for their nuptials.
But see, she comes; I'll take my leave and die.

[*Retires.*

Zan. Hadst thou a thousand lives, thy death
would please me.

Unhappy fate! my country overcome!

My six years' hope of vengeance quite expir'd—
Would nature were—I will not fall alone:
But others' groans shall tell the world my death

[*Exit.*

Enter LEONORA.

Alon. When nature ends with anguish like to this,

Sinners shall take their last leave of the sun,
And bid his light adieu.

Leon. The mighty conqueror

Dismay'd! I thought you gave the foe your sorrows.

Alon. Oh, cruel insult! are those tears your sport,

Which nothing but a love for you could draw?

Afric I quell'd, in hope by that to purchase
Your leave to sigh unscorn'd; but I complain not;
'Twas but a world—and you are—Leonora.

Leon. That passion which you boast of is your guilt,

A treason to your friend. You think mean of me,
To plead your crimes as motives of my love.

Alon. You, Madam, ought to thank those crimes you blame!

'Tis they permit you to be thus inhuman,
Without the censure both of earth and Heaven—
I fondly thought a last look might be kind.
Farewell for ever.—This severe behaviour
Has, to my comfort, made it sweet to die.

Leon. Farewell for ever! Sweet to die! Oh, Heaven!

Alonzo, stay; you must not thus escape me;
But hear your guilt at large.

Alon. Oh, Leonora!

What could I do?—In duty to my friend,
I saw you; and to see is to admire.
For Carlos did I plead, and most sincerely.
Witness the thousand agonies it cost me.

You know I did; I sought but your esteem;
If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty.

Leon. If from your guilt none suffer'd but yourself,

It might be so—Farewell. [*Going.*]

Alon. Who suffers with me?

Leon. Enjoy your ignorance, and let me go.

Alon. What mean these tears?

Leon. I weep by chance; nor have my tears a meaning.

But, oh, when first I saw Alonzo's tears,
I knew their meaning well!

[*ALONZO falls on his knees, and takes her hand.*]

Alon. Heavens! what is this? that excellence
for which

Desire was planted in the heart of man;
Virtue's supreme reward on this side heaven;
The cordial of my soul—and this destroys me—
Indeed, I flatter'd me that thou didst hate.

Leon. Alonzo, pardon me the injury
Of loving you. I struggled with my passion,
And struggled long: let that be some excuse.

Alon. Unkind! you know I think your love a
blessing

Beyond all human blessings! 'tis the price
Of sighs and groans, and a whole year of dying.
But, oh, the curse of curses!—Oh, my friend!—

Leon. Alas!

Alon. What says my love? speak, Leonora?

Leon. Was it for you, my lord, to be so quick
In finding out objections to our love?

Think you so strong, my love, or weak my virtue,
It was unsafe to leave that part to me?

Alon. Is not the day then fix'd for your es-
pousals? [*way;*]

Leon. Indeed, my father once had thought that
But marking how the marriage pain'd my heart,
Long he stood doubtful; but at last resolv'd
Your counsel, which determines him in all,
Should finish the debate.

Alon. Oh, agony!

Must I not only lose her, but be made
Myself the instrument? not only die,
But plunge the dagger in my heart myself?
This is refining on calamity.

Leon. What, do you tremble lest you should
be mine?

For what else can you tremble? not for that
My father places in your power to alter.

Alon. What's in my power? oh, yes, to stab
my friend!

Leon. To stab your friend were barbarous in-
deed!

Spare him—and murder me.

Alon. First perish all!

No, Leonora, I am thine for ever.

[*Embraces her.*]

Leon. Hold, Alonzo,
And hear a maid whom doubly thou hast con-
quered.

I love thy virtues as I love thy person,
And I adore thee for the pains it gave me;
But as I felt the pains, I'll reap the fruit;
I'll shine out in my turn, and show the world
Thy great example was not lost upon me.
Nay, never shrink; take back the bright example
You lately lent; oh, take it while you may,
While I can give it you, and be immortal!

[*Exit.*]

Alon. She's gone, and I shall see that face no
more;

But pine in absence, and till death adore.

When with cold dew my fainting brow is hung,
And my eyes darken, from my falt'ring tongue
Her name will tremble in a feeble moan,
And love with fate divide my dying groan.

[*Exit*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter DON MANUEL and ZANGA.

Zan. If this be true, I cannot blame your pain
For wretched Carlos; 'tis but humane in you.
But when arriv'd your dreadful news?

Man. This hour.

Zan. What, not a vessel sav'd?

Man. All, all, the storm
Devour'd; and now o'er his late envied fortune
The dolphins bound, and wat'ry mountains roar,
Triumphant in his ruin.

Zan. Is Alvarez

Determin'd to deny his daughter to him?
That treasure was on shore; must that too join
The common wreck?

Man. Alvarez pleads, indeed,
That Leonora's heart is disinclin'd,
And pleads that only; so it was this morning,
When he concurr'd: the tempest broke the match
And sunk his favour, when it sunk the gold.
The love of gold is double in his heart;
The vice of age, and of Alvarez too.

Zan. How does Don Carlos bear it?

Man. Like a man

Whose heart feels most a human heart can feel,
And reasons best a human head can reason.

Zan. But is he then in absolute despair?

Man. Never to see his Leonora more.

And, quite to quench all future hope, Alvarez
Urges Alonzo to espouse his daughter
This very day; for he has learn'd their loves.

Zan. Ha! was not that receiv'd with ecstasy
By Don Alonzo?

Man. Yes, at first; but soon

A damp came o'er him, it would kill his friend.

Zan. Not if his friend consented; and since
now

He can't himself espouse her—

Man. Yet, to ask it

Has something shocking to a generous mind;

At least, Alonzo's spirit startles at it.

Wide is the distance between our despair,

And giving up a mistress to another.

But I must leave you. Carlos wants support
In his severe affliction. [*Exit.*]

Zan. Ha, it dawns!—

It rises to me, like a new-found world
To mariners long time distress'd at sea,
Sore from a storm, and all their viands spent;
Or like the sun just rising out of chaos,
Some dregs of ancient night not quite purg'd off
But shall I finish it?—Hoa, Isabella!

Enter ISABELLA.

I thought of dying; better things come forward;
Vengeance is still alive! from her dark covert,
With all her snakes erect upon her crest,
She stalks in view, and fires me with her charms.
When, Isabella, arriv'd Don Carlos here?

Isa. Two nights ago.

Zan. That was the very night
Before the battle—Mem'ry, set down that
It has the essence of a crocodile,

Though yet but in the shell—I'll give it birth—
What time did he return?

Isa. At midnight.

Zan. So—

Say, did he see that night his Leonora?

Isa. No, my good lord.

Zan. No matter—tell me, woman,
Is not Alonzo rather brave than cautious,
Honest than subtle, above fraud himself,
Slow, therefore, to suspect it in another?

Isa. You best can judge; but so the world
thinks of him.

Zan. Why, that was well—go, fetch my tablets
hither. [*Exit* ISABELLA.]

Two nights ago my father's sacred shade
Thrice stalk'd around my bed, and smil'd upon
me;

He smil'd, a joy then little understood—

It must be so—and if so, it is vengeance
Worth waking of the dead for.

Re-enter ISABELLA, with the tablets; ZANGA
writes then reads as to himself.

Thus it stands—

The father's fix'd—Don Carlos cannot wed—

Alonzo may—but that will hurt his friend—

Nor can he ask his leave—or, if he did,

He might not gain it—It is hard to give

Our own consent to ills, though we must bear
them.

Were it not then a master-piece worth all

The wisdom I can boast, first to persuade

Alonzo to request it of his friend;

His friend to grant—then from that very grant,

The strongest proof of friendship man can give

(And other motives,) to work out a cause

Of jealousy, to rack Alonzo's peace?

I have turn'd o'er the catalogue of human woes,

Which sting the heart of man, and find none
equal.

It is the hydra of calamities,

The sevenfold death; the jealous are the damn'd.

Oh, jealousy, each other passion's calm

To thee, thou conflagration of the soul!

Thou king of torments, thou grand counterpoise

For all the transports beauty can inspire!

Isa. Alonzo comes this way.

Zan. Most opportunely.—

Withdraw.

[*Exit* ISABELLA.]

Enter DON ALONZO.

My lord, I give you joy.

Alon. Of what, good Zanga?

Zan. Is not the lovely Leonora yours?

Alon. What will become of Carlos?

Zan. He's your friend;

And since he can't espouse the fair himself,

Will take some comfort from Alonzo's fortune.

Alon. Alas, thou little know'st the force of love!

Love reigns a sultan with unrival'd sway;

Puts all relations, friendship's self to death,

If once he's jealous of it. I love Carlos;

Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning

At his intended nuptials. For myself

I then felt pains, which now for him I feel.

Zan. You will not wed her then?

Alon. Not instantly.

Insult his broken heart the very moment!

Zan. I understand you: but you'll wed here-

after,
When your friend's gone, and his first pain as-
suag'd.

Alon. Am I to blame in that?

Zan. My lord, I love

Your very errors; they are born from virtue.

Your friendship (and what nobler passion claims

The heart?) does lead you blindfold to your ruin.

Consider, wherefore did Alvarez break

Don Carlos' match, and wherefore urge Alonzo's?

'Twas the same cause, the love of wealth. To-

morrow

May see Alonzo in Don Carlos' fortune;

A higher bidder is a better friend,

And there are princes sigh for Leonora.

When your friend's gone, you'll wed; why, then

the cause

Which gives you Leonora now, will cease.

Carlos has lost her; should you lose her too,

Why, then you heap new torments on your friend,

By that respect which labour'd to relieve him—

'Tis well, he is disturb'd; it makes him pause.

[*Aside.*]

Alon. Think'st thou, my Zanga, should I ask

Don Carlos,

His goodness would consent that I should wed
her?

Zan. I know it would.

Alon. But then the cruelty

To ask it, and for me to ask it of him!

Zan. Methinks, you are severe upon your

friend,

Who was it gave him liberty and life?

Alon. That is the very reason which forbids it.

Were I a stranger I could freely speak:

In me it so resembles a demand,

Exactng of a debt, it shocks my nature.

Zan. My lord, you know the sad alternative.

Is Leonora worth one pang or not?

It hurts not me, my lord, but as I love you:

Warmly as you I wish Don Carlos well;

But I am likewise Don Alonzo's friend:

There all the difference lies between us two

In me, my lord, you hear another self;

And, give me leave to add, a better too,

Clear'd from those errors, which, though caus'd by
virtue,

Are such as may hereafter give you pain—

Don Lopez of Castile would not demur thus.

Alon. Perish the name! What, sacrifice

fair

To age and ugliness, because set in gold?

I'll to Don Carlos, if my heart will let me.

I have not seen him since his sore affliction;

But shunn'd it, as too terrible to bear.

How shall I bear it now? I'm struck already.

[*Exit.*]

Zan. Half of my work is done. I must secure

Don Carlos, ere Alonzo speak with him.

[*He gives a message to a Servant, then returns.*]

Proud, hated Spain, oft drench'd in Moorish

blood!

Dost thou not feel a deadly foe within thee?

Shake not the towers where'er I pass along,

Conscious of ruin, and their great destroyer?

Shake to the centre, if Alonzo's dear

Look down, oh, holy prophet! see me torture

This Christian dog, this infidel, who dares

To smite thy votaries, and spurn thy law;

And yet hopes pleasure from two radiant eyes,

Which look as they were lighted up for thee!

Shall he enjoy thy paradise below?

Blast the bold thought, and curse him with her
charms!

But see, the melancholy lover comes.

Enter DON CARLOS.

Car. Hope, thou hast told me lies from day to day,
For more than twenty years; vile promiser!
None here are happy, but the very fool,
Or very wise; I am not fool enough
To smile in vanities, and hug a shadow;
Nor have I wisdom to elaborate
An artificial happiness from pains:
Even joys are pains, because they cannot last.

[*Sighs.*
How many lift the head, look gay and smile,
Against their consciences? And this we know,
Yet, knowing, disbelieve, and try again
What we have tried, and struggle with conviction.
Each new experience gives the former credit;
And reverend gray threescore is but a voucher,
That thirty told us true.

Zan. My noble lord,
I mourn your fate: but are no hopes surviving?
Car. No hopes. Alvarez has a heart of steel.
'Tis fix'd—'tis past—'tis absolute despair!

Zan. You wanted not to have your heart made tender,

By your own pains, to feel a friend's distress.

Car. I understand you well. Alonzo loves;
I pity him.

Zan. I dare be sworn you do.

Yet he has other thoughts.

Car. What canst thou mean?

Zan. Indeed he has; and fears to ask a favour
A stranger from a stranger might request;
What costs you nothing, yet is all to him:
Nay, what indeed will to your glory add,
For nothing more than wishing your friend well.

Car. I pray be plain; his happiness is mine.

Zan. He loves to death; but so reveres his friend,

He can't persuade his heart to wed the maid
Without your leave, and that he fears to ask.
In perfect tenderness I urg'd him to it,
Knowing the deadly sickness of his heart,
Your overflowing goodness to your friend,
Your wisdom, and despair yourself to wed her,
I wrung a promise from him he would try:
And now I come, a mutual friend to both,
Without his privacy, to let you know it,
And to prepare you kindly to receive him.

Car. Ha! if he weds, I am undone indeed;
Not Don Alvarez' self can then relieve me.

Zan. Alas, my lord, you know his heart is steel:
" 'Tis fix'd, 'tis past, 'tis absolute despair."

Car. Oh, cruel Heaven! and is it not enough
That I must never, never see her more?
Say, is it not enough that I must die;
But I must be tormented in the grave?—
Ask my consent!—Must I then give her to him?
Lead to his nuptial sheets the blushing maid?
Oh!—Leonora! never, never, never!

Zan. A storm of plagues upon him! he refuses.

[*Aside.*
Car. What, wed her—and to-day?

Zan. To-day, or never.

To-morrow may some wealthier lover bring,
And then Alonzo is thrown out like you:
Then whom shall he condemn for his misfortune?
Carlos is an Alvarez to his love.

Car. Oh, torment! whither shall I turn?

Zan. To peace.

Car. Which is the way?

Zan. His happiness is yours—
I dare not disbelieve you.

Car. Kill my friend!

Or worse—Alas! and can there be a worse?
A worse there is: nor can my nature bear it.

Zan. You have convinc'd me 'tis a dreadful task.

I find Alonzo's quitting her this morning
For Carlos' sake, in tenderness to you,
Betray'd me to believe it less severe
Than I perceive it is.

Car. Thou dost upbraid me.

Zan. No, my good lord; but since you can't comply,

'Tis my misfortune that I mention'd it;

For had I not, Alonzo would indeed
Have died, as now, but not by your decree.

Car. By my decree! Do I decree his death?

I do—Shall I then lead her to his arms?
Oh, which side shall I take? Be stabb'd, or—stab!

'Tis equal death! a choice of agonies!—

Ah, no!—all other agonies are ease

To one—O, Leonora!—never, never!

Go, Zanga, go, defer the dreadful trial,
Though but a day; something, perchance, may happen

To soften all to friendship and to love.

Go, stop my friend, let me not see him now;
But save us from an interview of death.

Zan. My lord, I'm bound in duty to obey you—

If I not bring him, may Alonzo prosper!

[*Aside, exit.*
Car. What is this world?—Thy school, oh, misery!

Our only lesson is to learn to suffer;

And he who knows not that was born for nothing.

But put it most severely—should I live—

Live long—alas, there is no length in time!

Nor in thy time, oh, man!—What's fourscore years—

Nay, what, indeed, the age of time itself,

Since cut from out eternity's wide round?

Yet Leonora—she can make time long,

Its nature alter, as she alter'd mine.

While in the lustre of her charms I lay,

Whole summer suns roll'd unperceiv'd away;

I years for days, and days for moments told,

And was surpris'd to hear that I grew old.

Now fate does rigidly its dues regain,

And every moment is an age of pain.

Enter ZANGA and DON ALONZO; ZANGA stops DON CARLOS.

Zan. Is this Don Carlos? this the boasted friend?

How can you turn your back upon his sadness?

Look on him, and then leave him if you can.

Car. I cannot yield; nor can I bear his griefs.

Alonzo; [*Goes to him, and takes his hand.*

Alon. Oh, Carlos!

Car. Pray, forbear.

Alon. Art thou undone, and shall Alonzo smile?

Alonzo, who, perhaps, in some degree

Contributed to cause thy dreadful fate?

I was deputed guardian of thy love;

But, oh! I lov'd myself! Pour down afflictions!

On this devoted head; make me your mark;

And be the world by my example taught,

How sacred it should hold the name of friend.

Car. You charge yourself unjustly: well I know

The only cause of my severe affliction.

Alvarez, curs'd Alvarez!—So much anguish

Felt for so small a failure, is one merit

Which faultless virtue wants. The crime was mine,
 Who plac'd thee there, where only thou couldst fail;
 Though well I knew that dreadful post of honour
 I gave thee to maintain. Ah! who could bear
 Those eyes unhurt? The wounds myself have felt
 (Which wounds alone should cause me to condemn thee.)

They plead in thy excuse; for I too strove
 To shun those fires, and found 'twas not in man.
Alon. You cast in shades the failure of a friend,
 And soften all; but think not you deceive me;
 I know my guilt, and I implore your pardon,
 As the sole glimpse I can obtain of peace.

Car. Pardon for him, who but this morning threw

Fair Leonora from his heart, all bath'd
 In ceaseless tears, and blushing for her love!
 Who, like a rose-leaf wet with morning dew,
 Would have stuck close, and clung for ever there!
 But 'twas in thee, through fondness for thy friend,
 To shut thy bosom against ecstasies:
 For which, while this pulse beats, it beats to thee;
 While this blood flows, it flows for my Alonzo,
 And every wish is levell'd at thy joy.

Zan. [*To ALONZO.*] My lord, my lord, this is your time to speak.

Alon. [*To ZANGA.*] Because he's kind? It therefore is the worst;

Do I not see him quite possess'd with anguish,
 And shall I pour in new? No, fond desire;
 No, love: one pang at parting, and farewell.
 I have no other love but Carlos now.

Car. Alas! my friend, why with such eager grasp

Dost press my hand, and weep upon my cheek?

Alon. If, after death, our forms (as some believe)
 Shall be transparent, naked every thought,
 And friends meet friends, and read each other's hearts,

Thou'lt know one day that thou wast held most dear.

Farewell.

Car. Alonzo, stop he cannot speak

[*Holds him.*
 Lest it should grieve me—Shall I be outdone?
 And lose in glory; as I lose in love? [*Aside.*

I take it much unkindly, my Alonzo,
 You think so meanly of me not to speak,
 When well I know your heart is near to bursting.
 Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?
 Your smallest friendship's liberty and life.

Alon. There, there it is, my friend; it cuts me there.

How dreadful is it to a generous mind
 To ask, when sure it cannot be denied!

Car. How greatly thought! In all he towers above me. [*Aside.*

Then you confess you would ask something of me?

Alon. No, on my soul.

Zan. [*To ALONZO.*] Then lose her.

Car. Glorious spirit!

Why, what a pang has he run through for this!
 By Heaven, I envy him his agonies. [*Aside.*

My Alonzo!
 Since thy great soul disdains to make request,
 Receive with favour that I make to thee.

Alon. What means my Carlos?

Car. Pray, observe me well.

Fate and Alvarez tore her from my heart,

And, plucking up my love, they had well nigh
 Pluck'd up life too, for they were twin'd together.
 Of that no more—What now does reason bid
 I cannot wed—Farewell, my happiness!
 But, O, my soul, with care provide for hers!
 In life, how weak, how helpless is a woman!
 Take then my heart in dowry with the fair,
 Be thou her guardian, and thou must be mine;
 Shut out the thousand pressing ills of life
 With thy surrounding arms—Do this, and then
 Set down the liberty and life thou gav'st me,
 As little things, as essays of thy goodness,
 And rudiments of friendship so divine.

Alon. There is a grandeur in thy goodness to me,

Which with thy foes would render thee ador'd
Car. I do not part with her, I give her thee.

Alon. O, Carlos!

But think not words were ever made
 For such occasions. Silence, tears, embraces,
 Are languid eloquence; I'll seek relief
 In absence from the pain of so much goodness,
 There, thank the bless'd above, thy sole superiors,
 Adore, and raise my thoughts of them by thee.

[*Exit.*

Zan. Thus far success has crown'd my boldest hope.

My next care is to hasten these new nuptials,
 And then my master-works begin to play.

[*Aside.*
 Why that was greatly done, without one sigh

To carry such a glory to its period. [*To CARLOS.*

Car. Too soon thou praisest me. He's gone, and now

I must unsluice my over-burden'd heart,
 And let it flow. I would not grieve my friend
 With tears; nor interrupt my great design;
 Great, sure, as ever human breast durst think of.
 But now my sorrows, long with pain suppress'd,
 Burst their confinement with impetuous sway,
 O'er-swell all bounds, and bear e'en life away:
 So till the day was won, the Greek renown'd
 With anguish wore the arrow in his wound,
 Then drew the shaft from out his tortur'd side,
 Let gush the torrent of his blood, and died.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. O, joy, thou welcome stranger! twice three years

I have not felt thy vital beam; but now
 It warms my veins, and plays around my heart:
 A fiery instinct lifts me from the ground,
 And I could mount!—the spirits numberless
 Of my dear countrymen, which yesterday
 Left their poor bleeding bodies on the field,
 Are all assembled here, and o'er-inform me.—
 O, bridegroom! great indeed thy present bliss;
 Yet even by me unenvied! for be sure
 It is thy last, thy last smile, that which now
 Sits on thy cheek; enjoy it while thou may'st;
 Anguish, and groans, and death, bespeak to-morrow.

Enter ISABELLA.

My Isabella!

Isa. What commands my Moor?

Zan. My fair ally! my lovely minister!
 'Twas well, Alvarez, by my arts impell'd

(To plunge Don Carlos in the last despair,
And so prevent all future molestation.)
Finish'd the nuptials soon as he resolv'd them;
This conduct ripen'd all for me and ruin.
Scarce had the priest the holy rites perform'd,
When I, by sacred inspiration, forg'd
That letter which I trusted to thy hand;
That letter, which in glowing terms conveys,
From happy Carlos to fair Leonora,
The most profound acknowledgment of heart,
For wond'rous transports which he never knew.
This is a good subservient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.

Isa. I quickly dropp'd it in the bride's apartment,

As you commanded.

Zan. With a lucky hand;
For soon Alonzo found it; I observed him
From out my secret stand. He took it up;
But scarce was it unfolded to his sight,
When he, as if an arrow pierc'd his eye,
Start'd, and trembling dropp'd it on the ground.
Pale and aghast awhile my victim stood,
Disguis'd a sigh or two, and puff'd them from him.
Then rubb'd his brow and took it up again.
At first he look'd as if he meant to read it;
But check'd by rising fears he crush'd it thus,
And thrust it, like an adder, in his bosom.

Isa. But if he read it not, it cannot sting him,
At least not mortally.

Zan. At first I thought so;
But further thought informs me otherwise,
And turns this disappointment to account.
This, Isabella, is Don Carlos' picture;
Take it, and so dispose of it, that found,
It may raise up a witness of her love;
Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
Or elsewhere, as shall best promote our end.

Isa. I'll weigh it as its consequence requires,
Then do my utmost to deserve your smile.

[*Exit.*

Zan. Is that Alonzo prostrate on the ground?—
Now he starts up like flame from sleeping embers,
And wild distraction glares from either eye.
If thus a slight surmise can work his soul,
How will the fulness of the tempest tear him?

Enter DON ALONZO.

Alon. And yet it cannot be—I am deceiv'd—
I injure her; she wears the face of Heaven.

Zan. He doubts.

[*Aside.*

Alon. I dare not look on this again.
If the first glance, which gave suspicion only,
Had such effect, so smote my heart and brain,
The certainty would dash me all in pieces.
It cannot—Ha! it must, it must be true.

[*Starts.*

Zan. Hold there, and we succeed. He has
descried me.

And (for he thinks I love him) will unfold
His aching heart, and rest it on my counsel.
I'll seem to go, to make my stay more sure.

[*Aside.*

Alon. Hold, Zanga, turn.

Zan. My lord.

Alon. Shut close the doors,
That not a spirit find an entrance here.

Zan. My lord's obey'd.

Alon. I see that thou art frightened.
If thou dost love me, I shall fill thy heart
With scorpions' stings.

Zan. If I do love, my lord?

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Alon. Come near me, let me rest upon thy
bosom;

(What pillow like the bosom of a friend?)
For I am sick at heart.

Zan. Speak, Sir, O, speak,
And take me from the rack.

Alon. I am most happy, mine is victory,
Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's shout,
And great men make their fortunes of my smiles
O curse of curses! in the lap of blessing
To be most curs'd!—My Leonora's false!

Zan. Save me, my lord!

Alon. My Leonora's false!

[*Gives him the letter.*

Zan. Then Heaven has lost its image here on
earth.

[*While ZANGA reads the letter, he trem-
bles, and shows the utmost concern.*

Alon. Good-natur'd man! he makes my pains
his own.

I durst not read it; but I read it now
In thy concern.

Zan. Did you not read it, then?

Alon. Mine eye just touch'd it, and could bear
no more.

Zan. Thus perish all that gives Alonzo pain!

[*Tears the letter.*

Alon. Why didst thou tear it?

Zan. Think of it no more.

'Twas your mistake, and groundless are your
fears.

Alon. And didst thou tremble then for my mis-
take?

Or give the whole contents, or by the pangs
That feed upon my heart, thy life's in danger.

Zan. Is this Alonzo's language to his Zanga?
Draw forth your sword, and find the secret here.

For whose sake is it, think you, I conceal'd?
Wherefore this rage? Because I seek your peace?

I have no interest in suppressing it,
But what good natur'd tenderness for you

Obliges me to have. Not mine the heart
That will be rent in two. Not mine the fame

That will be damn'd, though all the world should
know it.

Alon. Then my worst fears are true, and life is
past.

Zan. What has the rashness of my passion
utter'd?

I know not what; but rage is our destruction,
And all its words are wind—Yet sure, I think,

I nothing own'd—but grant I did confess,
What is a letter? letters may be forg'd.

For Heaven's sweet sake, my lord, lift up your
heart.

Some foe to your repose—

Alon. So Heaven look on me,

As I can't find the man I have offended.

Zan. Indeed! [*Aside.*]—Our innocence is not
our shield.

They take offence, who have not been offended,
They seek our ruin too, who speak us fair,

And death is often ambush'd in their smiles.

'Tis certain

A letter may be forg'd, and in a point

Of such a dreadful consequence as this,

One would rely on nought that might be false—

Think, have you any other cause to doubt her?

Away, you can find none. Resume your spirit:

All's well again.

Alon. Oh that it were!

Zan. It is;

For who could credit that, which, credited,
Makes hell superfluous by superior pains,
Without such proofs as cannot be withstood?
Has she not ever been to virtue train'd?
Is not her fame as spotless as the sun,
Her sex's envy, and the boast of Spain?

Alon. O, Zanga! it is that confounds me most,
'That, full in opposition to appearance—

Zan. No more, my lord, for you condemn yourself.

What is absurdity, but to believe
Against appearance!—You can't yet, I find,
Subdue your passion to your better sense;—
And, truth to tell, it does not much displease me.
'Tis fit our indiscretions should be check'd
With some degree of pain.

Alon. What indiscretion?

Zan. Come, you must bear to hear your faults
from me.

Had you not sent Don Carlos to the court
The night before the battle, that foul slave,
Who forg'd the senseless scroll which gives you
pain,

Had wanted footing for his villany.

Alon. I sent him not.

Zan. Not send him!—Ha!—That strikes me.
I thought he came on message to the king.
Is there another cause could justify
His shunning danger, and the promis'd fight?
But I perhaps may think too rigidly;
So long an absence, and impatient love—

Alon. In my confusion, that had quite escap'd
me.

By Heaven, my wounded soul does bleed afresh;
'Tis clear as day—for Carlos is so brave,
He lives not but on fame, he hunts for danger,
And is enamour'd of the face of death.

How then could he decline the next day's battle,
But for the transports?—Oh, it must be so—
Inhuman! by the loss of his own honour,
To buy the ruin of his friend!

Zan. You wrong him;

He knew not of your love.

Alon. Ha!

Zan. That stings home.

[*Aside.*

Alon. Indeed, he knew not of my treacherous
love—

Proofs rise on proofs, and still the last the strongest.
Love is my torture, love was first my crime;
For she was his, my friend's, and he (O horror!)
Confided all in me. O sacred faith!
How dearly I abide thy violation!

Zan. Were then their loves far gone?

Alon. The father's will

There bore a total sway; and he, as soon
As news arriv'd that Carlos' fleet was seen
From off our coast, fir'd with the love of gold,
Determin'd that the very sun which saw
Carlos' return, should see his daughter wed.

Zan. Indeed, my lord; then you must pardon me,
If I presume to mitigate the crime.

Consider, strong allurements soften guilt;
Long was his absence, ardent was his love,
At midnight his return, the next day destin'd
For his espousals—'twas a strong temptation.

Alon. Temptation!

Zan. 'Twas but gaining of one night.

Alon. One night!

Zan. That crime could ne'er return again.

Alon. Again! By Heaven, thou dost insult thy
lord.

[*death!*

Temptation! One night gain'd! O stings and

And am I then undone? Alas, my Zanga!

And dost thou own it too? Deny it still,
And rescue me one moment from distraction.

Zan. My lord, I hope the best.

Alon. False, foolish hope, thou know'st it false;
It is as glaring as the noon-tide sun.

Devil!—This morning, after three years' coldness,
To rush at once into a passion for me!

'Twas time to feign, 'twas time to get another,
When her first fool was sated with her beauties.

Zan. What says my lord? Did Leonora then
Never before disclose her passion for you?

Alon. Never.

Zan. Throughout the whole three years?

Alon. O, never! never!

Why, Zanga, shouldst thou strive? 'Tis all in
vain:

Though thy soul labours, it can find no reed
For hope to catch at. Ah! I'm plunging down
Ten thousand thousand fathoms in despair.

Zan. Hold, Sir, I'll break your fall—wave
every fear

And be a man again—Had he enjoy'd her,
Be most assur'd, he had resign'd her to you
With less reluctance.

Alon. Ha! Resign'd her to me!

Resign her! Who resign'd her?—Double death!
How could I doubt so long? My heart is broke.
First love her to distraction! then resign her!

Zan. But was it not with utmost agony?

Alon. Grant that, he still resign'd her, that's
enough.

Would he pluck out his eye to give it me?

Tear out his heart?—She was his heart no more—
Nor was it with reluctance he resign'd her;

By Heaven, he ask'd, he courted me to we'd.

I thought it strange; 'tis now no longer so.

Zan. Was't his request? Are you right sure
of that?

I fear the letter was not all a tale.

Alon. A tale! There's proof equivalent to sight.

Zan. I should distrust my sight on this occasion.

Alon. And so should I; by Heaven, I think I
should.

What, Leonora! the divine, by whom

We guess'd at angels! Oh! I'm all confusion.

Zan. You now are too much ruffled to think
clearly.

Since bliss and horror, life and death, hang on it,
Go to your chamber, there maturely weigh
Each circumstance; consider, above all,
That it is jealousy's peculiar nature

To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought
To conjure much, and then to lose its reason
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

Alon. Had I ten thousand lives, I'd give them all
To be deceiv'd.

And yet she seem'd so pure, that I thought
Heaven

Borrow'd her form for virtue's self to wear,

To gain her lovers with the sons of men.

O, Leonora! Leonora! [*Exit.*

Re-enter ISABELLA.

Zan. Thus far it works auspiciously. My
patient

Thrives, underneath my hand, in misery.

He's gone to think; that is, to be distracted

Isa. I overheard your conference, and saw you,
To my amazement, tear the letter.

Zan. There,

There, Isabella, I out-did myself.

For, tearing it, I not secure it only
In its first force, but superadd a new.
For who can now the character examine
To cause a doubt, much less detect the fraud?
And after tearing it, as loth to show
The foul contents, if I should swear it now
A forgery, my lord would disbelieve me,
Nay, more, would disbelieve the more I swore.
But is the picture happily disposed of?

Isa. It is.

Zan. That's well—Ah! what is well? O pang
to think!

O dire necessity! is this my province?
Whither, my soul! ah! whither art thou sunk?
Does this become a soldier? this become
Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd?
My martial glory withers at the thought.
But great my end; and since there are no other,
These means are just, they shine with borrow'd
light,

Illustrious from the purpose they pursue.
And greater sure my merit, who, to gain
A point sublime, can such a task sustain;
To wade through ways obscene, my honour bend,
And shock my nature, to attain my end.
Late time shall wonder; that my joys will raise:
For wonder is involuntary praise. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter DON ALONZO and ZANGA.

Alon. Oh, what a pain to think! when every
thought,

Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs,
And reason knits th' inextricable toil,
In which herself is taken!
No more I'll bear this battle of the mind,
This inward anarchy; but find my wife,
And, to her trembling heart presenting death,
Force all the secret from her.

Zan. O, forbear!

You totter on the very brink of ruin.

Alon. What dost thou mean?

Zan. That will discover all,
And kill my hopes:—What can I think or do?
[*Aside.*]

Alon. What, dost thou murmur?

Zan. Force the secret from her?

What's perjury to such a crime as this?
Will she confess it then? O, groundless hope!
But rest assur'd, she'll make this accusation,
Or false or true, your ruin with the king;
Such is her father's power.

Alon. No more, I care not;
Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die.

Zan. But for what better will you change this
load?

Grant you should know it, would not that be
worse?

Alon. No; it would cure me of my mortal pangs
By hatred and contempt: I should despise her,
And all my love-bred agonies would vanish.

Zan. Ah! were I sure of that, my lord—

Alon. What then?

Zan. You should not hazard life to gain the
secret.

Alon. What dost thou mean? thou know'st I'm
on the rack.

I'll not be play'd with; speak, if thou hast aught,
Or I this instant fly to Leonora

Zan. That is, to death. My lord, I am not yet
Quite so far gone in guilt to suffer it;
Though gone too far, Heaven knows—'Tis I am
guilty;

I have took pains, as you, I know, observ'd,
To hinder you from diving in the secret,
And turn'd aside your thoughts from the detec-
tion.

Alon. Thou dost confound me.

Zan. I confound myself;

And frankly own, though to my shame I own it,
Nought but your life in danger could have torn
The secret out, and made me own my crime.

Alon. Speak quickly, Zanga, speak.

Zan. Not yet, dread Sir:

First, I must be assur'd, that if you find
The fair one guilty, scorn, as you assur'd me,
Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your soul.

Alon. Oh! 'twill, by Heaven.

Zan. Alas! I fear it much,

And scarce can hope so far; but I of this
Exact your solemn oath, that you'll abstain
From all self-violence, and save my lord.

Alon. I trebly swear.

Zan. You'll bear it like a man?

Alon. A god.

Zan. Such have you been to me, these tears
confess it;

And pour'd forth miracles of kindness on me:
And what amends is now within my power,
But to confess, expose myself to justice,
And as a blessing, claim my punishment?
Know then, Don Carlos—

Alon. Oh!

Zan. You cannot bear it.

Alon. Go on, I'll have it, though it blast man-
kind;

I'll have it all, and instantly. Go on.

Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night—
That night, by chance (ill chance for me) did I
Command the watch that guards the palace gate.
He told me he had letters for the king,
Despatch'd from you.

Alon. The villain lied!

Zan. My lord,

I pray, forbear—Transported at his sight,
After so long a bondage, and your friend,
(Who could suspect him of an artifice?)

No further I inquir'd, but let him pass,
False to my trust, at least imprudent in it.
Our watch reliev'd, I went into the garden,
As is my custom, when the night's serene,
And took a moonlight walk: when soon I heard
A rustling in an arbour that was near me.
I saw two lovers in each others' arms,
Embracing and embrac'd. Anon the man
Arose; and, falling back some paces from her,
Gaz'd ardently awhile, then rush'd at once,
And, throwing all himself into her bosom,
There softly sigh'd, "Oh, night of ecstasy!
When shall we meet again?"—Don Carlos then
Led Leonora forth.

Alon. Oh, oh, my heart!

[*He sinks into a chain.*]

Zan. Groan on, and with the sound refresh
my soul!

'Tis through his heart; his knees smite one ano-
ther:

'Tis through his brain, his eye-balls roll in an
guish. [*Aside*]

My lord, my lord, why will you rack my soul?

Alon. Oh, she was all!

My fame, my friendship, and my love of arms,
All stoop'd to her; my blood was her possession.
Deep in the secret foldings of my heart
She liv'd with life, and far the dearer she:
To think on't is the torment of the damn'd,
And not to think on't is impossible.

Zan. You said you'd bear it like a man.

Alon. I do.

Am I not most distracted?

Zan. Pray, be calm.

Alon. As hurricanes:—be thou assur'd of that.

Zan. Is this the wise Alonzo?

Alon. Villain, no:

He died in the arbour—he was murder'd there!—

Zan. Alas! he weeps.

Alon. Go, dig her grave!

Zan. My lord!

Alon. But that her blood's too hot, I would ca-
rouse it

Around my bridal board!

Zan. And I would pledge thee. [Aside.]

Alon. But I may talk too fast. Pray let me
think,

And reason mildly.—Wedded and undone

Before one night descends.—Oh, hasty evil!

What friend to comfort me in my extreme!

Where's Carlos? why is Carlos absent from me?

Does he know what has happen'd?

Zan. My lord!

Alon. Oh, villain, villain, most accurs'd!

If thou didst know it, why didst let me wed?

Zan. Hear me, my lord; your anger will abate?

I knew it not:—I saw them in the garden;

But saw no more than you might well expect

To see in lovers destin'd for each other.

By Heaven, I thought their meeting innocent.

Who could suspect fair Leonora's virtue,

'Till after-proofs conspir'd to blacken it?

Sad proofs, which came too late, which broke not
out,

(Eternal curses on Alvarez' haste!)

'Till holy rites had made the wanton yours;

And then, I own, I labour'd to conceal it,

In duty and compassion to your peace.

Alon. Live now, be damn'd hereafter—for I
want thee.

Let me think—

The jess'mine bower—'tis secret and remote:

Go, wait thee there, and take thy dagger with
thee. [Exit ZANGA.]

How sweet the sound still sings within my ear!

When shall we meet again?—To-night, in hell.
[Going.]

Enter LEONORA.

Ha! I'm surprised! I stagger at her charms!

Oh, angel-devil!—Shall I stab her now?

No—it shall be as I at first determin'd.

To kill her now were half my vengeance lost.

Then I must now dissemble—if I can.

Leon. My lord, excuse me; see, a second time

I come in embassy from all your friends,

Whose joys are languid, uninspir'd by you.

Alon. This moment, Leonora, I was coming

To thee, and all—but sure, or I mistake,

Or thou canst well inspire my friends with joy.

Leon. What says my lord?

Alon. Thou art exceeding fair.

Leon. Beauty alone is but of little worth;

But, when the soul and body of a piece

Both shine alike,—then they obtain a price,

And are a fit reward for gallant actions,

Heaven's pay on earth for such great souls as
yours;—

If fair and innocent, I am your due.

Alon. Innocent!

[Aside.]

Leon. How, my lord! I interrupt you.

Alon. No, my best life! I must not part with
thee—

This hand is mine—Oh, what a hand is here!

So soft, souls sink into it, and are lost!

Leon. In tears, my lord?

Alon. What less can speak my joy?

Why, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,

And drink in all my being from thine eyes;

And I could snatch a flaming thunderbolt,

And hurl destruction!—

Leon. My lord, you fright me.

Is this the fondness of your nuptial hour?

Why, when I woo your hand, is it denied me?

Your very eyes, why are they taught to shun
me?—

Nay, my good lord, I have a title here.

[Takes his hand.]

And I will have it. Am I not your wife?

Have I not just authority to know

That heart which I have purchas'd with my own?

Tell me the secret; I conjure you, tell me.

Speak then, I charge you speak, or I expire,

And load you with my death. My lord, my lord!

Alon. Ha, ha, ha!

[He breaks from her, and she sinks upon
the floor.]

Leon. Are these the joys which fondly I con-
ceived?

And is it thus a wedded life begins?

What did I part with, when I gave my heart?

I knew not that all happiness went with it.

Why did I leave my tender father's wing,

And venture into love? The maid that loves,

Goes out to sea upon a shatter'd plank,

And puts her trust in miracles for safety.

Where shall I sigh?—where pour out my com-
plaint?

He that should hear, should succour, should re-
dress,

He is the source of all.

Alon. Go to thy chamber;

I soon will follow; that which now disturbs thee

Shall be clear'd up, and thou shalt not condemn
me. [Exit LEONORA.]

Oh, how like innocence she looks!—What, stab
her!

And rush into her blood?

How then? why thus—no more; it is determin'd.

Re-enter ZANGA.

Zan. I fear, his heart has fail'd him. She must
die.

Can I not rouse the snake that's in his bosom,

To sting out human nature, and effect it?

[Aside.]

Alon. This vast and solid earth, that blazing
sun,

Those skies, through which it rolls, must all have
end.

What then is man? the smallest part of nothing.

Day buries day; month, month; and year the
year.

Our life is but a chain of many deaths;

Can then death's self be fear'd? our life much
rather.

Life is the desert, life the solitude.

Death join us to the great majority:

'Tis to be borne to Platos and to Cæsars;

'Tis to be great for ever;

'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition, then, to die.

Zan. I think, my lord, you talk'd of death?

Alon. I did.

Zan. I give you joy; then Leonora's dead?

Alon. No, Zanga; to shed a woman's blood
Would stain my sword, and make my wars in-
glorious;

He who, superior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reason,
Does in some sort that reason deify,
And take a flight at heaven.

Zan. Alas, my lord,

'Tis not your reason, but her beauty, finds
Those arguments, and throws you on your sword.
You cannot close an eye that is so bright,
You cannot strike a breast that is so soft,
That has ten thousand ecstasies in store—
For Carlos?—No, my lord, I mean for you.

Alon. Oh, through my heart and marrow!
pr'ythee, spare me,

Nor more upbraid the weakness of thy lord:

I own, I tried, I quarrell'd with my heart,

And push'd it on, and bid it give her death;

But, oh, her eyes struck first and murder'd me.

Zan. I know not what to answer to my lord.

Men are but men; we did not make ourselves,

Farewell then, my best lord, since you must die.

Oh, that I were to share your monument,

And in eternal darkness close these eyes

Against those scenes which I am doomed to suffer!

Alon. What dost thou mean?

Zan. And is it then unknown?

Oh, grief of heart, to think that you should ask it!

Sure you distrust that ardent love I bear you,

Else could you doubt when you are laid in dust—

But it will cut my poor heart through and through,

To see those revel on your sacred tomb,

Who brought you thither by their lawless loves.

For there they'll revel, and exult to find

Him sleep so fast, who else might mar their joys.

Alon. Distraction! But Don Carlos well thou
know'st.

Is sheath'd in steel, and bent on other thoughts.

Zan. I'll work him to the murder of his friend.

[*Aside.*]

Yes, till the fever of his blood returns,

While her last kiss still glows upon his cheek.

But when he finds Alonzo is no more,

How will he rush, like lightning, to her arms!

There sigh, there languish, there pour out his soul;

But not in grief—sad obsequies to thee!—

But thou wilt be at peace, nor see, nor hear

The burning kiss, the sigh of ecstasy,

The throbbing hearts that jostle one another:

Thank Heaven, these torments will be all my own.

Alon. I'll ease thee of that pain. Let Carlos
die;

O'ertake him on the road, and see it done.

'Tis my command. [*Gives his signet.*]

Zan. I dare not disobey.

Alon. My Zanga, now I have thy leave to die.

Zan. Ah, Sir! think, think again. Are all
men buried

In Carlos' grave? you know not womankind:

When once the throbbing of the heart has broke

The modest zone, with which it first was tied,

Each man she meets will be a Carlos to her.

Alon. That thought has more of hell than had
the former.

Another, and another, and another!

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And each shall cast a smile upon my tomb.

I am convinc'd; I must not, will not die.

Zan. You cannot die; nor can you murder her

What then remains? In nature no third way,

But to forget, and so to love again.

Alon. Oh!

Zan. If you forgive, the world will call you
good;

If you forget, the world will call you wise;

If you receive her to your grace again,

The world will call you—very, very kind.

Alon. Zanga, I understand thee well. She dies;

Though my arm tremble at the stroke, she dies.

Zan. That's truly great. What think you
'twas set up

The Greek and Roman name is such a lustre,

But doing right in stern despite to nature;

Shutting their ears to all her little cries,

When great, august, and godlike justice call'd?

At Aulis, one pour'd out a daughter's life,

And gain'd more glory than by all his wars;

Another slew a sister in just rage;

A third, the theme of all succeeding times,

Gave to the cruel axe a darling son:

Nay more, for justice some devote themselves,

As he at Carthage, an immortal name!

Yet there is one step left above them all,

Above their history, above their fable:

A wife, bride, mistress, unenjoy'd—do that,

And tread upon the Greek and Roman glory

Alon. 'Tis done!—Again new transports fire
my brain:

I had forgot it, 'tis my bridal night.

Friend, give me joy, we must be gay together,

See that the festival be duly honour'd.

And when with garlands the full bowl is crown'd,

And music gives her elevating sound,

And golden carpets spread the sacred floor,

And a new day the blazing tapers pour,

Thou, Zanga, then my solemn friends invite,

From the dark realms of everlasting night;

Call Vengeance, call the Furies, call Despair,

And Death, our chief-invited guest, be there;

He, with pale hand, shall lead the bride, and
spread

Eternal curtains round our nuptial bed.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter ALONZO, meeting ZANGA.

Alon. Is Carlos murdered?

Zan. I obey'd your order.

Six ruffians overtook him on the road;

He fought as he was wont, and four he slew.

Then sunk beneath a hundred wounds to death.

His last breath bless'd Alonzo, and desired

His bones might rest near yours.

Alon. Oh, Zanga! Zanga!

But I'll not think: for I must act, and thinking

Would ruin me for action.

Where's Leonora then? Quick, answer me

I'm deep in horrors, I'll be deeper still.

I find the artifice did take effect,

And she forgives my late deportment to her.

Zan. I told her, from your childhood you wa-
wont,

On any great surprise, but chiefly then

When cause of sorrow bore it company,

To have your passion shake the seat of reason;

A momentary ill, which soon blew o'er:

Then did I tell her of Don Carlos' death,

(Wisely suppressing by what means he fell,) And laid the blame on that. At first she doubted; But such her honest artifice I us'd, And such her ardent wish it should be true, That she, at length, was fully satisfied. But what design you, Sir, and how?

Alon. I'll tell thee.

Thus I've ordain'd it. In the jess'mine bower, The place which she dishonour'd with her guilt, There will I meet her; the appointment's made; And calmly spread (for I can do it now) The blackness of her crime before her sight; And then, with all the cool solemnity Of public justice, give her to the grave. *[Exit.]*

Zan. Why, get thee gone! horror and night go with thee.

Sisters of Acheron, go hand in hand, Go dance around the bower, and close them; And tell them, that I sent you to salute them; Profane the ground; and for th' ambrosial rose, And breath of jess'mine, let hemlock blacken, And deadly nightshade poison all the air. For the sweet nightingale, may ravens croak, Toads pant, and adders rustle through the leaves; May serpents winding up the trees let fall Their hissing necks upon them from above, And mingle kisses—such as I would give them. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—The Bower.

Enter ALONZO.—LEONORA sleeping.

Alon. Ye amaranths! ye roses, like the morn! Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange groves! Why do you smile? Why do you look so fair? Are ye not blighted as I enter in? Did ever midnight ghosts assemble here? Have these sweet echoes ever learn'd to groan? Joy-giving, love-inspiring, holy bower! Know, in thy fragrant bosom thou receiv'st A—murderer! Oh, I shall stain thy lilies, And horror will usurp the seat of bliss.

[Advances.]

Ha! she sleeps— The day's uncommon heat has overcome her. Then take, my longing eyes, your last, full gaze. Oh, what a sight is here! how dreadful fair! Who would not think that being innocent? Where shall I strike? who strikes her, strikes himself.

My own life-blood will issue at her wound. But see, she smiles! I never shall smile more; It strongly tempts me to a parting kiss.

[Going, he starts back.]

Ha! smile again. She dreams of him she loves. Curse on her charms! I'll stab her through them all.

[As he is going to strike, she wakes.]

Leon. My lord, your stay was long; and yonder lull

Of falling waters tempted me to rest, Dispirited with noon's excessive heat.

Alon. Ye powers! with what an eye she mends the day!

While they were clos'd, I should have given the blow.

Leon. What says my lord?

Alon. Why, this Alonzo says:

If love were endless, men were gods; 'tis that Does counterbalance travel, danger, pain— 'Tis Heaven's expedient to make mortals bear The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.

Leon. Alas, my lord! why talk you of the grave?

Your friend is dead: in friendship you sustain A mighty loss: repair it with my love.

Alon. Thy love, thou piece of witchcraft! I would say,

Thou brightest angel! I could gaze for ever.

But oh, those eyes! those murderers! Oh, whence, Whence didst thou steal their burning orbs? from Heaven?

Thou didst; and 'tis religion to adore them.

Leon. My best Alonzo, moderate your thoughts. Extremes still fright me, though of love itself.

Alon. Extremes indeed! it hurry'd me away; But I come home again—and now for justice— And now for death—It is impossible—

[Aside.] I leave her to just Heaven.

[Drops the dagger, goes off.]

Leon. Ha, a dagger!

What dost thou say, thou minister of death?

What dreadful tale dost tell me?—Let me think—

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Death to my towering hope! Oh! fall from high!

My close, long-labour'd scheme at once is blasted, That dagger, found, will cause her to inquire; Inquiry will discover all; my hopes Of vengeance perish; I myself am lost— Curse on the coward's heart; wither his hand, Which held the steel in vain!—what can be done? Where can I fix?—that's something still—'twill breed

Fell rage and bitterness betwixt their souls, Which may, perchance, grow up to greater evil: If not, 'tis all I can—It shall be so— *[Aside.]*

Leon. Oh, Zanga, I am sinking in my fears! Alonzo dropp'd this dagger as he left me, And left me in a strange disorder too.

What can this mean? Angels preserve his life!

Zan. Yours, Madam, yours.

Leon. What, Zanga, dost thou say?

Zan. Carry you goodness then to such extremes,

So blinded to the faults of him you love, That you perceive not he is jealous?

Leon. Heavens!

And yet a thousand things recur that swear it. What villain could inspire him with that thought? It is not of the growth of his own nature.

Zan. Some villain; who, hell knows; but he is jealous;

And 'tis most fit a heart so pure as yours Do itself justice, and assert its honour, And make him conscious of his stab to virtue.

Leon. Jealous! it sickens at my heart. Unkind, Ungen'rous, groundless, weak, and insolent!

Why, wherefore? on what shadow of occasion? Oh, how the great man lessens to my thought!

How could so mean a vice as jealousy

Live in a throng of such exalted virtues!

I scorn and hate, yet love him, and adore.

I cannot, will not, dare not, think it true, 'Till from himself I know it. *[Exit.]*

Zan. This succeeds

Just to my wish. Now she, with violence, Upbraids him; he, not doubting she is guilty, Rages no less; and if on either side The waves run high, there still lives hope of ruin

Re-enter ALONZO.

My lord—

Alon. Oh, Zanga, hold thy peace! I am no coward;

But Heaven itself did hold my hand; I felt it,
By the well-being of my soul, I did.
I'll think of vengeance at another season.

Zan. My lord, her guilt—

Alon. Perdition on thee, Moor.

For that one word! Ah, do not rouse that thought!
I have o'erwhelm'd it much as possible:
I tell thee, Moor, I love her to distraction.
If 'tis my shame, why, be it so—I love her;
I could not hurt her to be lord of earth;
It shocks my nature like a stroke from Heaven.
But see, my Leonora comes—Be gone.

[Exit ZANGA]

Re-enter LEONORA.

Oh, seen for ever, yet for ever new!
The conquer'd thou dost conquer o'er again,
Inflicting wound on wound.

Leon. Alas, my lord!

What need of this to me?

Alon. Ha! dost thou weep?

Leon. Have I no cause?

Alon. If love is thy concern,
Thou hast no cause: none ever lov'd like me.
Oh, that this one embrace would last for ever!

Leon. Could this man ever mean to wrong my
virtue?

Could this man e'er design upon my life?
Impossible! I throw away the thought. [Aside.
These tears declare how much I taste the joy
Of being folded in your arms and heart;
My universe does lie within that space.
This dagger bore false witness.

Alon. Ha, my dagger!

It rouses horrid images. Away,
Away with it, and let us talk of love.

Leon. Of death!

Alon. As thou lov'st happiness—

Leon. Of murder!

Alon. Rash,

Rash woman! yet forbear.

Alas, thou quite mistak'st my cause of pain!
Yet, yet dismiss me; I am all in flames.

Leon. Who has most cause, you or myself?
what act

Of my whole life encourag'd you to this?

Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?
You find me kind, and think me kind to all;

The weak, ungenerous error of your sex.

What could inspire the thought? We oft'nest
judge

From our own hearts; and is yours then so frail,
It prompts you to conceive thus ill of me?

He that can stoop to harbour such a thought,
Deserves to find it true. [Holding him.

Alon. [Turning on her.] Ill-fated woman!

Why hast thou forc'd me back into the gulf
Of agonies I had block'd up from thought?
For, since thou hast replung'd me in my torture,
I will be satisfied.

Leon. Be satisfied!

Alon. Yes, thy own mouth shall witness it
against thee;

I will be satisfied.

Leon. Of what?

Alon. Of what?

How dar'st thou ask that question? Woman
woman,

Weak and assur'd at once! thus 'tis for ever.

Who told thee that thy virtue was suspected?

Who told thee I design'd upon thy life?

You found the dagger; but that could not speak;

Nor did I tell thee; who did tell thee then?
Guilt, conscious guilt!

Leon. 'Tis to my face! Oh! Hear'n!

Alon. 'Tis to thy very soul.

Leon. Thou'rt not in earnest?

Alon. Serious as death.

Leon. Then Heaven have mercy on thee:
Till now, I struggled not to think it true;
I sought conviction, and would not believe it.
And dost thou force me? this shall not be borne
Thou shalt repent this insult. [Going

Alon. Madam, stay.

Your passion's wise; 'tis a disguise for guilt:
You and your thousand arts shall not escape me
Leon. Arts?

Alon. Arts! Confess; for death is in my hand

Leon. 'Tis in your words.

Alon. Confess, confess, confess!

Nor tear my veins with passion to compel thee.

Leon. I scorn to answer thee, presumptuous
man!

Alon. Deny then, and incur a fouler shame.

Where did I find this picture?

Leon. Ha, Don Carlos!

By my best hopes, more welcome than thy own

Alon. I know it; but is vice so very rank,
That thou should'st dare to dash it in my face?
Nature is sick of thee, abandon'd woman!

Leon. Repent.

Alon. Is that for me?

Leon. Fall, ask my pardon.

Alon. Astonishment!

Leon. Dar'st thou persist to think I am dis-
honest?

Alon. I know thee so.

Leon. This blow then to thy heart—

[She stabs herself; he endeavours to prevent her

Alon. Ho, Zanga! Isabella! ho! she bleeds!

Descend, ye blessed angels, to assist her!

Leon. This is the only way I would wound thee
Though most unjust. Now think me guilty still

Enter ISABELLA.

Alon. Bear her to instant help. The world to
save her.

Leon. Unhappy man! well may'st thou gaze
and tremble.

But fix thy terror and amazement right;
Not on my blood, but on thy own distraction.
What hast thou done? whom censur'd—Leonora.
When thou hadst censur'd, thou wouldst save
her life:

Oh, inconsistent! should I live in shame,
Or stoop to any other means but this,
To assert my virtue? no: she who disputes,
Admits it possible she might be guilty.
While aught but truth could be my inducement
to it.

While it might look like an excuse to thee,
I scorn'd to vindicate my innocence:
But now, I let thy rashness know, the wound
Which least I feel, is that my dagger made
[Exit ISABELLA, leading out LEONORA.

Alon. Ha! was this woman guilty? And if
not—

How my thoughts darken that way! grant, kind
Heaven,

That she prove guilty; or my being end.
Is that my hope, then?—Sure, the sacred dust
Of her that bore me trembles in its urn,
As it in man the sore distress to bear,
When hope itself is blacken'd to despair?

When all the bliss I pant for, is to gain
In hell, a refuge from severer pain? [Exit.

Re-enter ZANGA.

Zan. How stands the great account 'twixt me
and vengeance?
Though much is paid, yet still it owes me much,
And I will not abate a single groan—
Ha! that were well—but that were fatal too—
Why, be it so—Revenge so truly great,
Would come too cheap, if bought with less than
life.

Re-enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Ah, Zanga, see me tremble! Has not yet
Thy cruel heart its fill? Poor Leonora—

Zan. Welters in blood, and gasps for her last
breath.

What then? We all must die.

Isa. Alonzo raves,
And, in the tempest of his grief, has thrice
Attempted on his life. At length, disarm'd,
He calls his friends, that save him, his worst foes,
And importunes the skies for swift perdition.
Thus in his storm of sorrow: after pause,
He started up, and call'd aloud for Zanga;
For Zanga raved; and see, he seeks you here,
To learn that truth, which most he dreads to know.

Zan. Begone. Now, now, my soul, consum-
mate all. [Exit ISABELLA.

Re-enter ALONZO.

Alon. Oh, Zanga!

Zan. Do not tremble so; but speak.

Alon. I dare not. [Falls on him.

Zan. You will drown me with your tears.

Alon. Have I not cause?

Zan. As yet, you have no cause.

Alon. Dost thou too rave?

Zan. Your anguish is to come:

You much have been abus'd.

Alon. Abus'd! by whom?

Zan. To know, were little comfort.

Alon. Oh, 'twere much!

Zan. Indeed!

Alon. By Heaven! Oh, give him to my fury!

Zan. Born for your use, I live but to oblige you.
Know, then, 'twas—I.

Alon. Am I awake?

Zan. For ever.

Thy wife is guiltless—that's one transport to me;
And I, I let thee know it—that's another.

I urg'd Don Carlos to resign his mistress,

I forg'd the letter, I dispos'd the picture;

I hated, I despis'd, and I destroy!

Alon. Oh!

Zan. Why, this is well—why, this is blow for
blow!

Where are you? Crown me, shadow me with
laurels,

Ye spirits which delight in just revenge!

Let Europe and her pallid sons go weep;

Let Africa and her hundred thrones rejoice:

Oh, my dear countrymen, look down and see

How I bestride your prostrate conqueror!

I tread on haughty Spain, and all her kings.

But this is mercy, this is my indulgence;

'Tis peace, 'tis refuge from my indignation.

I must awake him into horrors. Hoa!

Alonzo, hoa! the Moor is at the gate!

Awake, invincible, omnipotent!

'Thou who dost all subdue!

Alon. Inhuman slave!

Zan. Fallen Christian, thou mistak'st my cha-
racter.

Look on me. Who am I?—I know, thou say'st

The Moor, a slave, an abject, beaten slave:

(Eternal woes to him that made me so!)

But look again. Has six years' cruel bondage

Extinguish'd majesty so far, that nought

Shines here to give an awe of one above thee?

When the great Moorish king, Abdallah, fell,

Fell by thy hand accurs'd, I fought fast by him,

His son, though, through his fondness, in disguise

Less to expose me to th' ambitious foe.—

Ha! does it wake thee?—O'er my father's corse

I stood astride till I had clove thy crest;

And then was made the captive of a squadron,

And sunk into thy servant—But, oh! what,

What were my wages? Hear not Heaven, nor
earth!

My wages were a blow! by Heaven, a blow!

And from a mortal hand!

Alon. Oh, villain, villain!

Zan. All strife is vain! [Showing a dagger.

Alon. Is thus my love return'd?

Is this my recompense? Make friends of tigers!

Lay not your young, oh, mothers, on the breast,

For fear they turn to serpents as they lie,

And pay you for their nourishment with death!—

Carlos is dead, and Leonora dying!

Both innocent, both murder'd, both by me.

Zan. Must I despise thee too, as well as hate
thee?

Complain of grief, complain thou art a man.—

Priam from fortune's lofty summit fell;

Great Alexander 'midst his conquests mourn'd;

Heroes and demi-gods have known their sorrows

Cæsars have wept; and I have had—my blow;

But, 'tis reveng'd, and now my work is done.

Yet, ere I fall, be it one part of vengeance

To force thee to confess that I am just.—

Thou seest a prince, whose father thou hast slain,

Whose native country thou hast laid in blood,

Whose sacred person (oh!) thou hast profan'd,

Whose reign extinguish'd—what was left to me,

So highly born? No kingdom, but revenge;

No treasure but thy tortures and thy groans.

If men should ask who brought thee to thy end,

Tell them, the Moor, and they will not despise
thee.

If cold white mortals censure this great deed,

Warn them, they judge not of superior beings,

Souls made of fire, and children of the sun,

With whom revenge is virtue. Fare thee well—

Now, fully satisfied, I should take leave:

But one thing grieves me, since thy death is near,

I leave thee my example how to die.

As he is going to stab himself, ALONZO rushes

upon him to prevent him. In the mean time,

enter DON ALVAREZ, attended. They disarm

and seize ZANGA. ALONZO puts the dagger in

his bosom.

Alon. No, monster, thou shalt not escape by

death.

Oh, father!

Alv. Oh, Alonzo!—Isabella,

Touch'd with remorse to see her mistress' pangs,

Told all the dreadful tale.

Alon. What groan was that?

Zan. As I have been a vulture to thy heart.

So will I be a raven to thine ear,

As true as ever snuff'd the scent of blood,

As ever flap'd its heavy wing against

The window of the sick, and croak'd despair.
Thy wife is dead.

[ALVAREZ goes aside, and returns.

Alv. The dreadful news is true.

Alon. Prepare the rack; invent new torments
for him.

Zan. This too is well. The fix'd and noble mind
Turns all occurrence to its own advantage;
And I'll make vengeance of calamity.
Were I not thus reduc'd, thou wouldst not know,
That, thus reduc'd, I dare/defy thee still.
Torture thou may'st, but thou shalt ne'er despise
me.

The blood will follow where the knife is driven,
The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear,
And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain.
But these are foreign to the soul: not mine
The groans that issue, or the tears that fall;
They disobey me; on the rack I scorn thee,
As when my falchion clove thy helm in battle.

Alv. Peace, villain!

Zan. While I live, old man, I'll speak:
And, well I know, thou dar'st not kill me yet;
For that would rob thy blood-hounds of their prey.

Alon. Who call'd Alonzo?

Alv. No one call'd, my son.

Alon. Again!—'Tis Carlos' voice, and I obey.
Oh, how I laugh at all that this can do!

[Shows the dagger.

The wounds that pain'd, the wounds that mur-
der'd me,
Were given before; I am already dead;
This only marks my body for the grave.

[Stabs himself.

Afric, thou art reveng'd.—Oh, Leonora!

[Dies.

Zan. Good ruffians, give me leave; my blood
is yours,
The wheel's prepar'd, and you shall have it
all.

Let me but look one moment on the dead.

And pay yourselves with gazing on my pangs.

[He goes to ALONZO'S body.

Is this Alonzo? Where's the haughty mien?

Is that the hand which smote me? Heavens, how
pale!

And art thou dead! So is my enmity.

I war not with the dust. The great, the proud,

The conqueror of Afric, was my foe.

A lion preys not upon carcasses.

This was the only method to subdue me.

Terror and doubt fall on me: all thy good

Now blazes, all thy guilt is in the grave.

Never had man such funeral applause:

If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.

Oh, vengeance, I have follow'd thee too far,

And to receive me, hell blows all her fires.

[Exeunt.

THE RIVALS:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY R. B. SHERIDAN, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS was the earliest theatrical production of Mr. Sheridan, and was first brought on the stage at Covent Garden in the year 1775, when it was disliked by the audience, and of course laid aside.

On subsequent revival, at Covent Garden and at Drury Lane, the public were highly delighted with it; and it is still looked upon as an excellent specimen of pure and just Comedy, which the judges of theatrical composition had so long deplored the want of.

Comedy proposes for its object the exposure of the follies and slighter vices of mankind, so as to raise in the beholders a sense of their impropriety, and to expose them to censure and laughter: it endeavours to

"Catch the manners living as they rise;"

and, in the *Rivals*, its judicious author has given pictures taken from among ourselves; he has satirized the reigning vices; and exhibited to the age a faithful copy of itself, with its humours, its follies, its manners, and its extravagancies.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	As originally acted.	COVENT GARDEN, 1813.	DRURY LANE, 1814.
SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE,	<i>Mr. Shuter.</i>	<i>Mr. Fawcett.</i>	<i>Mr. Downton.</i>
CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE,	<i>Mr. Woodward.</i>	<i>Mr. C. Kemble.</i>	<i>Mr. Elliston.</i>
SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER,	{ <i>Mr. Lee.</i>	<i>Mr. Jones</i>	<i>Mr. Johnstone.</i>
	{ <i>Mr. Clinch.</i>		
FAULKLAND,	<i>Mr. Lewis.</i>	<i>Mr. Abbott.</i>	<i>Mr. Holland.</i>
ACRES,	<i>Mr. Quick.</i>	<i>Mr. Liston.</i>	<i>Mr. Bannister</i>
FAG,	<i>Mr. Lee Lewis.</i>	<i>Mr. Farley.</i>	<i>Mr. Decamp.</i>
DAVID,	<i>Mr. Dunstall.</i>	<i>Mr. Emery.</i>	<i>Mr. Penley.</i>
JAMES,		<i>Mr. Lee.</i>	<i>Mr. Buxton.</i>
COACHMAN,	<i>Mr. Fearon.</i>	<i>Mr. Atkins.</i>	<i>Mr. Mattocks.</i>
SERVANTS,		{ <i>Mr. Sarjant.</i>	<i>Mr. J. West.</i>
		{ <i>Mr. Truman.</i>	<i>Mr. Evans.</i>
MRS. MALAPROP,	<i>Mrs. Green.</i>	<i>Mrs. Davenport.</i>	<i>Mrs. Sparks.</i>
LYDIA LANGUISH,	<i>Miss Barsanti.</i>	<i>Miss S. Booth.</i>	<i>Mrs. Edwin.</i>
JULIA,	<i>Mrs. Bulkley.</i>	<i>Miss Cooke.</i>	<i>Mrs. Davison</i>
LUCY,	<i>Mrs. Lessingham.</i>	<i>Miss Logan.</i>	<i>Mrs. Harlove.</i>
JENNY,		<i>Miss Cox.</i>	<i>Mrs. Chatterley.</i>

SCENE.—Bath.

Time of action, within one day.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street at Bath.

COACHMAN *crosses the Stage.*—Enter FAG, *looking after him.*

Fag. What, Thomas! Sure, 'tis he!—What, Thomas, Thomas!

Coach. Hey! odd 's life! Mr. Fag; give us your hand, my old fellow-servant!

Fag. Excuse my glove, Thomas; I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad! why, my prince of chario-

teers, you look as hearty!—but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath?

Coach. Sure, master, Madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postillion, be all come.

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Ay: master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit, so he'd a mind to gi't the slip,—and whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Ay, ay; hasty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute.

Coach. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young

master? Odd, Sir Anthony will stare, to see the captain here!

Fag. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

Coach. Why, sure!

Fag. At present, I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

Coach. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Coach. No! why, didn't you say, you had left young master?

Fag. No. Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no further;—briefly then—Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

Coach. The devil they are: do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning on't.

Fag. You'll be secret, Thomas?

Coach. As a coach horse.

Fag. Why, then the cause of all this is love,—love, Thomas, who has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

Coach. But, pray, why does your master pass only for ensign?—now, if he had shammed general, indeed—

Fag. Ah, Thomas! there lies the mystery o'the matter!—Harkye, Thomas, my master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste—a lady, who likes him better as a half-pay ensign, than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet of three thousand a year.

Coach. That is an odd taste, indeed! but has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? is she rich, eh?

Fag. Rich! why, I believe she owns half the stocks! Zounds, Thomas, she could pay the national debt, as easily as I could my washerwoman!—She has a lap-dog that eats out of gold—she feeds her parrot with small pearls, and all her thread papers are made of bank notes!

Coach. Bravo, faith!—Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands, at least; but does she draw kindly with the captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miss Lydia Languish:—But there is an odd tough aunt in the way—though, by the bye, she has never seen my master—for he got acquainted with Miss, while on a visit in Gloucestershire.

Coach. Well, I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony. But, pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath? I ha' heard a great deal of it;—here's a mort o' merry making, eh?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge—but, damn the place, I'm tired of it; their regular hours stupify me—not a fiddle or a card, after eleven! however, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little, in private parties;—I'll introduce you there, Thomas, you'll like him much.—But, Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed, you must;—Here, now, this wig! what, the devil, do you do with a wig, Thomas? none of the London whips, of any degree of ton, wear wigs now.

Coach. More's the pity, more's the pity, I say—Odds life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next. Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the bar, I guessed 'twould mount to the box! but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag: and lookye, I'll never give up

mine, the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that. But hold, mark—mark, Thomas.

Coach. Zooks, 'tis the captain! Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No, no, that is Madam Lucy, my master's mistress' maid; they lodge at that house—but I must after him, to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd, he's giving her money!—Well, Mr. Fag—

Fag. Good bye, Thomas; I have an appointment in Gyde's porch, this evening, at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.—A Dressing-Room in Mrs. MALAPROP'S Lodgings.

LYDIA LANGUISH *sitting on a Sofa, with a book in her hand*; LUCY, *as just returned from a message.*

Lucy. Indeed, Ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it: I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

Lyd. And could not you get "The Reward of Constancy?"

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "The Fatal Connexion?"

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "The Mistakes of the Heart?"

Lucy. Ma'am, as ill luck would have it, Mr. Bull said, Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

Lyd. Heigho! Did you inquire for "The Delicate Distress?"

Lucy. Or, "The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?" Yes, indeed, Ma'am, I asked every where for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'n't fit for a Christian to read.

Lyd. Heigho! Yes, I always know when lady Slattern has been before me: She has a most observing thumb, and, I believe, cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes. Well, child, what have you brought me?

Lucy. Oh, here, Ma'am! [*Taking books from under her cloak, and from her pockets.*] This is "The Man of Feeling," and this, "Peregrine Pickle."—Here are "The Tears of Sensibility," and "Humphrey Clinker."

Lyd. Hold! here's some one coming—quick, see who it is—[*Exit Lucy.*]—Surely, I heard my cousin Julia's voice!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Lud, Ma'am! here is Miss Melville!

Lyd. Is it possible!

Enter JULIA.

Lyd. My dearest Julia, how delighted am I: [*Embrace.*] How unexpected was this happiness!

Jul. True, Lydia, and our pleasure is the greater; but what has been the matter? you were denied to me at first.

Lyd. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you! but first inform me what has conjured you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

Jul. He is; we are arrived within this hour, and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

Lyd. Then, before we are interrupted, let me

impart to you some of my distress; I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, though your prudence may condemn me: My letters have informed you of my whole connexion with Beverley; but I have lost him, Julia!—My aunt has discovered our intercourse, by a note she intercepted, and has confined me ever since: Yet, would you believe it? she has fallen absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet, she met one night, since we have been here, at lady Mac-shuffle's rout.

Jul. You jest, Lydia.

Lyd. No, upon my word:—She really carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chooses to be known to him;—but it is a Delia, or a Celia, I assure you.

Jul. Then, surely, she is now more indulgent to her niece?

Lyd. Quite the contrary: since she has discovered her own frailty, she is become more suspicious of mine.—Then I must inform you of another plague; that odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day, so that I protest, I shall be teased out of all spirits!

Jul. Come, come, Lydia, hope for the best:—Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

Lyd. But you have not heard the worst:—Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley, just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since, to make it up.

Jul. What was his offence?

Lyd. Nothing at all; but I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel; and, somehow, I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity; so, last Thursday, I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was, at that time, paying his addresses to another woman.—I signed it, 'Your friend unknown,' showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vowed I'd never see him more.

Jul. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

Lyd. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out; I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever.

Jul. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so. Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign—and you have thirty thousand pounds!

Lyd. But, you know, I lose most of my fortune, if I marry, without my aunt's consent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty; nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

Jul. Nay, this is caprice!

Lyd. What, does Julia tax me with caprice? I thought her lover Faulkland had injured her to it.

Jul. I do not love even his faults.

Lyd. But a-propos! you have sent to him, I suppose?

Jul. Not yet, upon my word! nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath:—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden I could not inform him of it.

Lyd. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress, though under the protection of Sir Anthony; yet

have you, for this long year, been a slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy, of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Jul. Nay, you are wrong entirely:—We were contracted before my father's death: That, and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish.—He is too generous to trifle on such a point;—and, for his character, you wrong him there too.—No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness. Unused to the fopperies of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover.—This temper, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardour of his attachment.

Lyd. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him; but, tell me candidly, Julia—had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are? Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

Jul. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet, surely, that alone were an obligation sufficient—

Lyd. Obligation! why, a water spaniel would have done as much! Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!—What's here?

Enter LUCY, in a hurry.

Lucy. O, Ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute, just come home with your aunt!

Lyd. They'll not come here:—Lucy, do you watch. *[Exit LUCY.]*

Jul. Yet I must go; Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me, as long as she chooses, with her select words, so ingeniously misapplied, without being mispronounced.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. O lud, Ma'am! they are both coming up stairs!

Lyd. Well, I'll not detain you.—Adieu, my dear Julia! I'm sure you are in haste to send to Faulkland.—There—through my room you'll find another staircase.

Jul. Adieu!

Lyd. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books.—Quick, quick.—Fling "Peregrine Pickle" under the toilet—throw "Roderick Random" into the closet—put "The Innocent Adultery" into "The Whole Duty of Man"—thrust "Lord Aimworth" under the sofa—cram "Ovid" behind the bolster—there—put "The Man of Feeling" into your pocket.—Now for them!

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. M. There, Sir Anthony, there sits the deliberate simpleton, who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

Lyd. Madam, I thought you once—

Mrs. M. You thought, Miss! I don't know any

business you have to think at all: thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is, that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, from your memory.

Lyd. Ah, Madam! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. M. But, I say, it is, Miss! there is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle, as if he had never existed; and I thought it my duty to do so; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

Sir A. Why, sure, she won't pretend to remember what she's ordered not! ay, this comes of her reading!

Lyd. What crime, Madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

Mrs. M. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof convertible of it: but, tell me, will you promise to do as you're bid? will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

Lyd. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that, had no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. M. What business have you, Miss, with preference and aversion? they don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that, as both always wear off, 'tis safest, in matrimony, to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor, dear uncle, before marriage, as if he'd been a black-a-moor; and yet, Miss, you are sensible what a wife I made? and when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed! But, suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

Lyd. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. M. Take yourself to your room; you are fit company for nothing but your own ill humours.

Lyd. Willingly, Ma'am; I cannot change for the worse. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. M. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

Sir A. It is not to be wondered at, Ma'am; all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library; she had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers; from that moment, I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

Mrs. M. Those are vile places, indeed!

Sir A. Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge?—It blossoms through the year! and depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. M. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony! you surely speak laconically.

Sir A. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. M. Observe me, Sir Anthony—I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman;—for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or

Paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning: nor would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments; but, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, Sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts; and, as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know; and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir A. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you; though I must confess, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question.—But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate,—you say you have no objection to my proposal?

Mrs. M. None, I assure you.—I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres; and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

Sir A. Well, Madam, I will write for the boy directly.—He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

Mrs. M. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

Sir A. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop: Jack knows, that the least demur puts me in a phrenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 'twas, "Jack do this,"—if he demurred, I knocked him down; and if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

Mrs. M. Ay, and the properest way, o'my conscience!—Nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations; and I hope you will represent her to the captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir A. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently. Well, I must leave you; and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl—take my advice, keep a tight hand—if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about.

[Exit SIR ANTHONY.]

Mrs. M. Well, at any rate, I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition. She has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Sure, Lucy can't have betrayed me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton, I should have made her confess it.—Lucy! Lucy! *[Calls.]* Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Did you call, Ma'am?

Mrs. M. Yes, girl.—Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No indeed, Ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. M. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned—

Lucy. O gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out!

Mrs. M. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on.

Lucy. No, Ma'am.

Mrs. M. So, come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius—but mind, Lucy, if ever you betray what you are intrusted with (unless it be other people's secrets to me,) you forfeit my malevolence for ever: and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality. *[Exit.]*

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! So, my dear simplicity, let me give you a little respite; *[Altering her manner.]* let girls, in my station, be as fond as they please of being expert and knowing in their trusts, commend me to a mask of silliness, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account have I turned my simplicity lately; *[Looks at a paper.]* For abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign! in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve—gowns, five; hats, ruffles, caps, &c. &c. numberless.—From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half.—About a quarter's pay!—Item, from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her—when I found matters were likely to be discovered,—two guineas and a black paduasoy.—Item, from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters—which I never delivered—two guineas and a pair of buckles.—Item, from Sir Lucius O' Trigger, three crowns, two gold pocket-pieces, and a silver snuff-box!—Well done, simplicity! yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe, that he was corresponding, not with the aunt, but with the niece; for, though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. *[Exit.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE'S Lodgings.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE and FAG.

Fag. Sir, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in; I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

Capt. A. And what did he say, on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life, I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished!

Capt. A. Well, Sir, and what did you say?

Fag. O, I lied, Sir—I forget the precise lie, but, you may depend on't, he got no truth from me.—Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what has brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently.—Sir Anthony's servants were curious, Sir, very curious indeed.

Capt. A. You have said nothing to them?—

Fag. Oh, not a word, Sir, not a word; Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)—

Capt. A. 'Sdeath!—you rascal! you have not trusted him?

Fag. Oh, no, Sir—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity!—He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was sly, Sir—devilish sly!—My master (said I) honest Thomas (you know, Sir, one says honest to one's inferiors) is come to Bath to recruit—yes, Sir—I said to recruit—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, Sir, is nothing to him, nor any one else.

Capt. A. Well—recruit will do—let it be so—

Fag. Oh, Sir, recruit will do surprisingly;—

indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas, that your honour had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen, seven minoritv waiters, and thirteen billiard markers.

Capt. A. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

Fag. I beg pardon, Sir—I beg pardon—But, with submission, a lie is nothing unless one supports it.—Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge indorsements as well as the bill.

Capt. A. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit by offering too much security. Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, Sir, changing his dress.

Capt. A. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miss Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, Sir; he has seen no one since he came in, but his gentleman, who was with him at Bristol.—I think, Sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down—

Capt. A. Go, tell him I am here.

Fag. Yes, Sir—*[Going.]* I beg pardon, Sir, but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember that we are recruiting, if you please.

Capt. A. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderness to my character, if your honour could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I shall esteem it as an obligation;—for, though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it hurts one's conscience to be found out. *[Exit.]*

Capt. A. Now for my whimsical friend:—If he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him—

Enter FAG.

Fag. Mr. Faulkland, Sir.

[Exit.]

Enter FAULKLAND.

Capt. A. Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again: you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me, when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? how stand matters between you and Lydia?

Capt. A. 'Faith, much as they were.

Faulk. Nay, then you trifle too long—if you are sure of her, propose to the aunt, in your own character, and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

Capt. A. Softly, softly, for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side.—Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

Faulk. Indeed, I cannot; I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

Capt. A. By heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man.

Faulk. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not, like mine, fixed immutably on one only object.—You throw for a large stake, but losing, you could stake and throw again; but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stripped of all.

Capt. A. But, for heaven's sake, what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present?

Faulk. What grounds for apprehension, did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand! I fear for her spirits—her health—her life—O! Jack, when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement in the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

Capt. A. Ay, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or not.—So then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia were well, and in spirits, you would be entirely content?

Faulk. I should be happy beyond measure—I am anxious only for that.

Capt. A. Then cure your anxiety at once—Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

Capt. A. She is arrived here with my father, within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be serious?

Capt. A. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously then, it is as I tell you—upon my honour.

Faulk. My dear Jack—now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.

Enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres, just arrived, is below.

Capt. A. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her.—Fag, show the gentleman up.

[Exit FAG.]

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Capt. A. Oh, very intimate: he is likewise a rival of mine—that is, of my other self's, for he does not think his friend, Captain Absolute, ever saw the lady in question;—and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of one Beverley, a concealed, skulking rival, who—

Faulk. Hush! He's here!

Enter ACRES.

Acres. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how dost thou? just arrived, 'faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant. Warm work on the roads, Jack—odds whips and wheels! I've travelled like a comet, with a tail of dust all the way, as long as the Mall.

Capt. A. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an eccentric planet, but we know your attraction hither—give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you: Sir, I solicit your connexions.—Hey, Jack—what, this is Mr. Faulkland, who—

Capt. A. Ay, Bob, Miss Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

Acres. Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man!

Faulk. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, Sir.—I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire?

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, Sir—never better.—Odds blushes and blooms! she has been as healthy as the German spa.

Faulk. Indeed!—I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

Acres. False, false, Sir—only said to vex you: quite the reverse, I assure you.

Faulk. There Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

Capt. A. Now you are angry with your mistress for not having been sick!

Faulk. No, no, you misunderstand me:—yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love.—Now confess—isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

Capt. A. Oh, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure!

Acres. Good apartments, Jack.

Faulk. Well, Sir, but you was saying that Miss Melville has been so exceedingly well—what then, she has been merry and gay, I suppose?—always in spirits, hey?

Acres. Merry! odds crickets! she has been the bell and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining! so full of wit and humour!

Faulk. By my soul! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome!—What! happy, and I away!

Capt. A. Just now, you were only apprehensive for your mistress' spirits.

Faulk. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company?

Capt. A. No, indeed, you have not.

Faulk. Have I been lively and entertaining?

Capt. A. Oh, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faulk. Have I been full of wit and humour?

Capt. A. No, 'faith, to do you justice, you have been confoundedly stupid, indeed.

Acres. What's the matter with the gentleman?

Capt. A. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

Faulk. Yes, yes, she has a happy disposition!

Acres. That she has, indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp, squallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—there was this time month—odds minims and crotchets! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert! [*Sings.*] *My heart's my own, my will is free.* That's very like her.

Faulk. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happiness on such a trifler! 'Sdeath! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to soothe her light heart with catches and glees!—What can you say to this, Sir?

Capt. A. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, Sir.

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—but she has been dancing too, I doubt not!

Acres. What does the gentleman say about dancing?

Capt. A. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

Acres. Ay, truly does she—there was at our last race ball—

Faulk. Hell and the devil! There! there—I told you so! I told you so! oh! she thrives in my absence!—Dancing!

Capt. A. For Heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't expose yourself so!—Suppose she has danced,

what then?—does not the ceremony of society often oblige—

Faulk. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as you say—for form sake.—I say, Mr.—Mr.—What's his damned name?

Capt. A. Acres, Acres.

Faulk. O ay, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a minuet—hey?

Acres. Oh, I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of, was her country dancing:—odds swimmings! she has such an air with her!—

Faulk. Now, disappointment on her!—defend this, Absolute! why don't you defend this?—country dances! jigs and reels! am I to blame now? a minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say, I should not have regarded a minuet—but country dances! Zounds! had she made one in a cotillion—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous, palming puppies!—to show paces, like a managed filly!—Oh, Jack, there never can be but one man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a country dance; and, even then, the rest of the couples should be her great uncles and aunts!

Capt. A. Ay, to be sure, grandfathers and grandmothers!

Faulk. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, it will spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain!—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded lobby has perceived it. [*Going.*]

Capt. A. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faulk. Damn his news. [*Exit.*]

Capt. A. Ha, ha, ha! poor Faulkland! five minutes since—"nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness!"

Acres. The gentleman wasn't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

Capt. A. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You don't say so! ha, ha! jealous of me!—that's a good joke!

Capt. A. There's nothing strange in that, Bob; let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

Acres. Ah! you joke—ha, ha! mischief—ha, ha! but you know I am not my own property! my dear Lydia has forestalled me.—She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but, odds frogs and tambours! I sha'n't take matters so here—now ancient Madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's master—I shall straightway cashier the hunting-frock, and render my leather breeches incapable—My hair has been in training some time.

Capt. A. Indeed!

Acres. Ay—and thoff the side curls are a little restive, my hind part takes it very kindly.

Capt. A. O., you'll polish, I doubt not.

Acres. Absolutely I propose so—then, if I can find out this ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Capt. A. Spoke like a man—but, pray, Bob, I

observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing—

Acres. Ha, ha! you've taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't it?—I didn't invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia, a great scholar, I assure you, says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable; because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, by Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the sentiment;—so that to swear with propriety says my little major, the "oath should be an echo to the sense;" and this we call the oath referential, or sentimental swearing—ha, ha, ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

Capt. A. Very genteel, and very new indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Ay, ay, the best terms will grow obsolete—Dammes have had their day.

Enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you—Shall I show him into the parlour?

Capt. A. Ay—you may.

Acres. Well, I must be gone—

Capt. A. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, Sir.

Capt. A. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly? [*Exit FAG.*]

Acres. You have business with Sir Anthony. I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop at my lodgings. I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Adieu, Jack, we must meet at night, when you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

Capt. A. That I will, with all my heart. [*Exit ACRES.*] Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here; I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter SIR ANTHONY.

Sir, I am delighted to see you here, and looking so well! your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

Sir A. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack. What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Capt. A. Yes, Sir, I am on duty.

Sir A. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it! for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business. Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

Capt. A. Pardon me, Sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty, and I pray fervently that you may continue so.

Sir A. I hope your prayers may be heard, with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time. Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

Capt. A. Sir, you are very good.

Sir A. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world. I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Capt. A. Sir, your kindness overpowers me. Yet, Sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

Sir A. Oh! that shall be as your wife chooses.

Capt. A. My wife, Sir!

Sir A. Ay, ay, settle that between you, settle that between you.

Capt. A. A wife, Sir, did you say?

Sir A. Ay, a wife: why, did not I mention her before?

Capt. A. Not a word of her, Sir.

Sir A. Odd so; I mustn't forget her, though. Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage; the fortune is saddled with a wife: but I suppose that makes no difference?

Capt. A. Sir, Sir! you amaze me!

Sir A. Why, what the devil's the matter with the fool? just now you were all gratitude and duty.

Capt. A. I was, Sir: you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir A. Why, what difference does that make?

Odds life, Sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

Capt. A. Pray, Sir, who is the lady?

Sir A. What's that to you, Sir? come, give me your promise to love, and to marry her directly.

Capt. A. Sure, Sir, that is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir A. I am sure, Sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to object to a lady you know nothing of.

Capt. A. You must excuse me, Sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir A. Harkye, Jack;—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool,—quite cool; but take care; you know I am compliance itself, when I am not thwarted; no one more easily led, when I have my own way; but don't put me in a frenzy.

Capt. A. Sir, I must repeat it; in this I cannot obey you.

Sir A. Now, damn me, if ever I call you Jack again while I live!

Capt. A. Nay, Sir, but hear me.

Sir A. Sir, I won't hear a word, not a word! not one word! so give me your promise by a nod, and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog—if you don't, by—

Capt. A. What, Sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness; to—

Sir A. Zounds! sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's museum; she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew.—She shall be all this, sirrah! yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night, to write sonnets on her beauty.

Capt. A. This is reason and moderation, indeed!

Sir A. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

Capt. A. Indeed, Sir, I never was in a worse humour for mirth in my life.

Sir A. 'Tis false, Sir; I know you are laughing in your sleeve; I know you'll grin when I am gone, sirrah!

Capt. A. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir A. None of your passion, Sir! none of your violence, if you please; it won't do with me, I promise you.

Capt. A. Indeed, Sir, I never was cooler in my life.

Sir A. 'Tis a confounded lie! I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog; but it won't do.

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Capt. A. Nay, Sir, upon my word—

Sir A. So you will fly out! can't you be cool, like me? what the devil good can passion do? passion is of no service, you impudent, insolent, overbearing reprobate! there, you sneer again! don't provoke me! but you rely upon the mildness of my temper, you do, you dog! you play upon the meekness of my disposition! yet, take care; the patience of a saint may be overcome at last! but mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do every thing on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you. If not, zounds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own: I'll strip you of your commission: I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest. I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and damn me! if ever I call you Jack again! [Exit.]

Capt. A. Mild, gentle, considerate father! I kiss your hands.

Enter Fag.

Fag. Assuredly, Sir, your father is wrath to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time—muttering, growling, and thumping the bannisters all the way; I, and the cook's dog, stand bowing at the door; rap, he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my master: then, kicking the poor turnspit into the area, damns us all for a puppy triumvirate! upon my credit, Sir, were I in your place, and found my father such bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

Capt. A. Cease your impertinence, Sir; did you come in for nothing more?—Stand out of the way.

[Pushes him aside, and exits.]

Fag, solus.

So! Sir Anthony trims my master; he is afraid to reply to his father, and vents his spleen on poor Fag! when one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another who happens to come in the way, shows the worst of tempers, the—

Enter ERRAND BOY.

Boy. Mr. Fag, Mr. Fag! your master calls you.

Fag. Well, you little dirty puppy, you needn't bawl so;—the meanest disposition, the—

Boy. Quick! quick, Mr. Fag.

Fag. Quick, quick! you impudent jackanapes! am I to be commanded by you too, you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen bred—

[Kicks him off.]

SCENE II.—The North Parade.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. So, I shall have another rival to add to my mistress' list; Captain Absolute:—however, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received due notice in form. Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his dear Delia, as he calls her: I wonder he's not here!—

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir L. Hah! my little ambassadress! upon my conscience I have been looking for you; I have been on the South parade this half hour.

Lucy. [Speaking simply.] O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

Sir L. 'Faith! may be that was the reason we

did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out, and I not see you, for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-house, and I chose the window, on purpose that I might not miss you.

Lucy. My stars! now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

Sir L. Sure enough it must have been so; and I never dream'd it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have; I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir L. I 'faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed; well, let me see what the dear creature says.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius.

[Gives him a letter.]

Sir L. [Reads.] *Sir—There is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination: such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Very pretty upon my word! Female punctuation forbids me to say more; yet let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections. Yours, while meretricious.*

DELIA.

Upon my conscience, Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language! 'faith, she's quite the queen of the dictionary!

Lucy. Ay, Sir, a lady of her experience.

Sir L. Experience! what, at seventeen?

Lucy. O, true, Sir; but then she reads so, my stars! how she will read off hand!

Sir L. 'Faith, she must be very deep read, to write this way; though she is rather an arbitrary writer, too—for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note, that would get their habeas corpus from any court in Christendom. However, when affection guides the pen, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

Lucy. Ah, Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

Sir L. Oh, tell her, I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain! but we must get the old gentlewoman's consent, and do every thing fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice!

Sir L. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it: I am so poor, that I can't afford to do a dirty action. If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure. However, my pretty girl, [Gives her money.] here's a little something to buy you a riband; and meet me in the evening, and I will give you an answer to this. So, hussy, take a kiss beforehand, to put you in mind. [Kisses her]

Lucy. O lud! Sir Lucius—I never seed such a gemman! my lady wont like you, if you're so impudent.

Sir L. 'Faith she will, Lucy; that same—pho; what's the name of it; modesty! is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked; so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her fifty, my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir L. Ah then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth presently.

Lucy. For shame now; here is some one coming.

Sir L. O faith, I'll quiet your conscience!

[Sees FAG; exit, humming a tune.]

Enter FAG.

Fag. So, so, Ma'am. I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. O lud!—now, Mr. Fag—you hurry one so!

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please—You play false with us, Madam—I saw you give the baronet a letter.—My master shall know this—and if he don't call him out—I will.

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty!—That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton.—She is taken with Sir Lucius' address.

Fag. How! what tastes some people have! Why, I suppose I have walked by her window a hundred times.—But what says our young lady?—any message to my master?

Lucy. Sad news, Mr. Fag! A worse rival than Acres! Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

Fag. What, Captain Absolute?

Lucy. Even so. I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha, ha, ha! very good, 'faith! Good bye, Lucy, I must away with this news.

Lucy. Well you may laugh, but it is true, I assure you. [Going.] But, Mr. Fag, tell your master not to be cast down by this.

Fag. Oh, he'll be so disconsolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

Fag. Never fear—never fear.

Lucy. Be sure bid him keep up his spirits.

Fag. We will—we will. [Exeunt severally.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The North Parade.

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Capt. A. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed!—Whimsical enough, 'faith! My father wants to force me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with! He must not know of my connexion with her yet awhile. He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters; however, I'll read my recantation instantly. My conversion is something sudden, indeed; but, I can assure him, it is very sincere—So, so, here he comes—he looks plaguy gruff! [Steps aside]

Enter SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Sir A. No—I'll die sooner than forgive him! Die, did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him. At our last meeting, his impudence had almost put me out of temper—An obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy! Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters! for putting him, at twelve years old, into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a year, besides his pay, ever since! But I have done with him—he's any body's son for me—I never will see him more—never—never—never—never.

Capt. A. Now for a penitential face! [Aside.]

Sir A. Fellow, get out of my way!

Capt. A. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

Sir A. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

Capt. A. A sincere penitent. I am come, Sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

Sir A. What's that?

Capt. A. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and considering on your past goodness, and kindness, and condescension to me.

Sir A. Well, Sir?

Capt. A. I have been likewise weighing and balancing, what you were pleased to mention concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir A. Well, puppy?

Capt. A. Why, then, Sir, the result of my reflections is, a resolution to sacrifice every inclination of my own to your satisfaction.

Sir A. Why, now you talk sense, absolute sense; I never heard any thing more sensible in my life. Confound you! you shall be Jack again.

Capt. A. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir A. Why then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented me telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare! What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

Capt. A. Languish! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire?

Sir A. Worcestershire! no. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop, and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment?

Capt. A. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet, stay, I think I do recollect something—Languish—Languish—She squints, don't she?—A little red-haired girl?

Sir A. Squints!—A red-haired girl! Zounds, no!

Capt. A. Then I must have forgot; it ca'n't be the same person.

Sir A. Jack, Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

Capt. A. As to that, Sir, I am quite indifferent; if I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

Sir A. Nay, but Jack, such eyes! such eyes, so innocently wild, so bashfully irresolute, not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks, Jack! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips! O, Jack, lips, smiling at their own discretion! and, if not smiling, more sweetly pouting—more lovely in sullenness! Then Jack, her neck! O, Jack, Jack!

Capt. A. And which is to be mine, Sir, the niece, or the aunt?

Sir A. Why, you unfeeling, insensible puppy, I despise you. When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket. The aunt, indeed! Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched any thing old or ugly, to gain an empire.

Capt. A. Not to please your father, Sir?

Sir A. To please my father—Zounds! not to please—O, my father—Oddso!—Yes, yes; if my father, indeed, had desired—that's quite another matter—Though he wasn't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Capt. A. I dare say not, Sir.

Sir A. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful!

Capt. A. Sir, I repeat it, if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, Sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more

graces of that kind—now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and, though one eye may be very agreeable, yet, as the prejudice has always run in favour of two, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

Sir A. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you are an anchorite! A vile, insensible stock! You a soldier! you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regiments on! Odds life, I've a great mind to marry the girl myself!

Capt. A. I am entirely at your disposal, Sir; if you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the aunt; or, if you should change your mind, and take the old lady,—'tis the same to me, I'll marry the niece.

Sir A. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite, or—but, come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie, I'm sure it must—come, now, damn your demure face, come, confess, Jack, you have been lying—ha'n't you? You have been playing the hypocrite, hey?—I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Capt. A. I'm sorry, Sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

Sir A. Hang your respect and duty! But come along with me, I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly. Her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back, stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, 'egad, I'll marry the girl myself. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—JULIA'S Dressing Room.

Enter FAULKLAND.

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly: I wonder she is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met!—How delicate was the warmth of her expressions!—I was ashamed to appear less happy, though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations: yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so very happy in my absence. She is coming—Yes, I know the nimbleness of her tread, when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter JULIA.

Jul. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome, restrained as we were, by the presence of a third person?

Jul. Oh, Faulkland! when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered something of coldness in your first salutation.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I was rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health: Sure I had no cause for coldness?

Jul. Nay, then, I see you have taken something ill: You must not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well, then, shall I own to you, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was somewhat damped, by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire; on your mirth—your sing

ing—dancing—and I know not what! For such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment, in your absence, as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear, that steals down the cheek of parting lovers, is a compact, that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

Jul. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing, minute caprice? Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh, in your breast, against my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: No, no, I am happy, if you have been so—yet only say that you did not sing with mirth,—say that you thought of Faulkland in the dance.

Jul. I never can be happy in your absence. If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you when I say, that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodness to me! Oh, I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

Jul. If ever, without such cause from you as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude!

Faulk. Ah, Julia! that last word is grating to me! I would I had no title to your gratitude! Search your heart, Julia: perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart!

Jul. For what quality must I love you?

Faulk. For no quality: To regard me for any quality of mind or understanding were only to esteem me! And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation there for any part of your affection.

Jul. Where nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it as misplaced. I have seen men, who in this vain article, perhaps, might rank above you; but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

Faulk. Now, this is not well from you, Julia: I despise person in a man, yet, if you loved me as I wish, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none so fair.

Jul. I see you are determined to be unkind—The contract, which my poor father bound us in, gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought or promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love.

Jul. Then try me now—Let us be free as strangers, as to what is past: My heart will not feel more liberty.

Faulk. There, now! so hasty, Julia! so anxious to be free! If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loose your bonds, even though I wished it!

Jul. Oh, you torture me to the heart! I cannot bear it!

Faulk. I do not mean to distress you: If I loved you less, I should never give you any uneasy moment. I would not boast, yet let me say, that I have neither age, person, or character, to found dislike on; my fortune such, as few ladies could be charged with indiscretion in the match. O,

Julia! when love receives such countenance from prudence, nice minds will be suspicious of its birth.

Jul. I know not whither your insinuations would tend; but, as they seem pressing to insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so—I have given you no cause for this!

[*Exit in tears.*]

Faulk. In tears? stay, Julia—stay but for a moment—The door is fastened!—Julia, my soul! but for one moment!—I hear her sobbing! 'Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus!—Yet stay—Ay, she is coming now: how little resolution there is in woman! how a few soft words can turn them!—No, zounds! she's not coming, nor don't intend it, I suppose! This is not steadiness, but obstinacy! Yet I deserve it. What, after so long an absence, to quarrel with her tenderness! 'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated, and when I distress her so again, may I lose her for ever!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—MRS. MALAPROP'S Lodgings.

MRS. MALAPROP, with a letter in her hand, and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. M. Your being Sir Anthony's son, captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation; but, from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

Capt. A. Permit me to say, Madam, that, as I never yet have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair, at present, is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop, of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

Mrs. M. Sir, you do me infinite honour! I beg, captain, you'll be seated. [*Sits.*] Ah! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineffetual qualities in a woman! few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman! Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower of beauty!

Capt. A. It is but too true, indeed, Ma'am; yet I fear our ladies should share the blame; they think our admiration of beauty so great, that knowledge, in them, would be superfluous. Thus, like garden trees, they seldom show fruit, till time has robbed them of the more specious blossom: few, like Mrs. Malaprop, and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once!

Mrs. M. Sir, you overpower me with good breeding.—He is the very pine-apple of politeness! You are not ignorant, captain, that this giddy girl has, somehow, contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eves-dropping ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows any thing of.

Capt. A. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before. I'm not at all prejudiced against her on that account, but it must be very distressing, indeed, Ma'am.

Mrs. M. Oh, it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree!—I thought she had persisted, from corresponding with him; but behold, this very day, I have interceded another letter from the fellow—I believe I have it in my pocket.

Capt. A. Oh, the devil! my last note! [*Aside.*]

Mrs. M. Ay, here it is.

Capt. A. Ay, my note, indeed! O, the little traitress, Lucy! [*Aside.*]

Mrs. M. There, perhaps you may know the writing.

[*Gives him the letter.*]

Capt. A. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I certainly must have seen this hand before.—

Mrs. M. Nay, but read it, captain.

Capt. A. [*Reads.*] *My soul's idol, my adored Lydia!*—Very tender, indeed!

Mrs. M. Tender! ay, and profane too, o'my conscience!

Capt. A. *I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival—*

Mrs. M. That's you, Sir.

Capt. A. *Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honour.*—Well, that's handsome enough.

Mrs. M. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so.

Capt. A. That he had, I'll answer for him, Ma'am.

Mrs. M. But go on, Sir—you'll see presently.

Capt. A. *As for the old weather-beaten she-dragon, who guards you—*Who can he mean by that?

Mrs. M. Me, Sir—me—he means me there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

Capt. A. Impudent scoundrel!—*it shall go hard but I will elude her vigilance; as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity, which makes her dress up her coarse features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand—*

Mrs. M. There, Sir, an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! was ever such a brute! Sure if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs.

Capt. A. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see—*same ridiculous vanity—*

Mrs. M. You need not read it again, Sir!

Capt. A. I beg pardon, Ma'am—*does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration—an impudent coxcomb—so that I have a scheme to see you shortly, with the old harriidan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews.*—Was ever such assurance!

Mrs. M. Did you ever hear any thing like it?—He'll elude my vigilance, will he?—yes, yes!—ha, ha! he's very likely to enter these doors!—we'll try who can plot best!

Capt. A. So we will, Ma'am—so we will.—Ha, ha, ha! a conceited puppy! ha, ha, ha!—Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape—while I, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. M. I am delighted with the scheme; never was any thing better perpetrated.

Capt. A. But pray, could I not see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. M. Why, I don't know—I doubt she is not prepared for a visit of this kind.—There is a decorum in these matters.

Capt. A. O Lord, she won't mind me!—only all her, Beverley—

Mrs. M. Sir?

Capt. A. Gently, good tongue!

Mrs. M. What did you say of Beverley?

Capt. A. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below—she'd come down fast enough then—ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves—besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha, ha!—Let him, if he can, I say again. Lydia, come down here! [*Calling.*] He'll make me a go-between in their interviews!—ha, ha, ha!—Come down, I say, Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing—ha, ha, ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Capt. A. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, Ma'am!—ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. The little hussy won't hear.—Well, I'll go and tell her at once how it is—she shall know that Captain Absolute is come to wait on her.—And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Capt. A. As you please, Ma'am.

Mrs. M. For the present, captain, your servant—Ah, you've not done laughing yet, I see—elude my vigilance! yes, yes—Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

Capt. A. Ha, ha, ha! one would think, now, that I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize with security—but such is Lydia's caprice, that, to undeceive, were probably to lose her. I'll see whether she knows me.

[*Walks aside, and seems engaged in looking at the pictures.*]

Enter LYDIA.

Lyd. What a scene am I now to go through! surely nothing can be more dreadful, than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart.—I have heard of girls persecuted, as I am, who have appealed, in behalf of their favoured lover, to the generosity of his rival: suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival—an officer too!—but, oh, how unlike my Beverley!—I wonder he don't begin—truly, he seems a very negligent wooer! quite at his ease, upon my word!—I'll speak first—Mr. Absolute!

Capt. A. Ma'am. [*Turns round.*]

Lyd. O heavens! Beverley!

Capt. A. Hush!—hush, my life!—softly! be not surprised!

Lyd. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed!—for heaven's sake, how came you here?

Capt. A. Briefly—I have deceived your aunt—I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and, contriving to have him kept away, have passed myself on her for Captain Absolute.

Lyd. Oh, charming!—And she really takes you for young Absolute?

Capt. A. Oh, she's convinced of it.

Lyd. Ha, ha, ha! I can't forbear laughing, to think how her sagacity is over-reached.

Capt. A. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur; then let me now conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserving persecution, and, with a licensed warmth, plead for reward.

Lyd. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth?—that ourden on the wings of love?

Capt. A. Oh, come to me—rich only thus; in loveliness! Bring no portion to me but thy love; 'twill be generous in you, Lydia; for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lyd. How persuasive are his words! how charming will poverty be with him!

Capt. A. By heavens, I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say, the world affords no smile to me but here.

[*Embracing her.*]

Lyd. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes—but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis.

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, listening.

Mrs. M. I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself.

[*Aside.*]

Capt. A. So pensive, Lydia! is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. M. Warmth abated?—so! she has been in a passion, I suppose.

Lyd. No—nor ever can, while I have life.

Mrs. M. An ill-tempered little devil! She'll be in a passion all her life, will she?

Lyd. Let her choice be Captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

Mrs. M. I am astonished at her assurance!—to his face; this to his face!

Capt. A. Thus, then, let me enforce my suit.

[*Kneeling.*]

Mrs. M. Ay—poor young man! down on his knees, entreating for pity! I can contain no longer. Why, thou vixen! I have overheard you.

Capt. A. Oh, confound her vigilance! [*Aside.*]
Mrs. M. Captain Absolute; I know not how to apologise for her shocking rudeness.

Capt. A. So; all's safe, I find. [*Aside.*] I have hopes, Madam, that time will bring the young lady—

Mrs. M. O, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

Lyd. Nay, Madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. M. Why, thou unblushing rebel, didn't you tell this gentleman to his face, that you loved another better? didn't you say you never would be his?

Lyd. No, Madam, I did not.

Mrs. M. Good heavens, what assurance! Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman! Didn't you boast that Beverley, that stroller, Beverley, possessed your heart? Tell me that, I say.

Lyd. 'Tis true, Ma'am; and none but Beverley—

Mrs. M. Hold! hold, assurance! you shall not be so rude.

Capt. A. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech: she's very welcome to talk thus, it does not hurt me in the least, I assure you.

Mrs. M. You are too good, captain—too amiably patient: but come with me, Miss; let us see you again soon, captain; remember what we have fixed.

Capt. A. I shall, Ma'am.

Mrs. M. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lyd. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bev—

Mrs. M. Hussy! Come along—come along.

[*Exeunt severally; CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE kissing his hand to LYDIA, MRS. MALAPROP stops her speaking.*]

SCENE IV.—ACRES' Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID *discovered*: ACRES *as just dressed.*

Acres. Indeed, David,—dress does make a difference, David.

David. 'Tis all in all, I think—difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: Master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, "Lard presarve me!" our dairy maid would come giggling to the door; and I warrant Dolly Tester, your honour's favourite, would blush like my waistcoat: Ooons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether Phillis would wag a hair of her tail.

Acres. Ay, David, there's nothing like polishing.

David. So I says of your honour's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

Acres. But, David, has Mr. De la Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chasing, and boring.

David. I'll call again, Sir.

Acres. Do, and see if there are any letters for me at the Post-office.

David. I will. By the mass, I can't help looking at your head! if I hadn't been at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself?

[*Exit. ACRES comes forward, practising a dancing step.*]

Acres. Sink, slide, coupée. Confound the first inventors of cotillions, say I! they are as bad as algebra, to us country gentlemen; I can walk a minuett easy enough, when I am forced! and I have been accounted a good stick in a country dance. Odds jigs and tabor! I never valued your cross-over two couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the country! but these outlandish heathen allemandes and cotillions are quite beyond me! I shall never prosper at them, that's sure, mine are true born English legs; they don't understand their cursed French lingo! their *pas* this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other!

Enter DAVID.

David. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, Sir.

Acres. Show him in.

[*Exit DAVID.*]

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir L. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

Sir L. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

Acres. 'Faith, I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last! In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as a very ill-used gentleman.

Sir L. Pray, what is the case? I ask no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius; I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady; her friends

take my part. I follow her to Bath, send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of. This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

Sir L. Very ill, upon my conscience! Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath. Odds slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

Sir L. A rival in the case, is there? and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

Acres. Unfairly! to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

Sir L. Then sure you know what is to be done!

Acres. Not I, upon my soul!

Sir L. We wear no swords here, but you understand me?

Acres. What! fight him?

Sir L. Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else? *Acres.* But he has given me no provocation.

Sir L. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another, than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

Acres. Breach of friendship? Ay, ay; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

Sir L. That's no argument at all—he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

Acres. 'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius! I fire apace; odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right on my side?

Sir L. What the devil signifies right, when your honour is concerned? do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad swords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching! I certainly do feel a kind of valour arising as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say—odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir L. Ah, my little friend! if I had Blunderbuss Hall here—I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the New Room; every one of whom had killed his man! For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank Heaven, our honour and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

Acres. Oh, Sir Lucius, I have bad ancestors too! every man of them colonel or captain in the militia, odd's balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it. The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast! Zounds! as the man in the play says, "I could do such deeds."

Sir L. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case; these things should always be done civilly.

Acres. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius; I must be in a rage. Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me.—Come, here's pen and paper. [*Sits down to write.*] I would the ink were red! Indite, I say, indite! How shall I begin?

Odd's bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand, however.

Sir L. Pray, compose yourself.

Acres. Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme.

Sir L. Pho, pho! do the thing decently, and like a Christian. Begin now—*Sir.*

Acres. That's too civil by half.

Sir L. To prevent the confusion that might arise—

Acres. Well.

Sir L. From our both addressing the same lady—

Acres. Ay—there's the reason—same lady—Well.

Sir L. I shall expect the favour of your company,—

Acres. Zounds! I'm not asking him to dinner?

Sir L. Pray, be easy.

Acres. Well, then, honour of your company,—

Sir L. To settle our pretensions,—

Acres. Well.

Sir L. Let me see; ay, King's-Mead-fields will do; in King's-Mead-fields.

Acres. So, that's done. Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest, a hand and dagger, shall be the seal.

Sir L. You see now, this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

Acres. Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

Sir L. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time. Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening, if you can; then, let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir L. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening. I would do myself the honour to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here who put a jest on me lately at the expense of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman, to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I should like to see you fight first! Odds life, I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson!

Sir L. I shall be very proud of instructing you. Well, for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do every thing in a mild and agreeable manner. Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished, as your sword. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—ACRES' Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID.

David. Then, by the mass, Sir, I would do no such thing! ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight, when I wa'n't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say, when she hears o't?

Acres. But my honour, David, my honour! I must be very careful of my honour.

David. Ay, by the mass! and I would be very careful of it, and I think in return my honour couldn't do less than to be very careful of me.

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honour!

David. I say, then, it would be but civil in honour never to risk the loss of a gentleman.

Lookye, master, this honour seems to me to be a marvellous false friend; ay, truly, a very courtier-like servant. Put the case, I was a gentleman (which, thank God, no one can say of me;) well—my honour makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance. So, we fight. (Pleasant enough that.) Boh! I kill him; (the more's my luck.) Now, pray, who gets the profit of it? why, my honour. But put the case that he kills me! by the mass! I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy.

Acres. No, David, in that case! Odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave!

David. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

Acres. Zounds! David, you are a coward! It doesn't become my valour to listen to you.—What, shall I disgrace my ancestors? think of that, David; think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

David. Under favour, the surest way of not disgracing them is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Lookye now, master, to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think it might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But, David, now, you don't think there is such very, very, very great danger, hey? Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done!

David. By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you. Ooons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his damned double-barrelled swords and cut-and-thrust pistols! Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to think o't; those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons! well, I never could abide them; from a child I never could fancy them! I suppose there an't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

Acres. Zounds! I wont be afraid; odds fire and fury! you sha'n't make me afraid. Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend, Jack Absolute, to carry it for me.

David. Ay, i'the name of mischief, let him be the messenger. For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the best horse in your stable. By the mass! it don't look like another letter! it is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter! and I warrant smells of gunpowder, like a soldier's pouch! Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon! you ha'n't the valour of a grasshopper.

David. Well, I say no more: 'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod Hall! but I ha' done. How Phillis will howl when she hears of it! ay, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after! and I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born!

[*Whimpering.*
Acres. It wont do, David, I am determined to fight; so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

David. Good bye, master. [*Whimpering.*
Acres. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven! [*Exit DAVID.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Capt. A. What s the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead! If I hadn't the valour of St. George, and the dragon to boot—

Capt. A. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. Oh!—there—

[*Gives him the challenge.*
Capt. A. To *Ensign Beverley*. So—what's going on now? [*Aside.*] Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Capt. A. Indeed! why, you wont fight him, will you, Bob?

Acres. 'Egad, but I will, Jack. Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage, and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

Capt. A. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

Capt. A. Well, give it me, and trust me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Capt. A. Not in the least—I beg you wont mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

Acres. You are very kind. What it is to have a friend! you couldn't be my second, could you, Jack?

Capt. A. Why no, Bob—not in this affair—it would not be quite so proper.

Acres. Well, then, I must get my friend Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

Capt. A. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

Capt. A. I'll come instantly. Well, my little hero, success attend you. [*Going.*

Acres. Stay, stay Jack. If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow, will you, Jack?

Capt. A. To be sure, I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog; hey, Bob?

Acres. Ay, do, do; and if that frightens him, 'egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

Capt. A. I will, I will; I'll say you are called, in the country, "Fighting Bob."

Acres. Right, right; 'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life, if I clear my honour.

Capt. A. No! that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wish me to kill him, do you, Jack?

Capt. A. No, upon my soul, I do not. But a devil of a fellow, hey?

[*Going.*
Acres. True, true; but stay, stay Jack; you may add, that you never saw me in such a rage before; a most devouring rage.

Capt. A. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

Capt. A. Ay, ay, "Fighting Bob."

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—MRS. MALAPROP'S Lodgings.

MRS. MALAPROP and LYDIA.

Mrs. M. Why, thou perverse one! tell me what you can object to him? Isn't he a handsome

man? tell me that. A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lyd. She little thinks whom she is praising! [*Aside.*] So is Beverley, Ma'am.

Mrs. M. No caparisons, Miss, if you please. Caparisons don't become a young woman. No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman.

Lyd. Ay, the Captain Absolute you have seen.

Mrs. M. Then he's so well bred; so full of alacrity and adulation! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play: "Hesperian curls—the front of Jot himself! an eye, like March, to threaten at command! a station, like Harry Mercury, new"—something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

Lyd. How enraged she'll be presently, when she discovers her mistake. [*Aside.*]

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, Ma'am.

Mrs. M. Show them up here. [*Exit SERVANT.*] Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman. Show your good breeding, at least, though you have forgot your duty.

Lyd. Madam, I have told you my resolution! I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to, or look at him.

[*Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door.*]

Enter SIR ANTHONY and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Sir A. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop; come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty, and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow: I don't know what's the matter, but if I had not held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

Mrs. M. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. I am ashamed for the cause! Lydia, Lydia, rise, I beseech you! pay your respects. [*Aside to her.*]

Sir A. I hope, Madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her aunt's choice, and my alliance. [*Aside to Mrs. M.*] Now, Jack, speak to her. [*Aside to the Captain.*]

Capt. A. What the devil shall I do? [*Aside.*] You see, Sir, she won't even look at me whilst you are here. I knew she wouldn't! I told you so. Let me entreat you, Sir, to leave us together! [*To his Father.*]

Lyd. [*Aside.*] I wonder I ha'n't heard my aunt exclaim yet! sure she can't have looked at him! perhaps their regimentals are alike, and she is something blind.

Sir A. I say, Sir, I won't stir a foot yet.

Mrs. M. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small. Turn round, Lydia, I blush for you! [*Aside to her.*]

Sir A. May I not flatter myself, that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son? why don't you begin, Jack? speak, you puppy, speak! [*Aside to him.*]

Mrs. M. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any. She will not say she has. Answer, hussy! why don't you answer? [*Aside to her.*]

Sir A. Then, Madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's

happiness. Zounds! sirrah! why don't you speak? [*Aside to him.*]

Capt. A. Hem, hem! Madam, hem! [*ABSOLUTE attempts to speak, then returns to SIR ANTHONY.*] 'Faith! Sir, I am so confounded! and so—so—confused! I told you I should be so, Sir, I knew it. The—the—tremor of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

Sir A. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it? go up, and speak to her directly! [*ABSOLUTE makes signs to MRS. MALAPROP to leave them together.*] What the devil are you at? unlock your jaws, sirrah, or— [*Aside to him.*]

Capt. A. [*Draws near LYDIA.*] Now Heaven send she may be too sullen to look round! I must disguise my voice. [*Aside. Speaks in a low, hoarse tone.*] Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? will not—

Sir A. What the devil ails the fellow? why don't you speak out? not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsy!

Capt. A. The—the—excess of my awe, and my—my—my modesty, quite choke me!

Sir A. Ah! your modesty again! I'll tell you what, Jack; if you don't speak out directly and glibly too, I shall be in such a rage! Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favour us with something more than a side-front.

[*MRS. MALAPROP seems to chide LYDIA.*]

Capt. A. So all will out, I see! [*Goes up to LYDIA, speaks softly.*] Be not surprised, my Lydia, suppress all surprise at present.

Lyd. [*Aside.*] Heavens! 'tis Beverley's voice! [*Looks round by degrees, and then starts up.*] Is this possible? my Beverley! how can this be! my Beverley?

Capt. A. Ah! 'tis all over! [*Aside.*]

Sir A. Beverley! the devil! Beverley! what can the girl mean? This is my son, Jack Absolute.

Mrs. M. For shame, hussy! for shame! your head runs so on that fellow, that you have him always in your eyes! beg Captain Absolute's pardon, directly.

Lyd. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley!

Sir A. Zounds, the girl's mad! her brain's turned by reading!

Mrs. M. O' my conscience, I believe so! what do you mean by Beverley, hussy? you saw Captain Absolute before to-day; there he is; your husband that shall be.

Lyd. With all my soul, Ma'am: when I refuse my Beverley—

Sir A. Oh, she's as mad as Bedlam! or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick! Come here, sirrah, who the devil are you?

Capt. A. 'Faith, Sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir A. Are you my son or not? answer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Capt. A. Ye powers of impudence, befriend me! [*Aside.*] Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sincerely believe myself to be yours also, I hope my duty has always shown. Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer, and shall be proud to add, affectionate nephew. I need not tell my Lydia, that she sees her faithful Beverley, who, knowing the singularity of her temper, assumed that name, and a station, which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lyd. So! there will be no elopement after all!

Sir A. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! to do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

Capt. A. Oh, you flatter me, Sir, you compliment: 'tis my modesty, you know, Sir; my modesty, that has stood in my way.

Sir A. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, insensible varlet you pretended to be, however! I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am—So this was your penitence, your duty, and obedience! I thought it was damned sudden—you never heard their names before, not you! what, the Languishes of Worcestershire, hey? if you could please me in this affair, 'twas all you desired! ah! you dissembling villain! what! [*Pointing to LYDIA.*] she squints, don't she! a little redhaired girl! hey? why, you hypocritical, young rascal, I wonder you a'n't ashamed to hold up your head!

Capt. A. 'Tis with difficulty, Sir—I am confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

Mrs. M. O lud! Sir Anthony! a new light breaks in upon me! hey! how! what! captain, did you write the letters then? what! am I to thank you for the elegant compilation of "an old weather-beaten she-dragon"—hey? O mercy! was it you that reflected on my parts of speech?

Capt. A. Dear Sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last, if you don't assist me. I shall certainly not be able to stand it.

Sir A. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive; odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden, that I could find in my heart to be so good-humoured! and so gallant! hey! Mrs. Malaprop! come, we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant! Jack, isn't the cheek as I said, hey? and the eye, you rogue! and the lip, hey? come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness; theirs is the time of life for happiness! [*Sings.*] *Youth's the season made for joy, hey! odd's life! I'm in such spirits, I don't know what I could not do! permit me, Ma'am.* [*Gives his hand to MRS. MALAPROP.* *Sings.*] *Tol de rol—Tol de rol! I should like to have a little fooling myself—Tol de rol! de rol!*

[*Exit singing, and handing MRS. MALAPROP.*]

LYDIA sits sullenly in the chair.

Capt. A. So much thought bodes me no good [*Aside.*] So grave, Lydia!

Lyd. Sir!

Capt. A. So! 'egad! I thought as much! that damned monosyllable has froze me! [*Aside.*] what, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our friends' consent as in our mutual vows—

Lyd. Friends' consent, indeed! [*Peevishly.*]

Capt. A. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance; a little wealth and comfort may be endured after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as—

Lyd. Lawyers! I hate lawyers!

Capt. A. Nay, then we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the license, and—

Lyd. The license! I hate license!

Capt. A. Oh, my love! be not so unkind; thus let me entreat— [*Kneeling.*]

Lyd. Pshaw! what signifies kneeling, when you know I must have you?

Capt. A. [*Rising.*] Nay, Madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise

you. If I have lost your heart, I resign the rest 'Gad, I must try what a little spirit will do.

[*Asiae.*]

Lyd. [*Rising.*] Then, Sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud. What, you have been treating me like a child! humouring my romance! and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

Capt. A. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear—

Lyd. So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them all—behold my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation, and I am myself the only dupe at last! [*Walking about in a heat.*] but here, Sir, here is the picture; Beverley's picture! [*Taking a miniature from her bosom.*] which I have worn, night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties! there, Sir, [*Flings it to him.*] and be assured, I throw the original from my heart as easily.

Capt. A. Nay, nay, Ma'am, we will not differ as to that—here, [*Taking out a picture.*] here is Miss Lydia Languish:—what a difference! ay, there is the heavenly assenting smile, that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes! those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar! and there the ardour of my blush, that would have checked the ardour of my thanks. Well, all that's past; all over, indeed! There, Madam; in beauty, that copy is not equal to you, but in my mind, its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I'll put it into my pocket. [*Puts it up again.*]

Lyd. [*Softening.*] 'Tis your own doing, Sir—I, I, I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

Capt. A. Oh, most certainly; sure now, this is much better than being in love! ha, ha, ha! there's some spirit in this! what signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises; all that's of no consequence, you know. To be sure, people will say, that Miss didn't know her own mind; but never mind that; or, perhaps, they may be ill-natured enough to hint, that the gentleman grew tired of the lady, and forsook her; but don't let that fret you.

Lyd. There's no bearing this insolence!

[*Bursts into tears.*]

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY.

Mrs. M. [*Entering.*] Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing awhile.

Lyd. This is worse than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate! [*Sobbing.*]

Sir A. What the devil's the matter now! Zounds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the oddest billing and cooing I ever heard!—but what the deuce is the meaning of it?—I'm quite astonished!

Capt. A. Ask the lady, Sir.

Mrs. M. Oh, mercy! I'm quite analysed, for my part! why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

Lyd. Ask the gentleman, Ma'am.

Sir A. Zounds! I shall be in a frenzy! why, Jack, you are not come out to be any one else, are you?

Mrs. M. Ay, Sir, there's no more trick, is there? you are not, like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once, are you?

Capt. A. You'll not let me speak; I say the lady can account for this much better than I can.

Lydia. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again—there is the man; I now obey you: for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever. [*Exit* LYDIA.]

Mrs. M. O mercy and miracles! what a turn here is! Why sure, captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha!—ha, ha, ha! now I see it. Ha, ha, ha! now I see it; you have been too lively, Jack.

Capt. A. Nay, Sir, upon my word—

Sir A. Come, no lying, Jack, I'm sure 'twas so. Come, no excuses, Jack; why your father, your rogue, was so before you: the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.

Capt. A. By all that's good, Sir—

Sir A. Zounds! say no more, I tell you; Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace. You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop: you must tell her, 'tis Jack's way; tell her, 'tis all our ways: it runs in the blood of our family! Come away, Jack, ha, ha, ha! Mrs. Malaprop, a young villain!

[*Pushes him out.*]

Mrs. M. Oh, Sir Anthony! O, fie, captain!

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE III.—The North Parade.

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir L. I wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself. Upon my conscience, these officers are always in one's way in love affairs: I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get sight of me! And I wonder what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them; unless it be a touch of the old serpent in them, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth. Ha, isn't this the captain coming? 'faith, it is! There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! who the devil is he talking to? [*Steps aside.*]

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Capt. A. To what fine purpose have I been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul! a little gipsy! I did not think her so damned absurd either. 'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humour in all my life! I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

Sir L. O, 'faith! I'm in the luck of it. I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose; to be sure I'm just come in the nick! now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly. [*Sir Lucius goes to* ABSOLUTE.] With regard to that matter, captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Capt. A. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant: because, Sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir L. That's no reason; for give me leave to tell you, a man may think an untruth as well as speak one.

Capt. A. Very true, Sir; but if a man never utters his thoughts, I should think they might stand a chance of escaping controversy.

Sir L. Then, Sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

Capt. A. Harkye, Sir Lucius, what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir L. I humbly thank you, Sir, for the quickness of your apprehension; [*Bowing.*] you have named the very thing I would be at.

Capt. A. Very well, Sir, I shall certainly not baulk your inclinations; but I should be glad you would please to examine your motives.

Sir L. Pray, Sir, be easy, the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel, as it stands; we should only spoil it by trying to explain it. However, your memory is very short; or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week. So, no more, but name your time and place.

Capt. A. Well, Sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better; let it be this evening, here by the Spring Gardens. We shall scarcely be interrupted.

Sir L. 'Faith! that same interruption, in affairs of this nature, shows very great ill-breeding. I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness. However, if it's the same to you, captain, I should take it as a particular kindness, if you'd let us meet in King's-Mead-fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may dispatch both matters at once.

Capt. A. 'Tis the same to me exactly. A little after six, then, we will discuss this matter more seriously.

Sir L. If you please, Sir; there will be a very pretty small-sword light, though it wont do for a long shot. So, that matter's settled; and my mind's at ease. [*Exit.*]

Enter FAULKLAND, meeting CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Capt. A. Well met. I was going to look for you. Oh, Faulkland! all the demons of spite and disappointment have conspired against me! I'm so vexed, that if I had not the prospect of a resource, in being knocked o' the head by and by, I should scarce have spirits to tell you the cause.

Faulk. What can you mean? Has Lydia changed her mind? I should have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the same object.

Capt. A. Ay, just as the eyes do of a person who squints: when her love-eye was fixed on me, t'other, her eye of duty, was finely obliqued; but, when duty bid her point that the same way, off t'other turned on a swivel, and secured its retreat with a frown!

Faulk. But what's the resource you—

Capt. A. Oh, to wind up the whole, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, you know him by sight, for some affront, which I am sure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at six o'clock: 'tis on that account I wish to see you, you must go with me.

Faulk. Nay, there must be some mistake, sure. Sir Lucius shall explain himself, and I dare say matters may be accommodated: but this evening, did you say? I wish it had been any other time.

Capt. A. Why? there will be light enough: there will (as Sir Lucius says) "be very pretty small-sword light, though it will not do for a long shot!" Confound his long shots.

Faulk. But I am myself a good deal ruffled, by a difference I have had with Julia. My vile, tormenting temper has made me treat her so cruelly that I shall not be myself till we are reconciled.

Capt. A. By Heavens, Faulkland, you don't deserve her!

Enter Servant; gives FAULKLAND a letter.

Faulk. O, Jack! this is from Julia; I dread to open it.

Capt. A. Here, let me see. [*Takes the letter and opens it.*] Ay, a final sentence, indeed! 'tis all over with you, 'faith!

Faulk. Nay, Jack, don't keep me in suspense.

Capt. A. Hear then. [*Reads.*]

As I am convinced, that my dear Faulkland's own reflections have already upbraided him for his last unkindness to me, I will not add a word on the subject. I wish to speak with you, as soon as possible. Yours, ever and truly, JULIA. There's stubbornness and resentment for you! [Gives him the letter.] Why, man, you don't seem one whit the happier at this!

Faulk. Oh, yes, I am—but—but—

Capt. A. Confound your buts! You never hear any thing that would make another man bless himself, but you immediately damn it, with a but!

Faulk. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honestly—don't you think there is something forward, something indelicate, in this haste to forgive? Women should never sue for reconciliation; that should always come from us: They should retain their coldness till wooed to kindness; and their pardon, like their love, should "Not unsought, be won."

Capt. A. I have not patience to listen to you—thou'rt incorrigible! so say no more on the subject. I must go to settle a few matters; let me see you before six, remember, at my lodgings. A poor industrious devil, like me, who have toiled, and drudged, and plotted to gain my ends, and am, at last, disappointed by other people's folly, may, in pity, be allowed to swear and grumble a little! but a captious sceptic in love; a slave to fretfulness and whim, who has no difficulties but of his own creating, is a subject more fit for ridicule than compassion!

Faulk. I feel his reproaches; yet I would not change this too exquisite nicety, for the gross content with which he tramples on the thorns of love. His engaging me in this duel has started an idea in my head, which I will instantly pursue: I'll use it as the touchstone of Julia's sincerity and disinterestedness; if her love prove pure and sterling ore, my name will rest on it with honour; and, once I've stamped it there, I'll lay aside my doubts for ever!

ACT V.

SCENE I.—JULIA'S Dressing-Room.

JULIA.

Jul. How this message has alarmed me! what dreadful accident can he mean? why such charge to be alone? O Faulkland! how many unhappy moments, how many tears, have you cost me!

Enter FAULKLAND.

What means this? why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas, Julia! I am come to take a long farewell!

Jul. Heavens! what do you mean?

Faulk. You see before you a wretch whose life is forfeited. Nay, start not; the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me: I left you, fretful and passionate,—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel; the event is, that I

must fly this kingdom instantly! Oh, Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely, before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment.

Jul. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the nature of your misfortune: had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought, that I could now chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love. My heart has long known no other guardian: I now entrust my person to your honour,—we will fly together: when safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled, and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows, and tenderest comforter.

Faulk. O Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude! Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you besides his solitary love?

Jul. I ask not a moment. No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself: and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves us no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love. But let us not linger, perhaps this delay—

Faulk. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark: yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition!

Jul. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act? I know not whether 'tis so, but sure that alone can never make us unhappy. The little I have will be sufficient to support us, and exile never should be splendid.

Faulk. Ay, but in such an abject state of life my wounded pride, perhaps, may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude, morose companion, beyond your patience to endure.

Jul. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you, one who, by bearing your infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device, I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

Jul. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

Faulk. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended. Let me to-morrow, in the face of Heaven, receive my future guide and mistress, and expiate my past folly, by years of tender adoration.

Jul. Hold, Faulkland! that you are free from a crime, which I before feared to name, Heaven knows, how sincerely I rejoice! These are tears of thankfulness for that! But, that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express!

Faulk. By Heavens! Julia.

Jul. Yet hear me. My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me! in his presence I pledged my hand; joyfully pledged it, where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that

parent, it seemed to me, that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer, without a pause, my grateful duty as well as my affection: Hence I have been content to bear from you, what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity.

Faulk. I confess it all! yet, hear—

Jul. After such a year of trial, I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel as unnecessary! I now see that it is not in your nature to be content, or confident, in love. With this conviction I never will be yours.

Faulk. Nay, but, Julia, by my soul and honour! If, after this—

Jul. But one word more. As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another. I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity; and the dearest blessing I can ask of Heaven to send you, will be, to charm you from that unhappy temper, which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement. All I request of you is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity; and, when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your least regret, that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world! *[Exit.]*

Faulk. She's gone! for ever! There was an awful resolution in her manner, that rivetted me to my place. O fool! dolt! barbarian! Cursed as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side! I must now haste to my appointment. Well, my mind is tuned for such a scene! I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here. O love! tormentor! fiend! whose influence, like the moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! *[Exit.]*

Enter MAID and LYDIA.

Maid. My mistress, Ma'am, I know, was here just now—perhaps she is only in the next room.

Lyd. Heigho! Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him.

Enter JULIA.

Oh, Julia, I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation! Lud, child! what's the matter with you? You have been crying! I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you!

Jul. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness;—Something has flurried me a little. Nothing that you can guess at. I would not accuse Faulkland to a sister. *[Aside.]*

Lyd. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them. You know who Beverley proves to be?

Jul. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair.

Lyd. So, then, I see I have been deceived by every one! but I don't care, I'll never have him.

Jul. Nay, Lydia—

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Lyd. Why, is it not provoking, when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last?—There had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements!—so becoming a disguise!—so amiable a ladder of ropes!—Conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop! and such paragraphs in the newspapers!—Oh! I shall die with disappointment!

Jul. I don't wonder at it.

Lyd. Now, sad reverse!—what have I to expect, but, after a deal of flimsy preparation, with a bishop's license, and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar; or, perhaps, he cried three times in a country church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish, to join John Absolute, and Lydia Languish, spinster!—Oh, that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

Jul. Melancholy, indeed!

Lyd. How mortifying to remember the dear delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow!—How often have I stole forth, in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden stuck like a dripping statue!—There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough so pathetically!—he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension!—and while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love!

Jul. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I should chide you only by laughing heartily at you, but it suits more the situation of my mind at present earnestly to entreat you, not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your caprice, which I too well know caprice can inflict.

Lyd. Oh, Lud! what has brought my aunt here?

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and DAVID.

Mrs. M. So, so! here's fine work!—here's fine suicide, parricide, and simulation, going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

Jul. For Heaven's sake, Madam, what's the meaning of this?

Lyd. Oh, patience!—Do, Ma'am, for Heaven's sake! tell us what is the matter!

Mrs. M. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter!—but he can tell you the perpendiculars.

Jul. Do speak, friend.

[To DAVID.]

David. Lookye, my lady—by the mass, there's mischief going on. Folks don't use to meet for amusement with fire arms, firelocks, fire engines, fire screens, fire offices, and the devil knows what other crackers beside!—This, my lady, I say, has an angry favour.—To be sure, Captain Absolute—

Jul. But who is engaged?

David. My poor master—under favour for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master of course is, or was, 'squire Acres—and Captain Absolute.—Then comes 'squire Faulkland.

Jul. Do, Ma'am, let us instantly endeavour to prevent mischief.

Mrs. M. Oh, fie! it would look very inelegant in us—we should only participate things.

Lyd. Do, my dear aunt, let us hasten to prevent them.

David. Ah, do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives!—they are desperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that blood-thirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger!—O mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape!—Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire putrifactions!

Lyd. What are we to do, Madam?

Mrs. M. Why, fly, with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief!—here, friend—you can show us the place? Come, Sir, lead the way, and we'll precede.

David. Oh, never fear; and one good thing is, we shall find it out by the report of the pistols.

All Ladies. The pistols!—Oh, let us fly.

[*Exeunt, DAVID talking.*]

SCENE II.—King's-Meadow-fields.

SIR LUCIUS and ACRES, with Pistols.

Acres. By my valour, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance—Odds levels and aims! I say, it is a good distance.

Sir L. It is, for muskets or small field-pieces; upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave these things to me. Stay, now—I'll show you. [*Measures paces along the Stage.*] There, now, that is a very pretty distance, a pretty gentleman's distance.

Acres. Zounds! we might as well fight in a sentrybox! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off, the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir L. 'Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, but I should think forty, or eight and thirty yards—

Sir L. Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no! by my valour there is no merit in killing him so near! Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot: a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me!

Sir L. Well—the gentleman's friend and I must settle that. But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius, but I don't understand—

Sir L. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk; and, if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say, it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A quietus!

Sir L. For instance, now, if that should be the case, would you choose to be pickled, and sent home? or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey? I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey?

Acres. Pickled! snug lying in the Abbey! Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

Sir L. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you were never engaged in an affair of this kind before.

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir L. Ah, that's a pity! there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray, now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

Acres. Odds files! I've practised that:—there,

Sir Lucius, there [*Puts himself in an attitude, a side-front, hey? Odd, I'll make myself small enough, I'll stand edgeways.*]

Sir L. Now, you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim— [*Levelling at him.*]

Acres. Zounds, Sir Lucius! are you sure it is not cocked?

Sir L. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

Sir L. Pho! be easy. Well, now, if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance—for if it misses a vital part of your right side, 'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left.

Acres. A vital part!

Sir L. But, there—fix yourself so— [*Placing him.*] let me see the broadside of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do you any harm at all.

Acres. Clean through me! a ball or two clean through me!

Sir L. Ay, and it is much the genteelst attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Lookye! Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one—so, by my valour! I will stand edgeways.

Sir L. [*Looking at his Watch.*] Sure, they don't mean to disappoint us—ha! no, 'faith—I think I see them coming.

Acres. Hey! what! coming!

Sir L. Ay, who are those yonder, getting over the stile?

Acres. There are two of them indeed! well—let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we—we—we we—wont run.

Sir L. Run!

Acres. No, I say—we wont run, by my valour!

Sir L. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing, nothing, my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow, as I did.

Sir L. O fie! consider your honour.

Acres. Ay, true—my honour—do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two every now and then, about my honour.

Sir L. Well, here they're coming. [*Looking.*]

Acres. Sir Lucius, if I wasn't with you I should almost think I was afraid: if my valour should leave me! valour will come and go.

Sir L. Then pray keep it fast while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius, I doubt it is going; yes, my valour is certainly going; it is sneaking off! I feel it oozing out, as it were, at the palms of my hands!

Sir L. Your honour, your honour. Here they are.

Acres. Oh, that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Sir L. Gentlemen, your most obedient; ha! what, Captain Absolute! so, I suppose, Sir, you are come here, just like myself, to do a kind office, first for your friend, then to proceed to business on your own account?

Acres. What, Jack! my dear Jack! my dear friend!

Capt. A. Harkye, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir L. Well, Mr. Acres, I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly. So, Mr. Beverley [*To FAULKLAND.*] if you choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, Sir!

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends!

Sir L. What, Sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, Sir.

Sir L. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! but I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game, you wont be so cantankerous as to spoil the party, by sitting out.

Capt. A. Oh, pray, Faulkland, fight, to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter.

Acres. No, no, Mr. Faulkland, I'll bear my disappointment like a christian: lookye, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir L. Observe me, Mr. Acres; I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him, I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres. Why, no, Sir Lucius, I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged; a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face: if he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!

Capt. A. Hold, Bob, let me set you right: there is no such man as Beverley in the case. The person who assumed that name is before you: and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir L. Well, this is lucky. Now you have an opportunity——

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend, Jack Absolute! I not if he were fifty Beverleys! Zounds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me be so unnatural!

Sir L. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valour has oozed away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the least; odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart, and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss-hall, or any thing of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

Sir L. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward; coward was the word, by my valour!

Sir L. Well, Sir?

Acres. Lookye, Sir Lucius, 't isn't that I mind the word coward; coward may be said in joke; but if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls——

Sir L. Well, Sir?

Acres. I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir L. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Capt. A. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres. He is a most determined dog; called, in the country, fighting Bob: He generally kills a man a week; don't you, Bob?

Acres. Ay,—at home.

Sir L. Well, then, captain, 'tis we must begin; so come out, my little counsellor, [*Draws his sword.*] and ask the gentleman, whether he will

resign the lady without forcing you to proceed against him?

Capt. A. Come then, Sir, [*Draws.*] since you wont let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

Enter SIR ANTHONY, DAVID, and the Ladies.

David. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular; and bind his hands over to their good behaviour.

Sir A. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy; how came you in a duel, Sir?

Capt. A. 'Faith, Sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, Sir, I serve his majesty.

Sir A. Here's a pretty fellow! I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his majesty! zounds; sirrah, then how durst you draw the king's sword against one of his subjects?

Capt. A. Sir, I tell you, that gentleman called me out, without explaining his reasons.

Sir A. 'Gad, Sir, how came you to call my son out, without explaining your reasons?

Sir L. Your son, Sir, insulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir A. Zounds, Jack! how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs. M. Come, come, let's have no honour before ladies. Captain Absolute, come here; how could you intimidate us so? here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Capt. A. For fear I should be killed, or escape, Ma'am?

Mrs. M. Nay, no delusions to the past, Lydia is convinced: speak, child.

Sir L. With your leave, Ma'am, I must put in a word here; I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence—Now mark——

Lyd. What is it you mean, Sir?

Sir L. Come, come, Delia, we must be serious now; this is no time for trifling.

Lyd. 'Tis true, Sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

Capt. A. Oh, my little angel, say you so? Sir Lucius, I perceive there must be some mistake here:—with regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you, I can only say that it could not have been intentional. And as you must be convinced, that I should not fear to support a real injury, you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency; I ask your pardon. But for this lady, while honoured with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

Sir L. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim; I make no pretensions to any thing in the world: and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir L. Captain, give me your hand: an affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation; and as for the lady, if she chooses to deny her own hand-writing here—— [*Takes out letters.*]

Mrs. M. Oh, he will dissolve my mystery! [*Aside.*] Sir Lucius, perhaps there is some mistake, perhaps I can illuminate——

Sir L. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no business. Miss Languish, are you my Delia, or not?

Lyd. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.

[*LYDIA and ABSOLUTE walk aside.*]

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger, ungrateful as you are, I own the soft impeachment; pardon my camelion blushes, I am Delia.

Sir L. You Delia? pho, pho, be easy.

Mrs. M. Why thou barbarous Vandyke, those letters are mine. When you are more sensible of my benignity, perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

Sir L. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension; and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you.—And, to show you I am not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

Capt. A. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's my friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir L. Ha! little valour—here, will you make your fortune?

Acres. Odds wrinkles! No.—But give me your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

Sir A. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. M. O Sir Anthony;—men are all barbarians!

[*All retire but JULIA and FAULKLAND.*]

Jul. He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen:—there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me—O woman! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

Faulk. Julia!—how can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet hope is the child of penitence.

Jul. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours.

[*SIR ANTHONY comes forward.*]

Sir A. What's going on here? So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant.—Come, Julia,

I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at last. All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland, seemed to proceed from what he calls the delicacy and warmth of his affection for you. There, marry him directly, Julia; you'll find he'll mend surprisingly.

[*The rest come forward.*]

Sir L. Come, now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better—

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius. So, Jack, I wish you joy.—Mr. Faulkland, the same. Ladies,—come now, to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour, to the New Rooms—and I insist on your all meeting me there.

Sir A. 'Gad! Sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a good husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope, to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine for having, by her gentleness and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

Capt. A. True, Faulkland, we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets of love; with this difference only, that you always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I—

Lyd. Was always obliged to me for it, hey! Mr. Modesty! But come, no more of that; our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

Jul. Then let us study to preserve it so: and while hope pictures to us a flattering scene of happiness, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright to be lasting. When hearts diffusing happiness would unite their fortunes, virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends most when its leaves are dropped!

THE DEUCE IS IN HIM:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

REMARKS.

A PARTIAL hint for this piece, was suggested, to the elegant writer, by the episode of Lindor, in Marmontel's tales; and the part relative to Mademoiselle Florival, from a story in the British Magazine.

A delicate vein of satire on the absurdities of Platonic love, runs through this laughable and well-written farce, which originally met with great and deserved success.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.	HAY-MARKET.
COLONEL TAMPER,.....	Mr. Palmer.....	Mr. Palmer.
PRATTLE,.....	Mr. Baddeley.....	Mr. Baddeley.
MAJOR BELFORD,.....	Mr. Whitfield.....	Mr. Evans.
EMILY,.....	Mrs. Goodall.....	Mrs. Goodall.
BELL,.....	Miss Collins.....	Mrs. Taylor.
MADMOISELLE FLORIVAL,.....	Miss Heard.....	Mrs. Heard.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in EMILY'S House.

Enter EMILY with a letter open in her hand—and MADMOISELLE FLORIVAL in man's clothes.

Em. Be assured, that I will do every thing in my power to serve you; my brother knew that he might command my service—Be comforted, I beseech you, Madam.

Flo. You cannot wonder, Madam, that I should be shocked, extremely shocked, at the cruel necessity of appearing before you in so indelicate a disguise.

Em. Indeed, you need not: there is something in your manner, which convinces me, that every action of your life carries its apology along with it; though I will not venture to inquire into the particulars of your story till your mind is more at ease.

Flo. Alas, Madam, it is my interest to make you acquainted with my story. I am the daughter of Monsieur Florival, a French physician, in the island of Belleisle. An English officer, who had been desperately wounded, was, after the capitulation, for the sake of due attendance, taken into my father's house; and as I, in the very early part of my life, had resided in England, he took some pleasure in my conversation. In a word, he won my affections, and asked me of my father in mar-

riage: but he, alas! too much influenced by the narrow prejudices so common between the two nations, forbade the officer his house, but not before we were, by the most solemn engagements, secretly contracted to each other.

Em. May I ask the officer's name?

Flo. Excuse me, Madam. Till I see or hear from him once more, my prudence, vanity, or call it what you will, will scarce suffer me to mention it. Your brother, indeed, is acquainted with—

Em. I beg your pardon—I hope, however, you have no reason to think yourself neglected or forgotten!

Flo. Oh, no; far from it. He was soon recalled by orders from England: and on my father's pressing me to consent to another match, my passion—I blush to own it—transported me so far, as to depart abruptly from Belleisle. I came over in an English ship to Portsmouth, where I expected according to letters he had contrived to send me, to find the officer. But, judge of my disappointment, when I learned that he embarked but three days before for the siege of the Havannah.

Em. The Havannah! You touch me nearly—pray go on.

Flo. In a strange kingdom—alone—and a woman—what could I do? In order to defeat inquiries after me, I disguised myself in this habit; and mixed with the officers of the place; but your

brother soon discovered my uneasiness, and saw through my disguise. I frankly confessed to him every particular of my story: in consequence of which, he has thus generously recommended me to your protection.

Em. And you may depend on my friendship.
—Your situation affects me strangely.

Flo. Oh, Madam, it is impossible to tell you half its miseries; especially since your brother has convinced me, that I am so liable to be discovered.

Em. You shall throw off that dress as soon as possible, and then I will take you into the house with me and my sister—In the meantime, let me see you every day—every hour. I shall not be afraid that your visits will affect my reputation.

Flo. You are too good to me. [*Weeping.*]

Em. Nay, this is too much; it overcomes me. Pray, be cheerful.

Flo. I humbly take my leave.

Em. Adieu. I shall expect you to dinner.

Flo. I shall do myself the honour of waiting on you. [*Exit.*]

Em. Poor woman! I thought my uneasiness almost insupportable; and yet, how much must her anxiety exceed mine!

Enter BELL.

Bell. So, sister! I met your fine gentleman. Upon my word, the young spark must be a favourite.—You have had a *tête-à-tête* of above half an hour together.

Em. How d'ye like him.

Bell. Not at all: a soft lady-like gentleman, with a white hand, a mincing step, and a smooth chin. Where does this pretty master come from?

Em. From my brother.

Bell. Who is he?

Em. A present to you.

Bell. A present to me! what d'ye mean?

Em. Why, did not my brother promise to take care of you before he went abroad?

Bell. Well, and what then?

Em. What then! Why, he has taken care of you—sent you a pretty fellow for a husband—Could he possibly take better care of you?

Bell. A husband!—a puppet, a doll, a—

Em. A soldier, Bell!—a red coat, consider.

Bell. A fine soldier indeed!—I can't bear to see a red coat cover any thing but a man, sister.—Give me a soldier that looks as if he could love me and protect me; ay, and tame me too, if I deserved it. If I was to have this thing for a husband, I would set him at the top of my India cabinet with the China figures, and bid the maid take care she did not break him.

Em. Well, well; if this is not the case, I don't know what my brother will say to you. Here's his letter; read it, and send him an answer yourself.

Bell. [*Reads.*] *Dear sister,*—*The bearer of this letter is—a lady!*—So, so! your servant, Madam!—and yours too, sister!—*whose case is truly compassionate, and whom I most earnestly recommend to your protection.*—Um—um—um—*take care of her*—Um—um—um—*not too many questions*—Um—um—um—*in town in a few days.*—I'll be whipped, now, if this is not some mistress of his.

Em. No, no, Bell, I know her whole history,—It is quite a little novel. She is a Frenchwoman, Mademoiselle Florival, run away from her father

at Belleisle, and dying for an English gentleman at the Havannah.

Bell. The Havannah!—Not for Colonel Tamper, I hope, sister.

Em. If Colonel Tamper had been at the taking of Belleisle too, I should have been frightened out of my wits about it.

Bell. Suppose I should bring you some news of him.

Em. Of whom?

Bell. Colonel Tamper.

Em. What do you mean?

Bell. Only a card.

Em. A card!—From whom? What card?

Bell. Oh, what a delightful flutter it puts her into!

Em. Nay, but tell me.

Bell. Well then—while your visitor was here, there came a card from Major Belford; and I took the liberty of sending an answer to it.

Em. Let me see it! Dear Bell, let me see it!

Bell. Oh, it was nothing but his compliments, and desiring to have the honour of waiting on you any time this morning, from Colonel Tamper.

Em. From Colonel Tamper!—What can this mean?—I am ready to sink with fear—Why does he not come himself?

Bell. He's not arrived—nor come to town yet, I suppose.

Em. Oh, Bell! I could suppose twenty things that terrify me to death.

Bell. I think now, such a message ought to put you quite out of your pain: he could not come from Colonel Tamper, if there was no such person in being.

Em. Ay, but suppose any accident should have happened to him! Heaven forbid! How unfortunate it is to dote upon a man, whose profession exposes him hourly to the risk of his life!

Bell. Lord, Emily, how can you torment yourself with such horrid examinations? Besides, should the worst come to the worst—it is but a lover lost; and that is a loss easily repaired, you know.

Em. Go, you mad-cap! but you'll pay for all this one day, I warrant you. When you come to be heartily in for it yourself, Bell, you will know, that when a pure and disinterested passion fills the breast, when once a woman has set her heart upon a man, nothing in the world but that very man will ever make her happy.

Bell. I admire your *setting your heart*, as you call it, of all things. Your love, my dear Emily, is not so romantic. You pitch upon a man of figure and fortune, handsome, sensible, good-natured, and well-bred; of rank in life, and credit in his profession; a man that half the women in town would pull caps for; and then you talk, like a sly prude, of your pure and disinterested passion.

Em. Why then, I declare, if he had not a friend on earth, or a shilling in the world—if he was as miserable as the utmost malice of ill fortune could make him, I would prefer Colonel Tamper to the first duke in the kingdom.

Bell. Oh, sister, it is a mighty easy thing for persons rolling in affluence and a coach-and-six, to talk of living on bread and water, and the comforts of love in a cottage.

Em. The coach-and-six, Bell, would give little happiness to those who could not be happy without it. When once the heart has settled its affec-

tions, how mean is it to withdraw them for any paltry considerations, of what nature soever!

Bell. I think the lady doth protest too much.

Em. Ay, but she'll keep her word.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Major Belford, Madam!

Em. Show him in—[*Exit SERVANT.*] Oh, Bell, I am ready to drop with apprehension!

Enter MAJOR BELFORD.

Belf. Ladies, your humble servant—[*Salutes them.*] I rejoice to find you so well.

Bell. And we congratulate you, Major, on your safe return from the Havannah—How does your friend Colonel Tamper do?

Belf. He is very well, Madam; but—

Em. But what, Sir—I am frighted beyond expression—Is he in England?

Belf. Yes, Madam.

Em. In town?

Belf. Yes, Madam.

Em. Why have not we the pleasure of seeing him then?

Belf. He'll be here immediately, Madam.

Em. Oh, well.

Belf. But it was thought proper that I should wait on you first, to prepare you for his reception.

Em. To prepare me! What does he mean?

Belf. Only to prevent your being alarmed at his appearance, Madam.

Em. Alarmed! you terrify me more and more—What is the matter?

Belf. Nay, nothing—A trifle—the mere chance of war, *la fortune de la guerre*, as the French call it; that's all, Madam.

Em. I'm upon the rack—Dear Sir, explain—

Belf. The colonel, you know, Madam, is a man of spirit.—Having exposed his person very gallantly in the several actions before the town of the Havannah, he received many wounds; one or two of which have been attended with rather disagreeable circumstances.

Em. But is the colonel well at present, Sir?

Belf. Extremely well, Madam.

Em. Are not the consequences of his wounds likely to endanger his life?

Belf. Not in the least, Madam.

Em. I am satisfied—Pray go on, Sir.

Belf. Do not you be alarmed, Madam—

Em. Keep me no longer in suspense, I beseech you, Sir!

Bell. What can all this mean?

Belf. The two principle wounds which the colonel received, Madam, were one a little above the knee, and another in his face. In consequence of the first, he was reduced to the necessity of saving his life by the loss of a leg; and the latter has deprived him of the sight of an eye.

Em. Oh, Heavens! [*Ready to faint.*]

Bell. Poor Emily! How could you be so abrupt, Sir? The violent agitation of her mind is too much for her spirits.

Belf. Excuse me, Madam—I was afraid of making you uneasy; and yet it was necessary you should be acquainted with these circumstances, previous to your seeing the colonel.

Em. [*Recovering.*] Lost a leg and an arm did you say, Sir?

Belf. No, not an arm—an eye, Madam.

Em. An eye! worse and worse—Poor colonel!

Belf. Rather unfortunate, to be sure. But we should consider, Madam, that we have saved his

life; and these were sacrifices necessary for its preservation.

Em. Very true. Ay—ay—so as he has but his life, I am happy. And I ought now to be attached to him, not only from tenderness, but compassion.

Belf. After all, Madam, his appearance is much better than you may imagine. His face, by the help of a black ribband, is very little disfigured; and he has got a false leg, made so naturally, that, except a small hitch in his gait, there is no material alteration in his person and deportment—Besides which, in point of health and spirits, he is particularly well.

Em. I am glad of it.—But, alas! he, whose person was so charming!—And his eyes, that were so brilliant!—So full of sensibility!

Belf. This accident, Madam, on his own account gives him no uneasiness: to say the truth, he seems rather vain upon it: I could wish therefore, when he comes, that you would not seem too deeply affected, but rather assume an air of cheerfulness, lest any visible uneasiness in you should shock the colonel.

Em. Poor colonel! I know his sensibility. Let me *endeavour*, therefore, to convince him, that he is as dear to me as ever! Oh, yes, *cost me what it will*, I must show him, that the preservation of his life is an entire consolation to me.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Colonel Tamper, Madam.

Em. Eh! what!

Bell. Desire the colonel to walk up—Compose yourself, my dear!—Poor Emily! I am in pain for her. [*Aside.*]

Enter COLONEL TAMPER—runs up to EMILY.

Tam. My dearest Emily!—how happy am I to see you once again! I have brought back the honest heart and hand which I devoted to you: as to the rest of my body, you see I did not care sixpence what became of it. Miss Bell, I rejoice to see you so well.—Major, I am yours—but my Emily—

Em. Oh, colonel!

[*Bursts into tears; leans upon BELL.*]

Tam. How's this? tears!

Bell. You should not have followed the major so soon, colonel; she had scarce recovered the first shock from his intelligence.

Tam. My impatience would suffer me to delay no longer—Why do you weep so, Emily?—Are you sorry to see me again?

Em. Sorry to see you unfortunate.

[*Weeping.*]

Tom. Unfortunate! call me rather fortunate; I am come back alive; alive and merry, Emily.

Em. I am glad you have saved your life.

[*Weeping.*]

Tam. I dare say you are. Look on me then; what, not one glance! Wont you deign to look on your poor maimed soldier? [*Pausing.*]—Is it possible, then, that any alteration of my person can occasion a change in your sentiments?

Em. Never, colonel, never: it is surely no mark of want of affection to be so much hurt at your misfortunes.

Tam. Misfortunes! no misfortunes at all—none at all to a soldier—nothing but the ordinary incidents and common casualties of his life—marks of honour—and tokens of valour—I declare I

wear them about with me as the most honourable badges of my profession.—I am proud of them—I would not part with this wooden leg for the best flesh and blood in Christendom.

Em. And can you really be so unconcerned at this accident?

Tam. Really; and you shall be unconcerned too, Emily. You shall find more in me still, than in half the battered rakes and fops about town. It injures me no more than it does a fine tree, to lop my branches. My trunk is heart of oak, and I shall thrive the better for it.

Em. But is there no hope of recovering your eye again? Oh, we must have the best advice—Is the sight quite lost?

Tam. Quite—blind as a mill-horse—Blind as a beetle, Emily—But what does that signify? Love is blind, you know; and if I have lost one eye, why, they say, I shall see the clearer with the other.

Em. I cannot look at him without shuddering.

[Retires and sits down.]

Bell. What action was it you suffered in, colonel?

Tam. Before the Moro castle, Ma'am, before the Moro—Hot work, hissing hot, by sea and land, I assure you, Ma'am. Ah, the Moro, the Moro!—But if men go to run their heads against stone-walls, they must expect to have a scone or two broken before they make their way through them—Eh, Major?

Bell. Major Belford was with you?

Tam. All the while. The major and I fought side by side, cheek by jowl, till I fell, Ma'am! We paid the Dons—didn't we, major? But Velasco, poor Velasco! A fine brave Don, must be owned—I had rather have died like Velasco, than have lived to be Generalissimo.

Bell. [To EMILY.] How are you, sister?

Tam. Nay, prythee, Emily, be comforted! more than all this might have happened to me at home. I might have thrown away my life in a duel, or broke my neck in a fox-chace: a fit of the gout, or an apoplexy, might have maimed me ten times worse for ever; or a palsy, perhaps, have killed one half of me at a single stroke—You must not take on thus—If you do, I shall be extremely uneasy.

Em. Excuse me, I cannot help it—but be assured, I esteem you as much as ever, Sir.

Tam. Esteem! and Sir!—This is cold language—I have not been used to hear you talk in that style, Emily.

Em. I don't know what I say—I am not well—let me retire.

Tam. When shall we name the happy day? I shall make shift to dance on that occasion—though as Withrington fought—on my stumps, Emily. Tell me, when shall we be happy?

Em. I grow more and more faint—Lead me to my chamber, Bell.

Bell. She is very ill—don't tease her now, colonel: but let us try to procure her some repose.

Tam. Ay, a short sleep and a little reflection, and all will be well, I dare say—I will be here again soon, and administer consolation, I warrant you. Adieu, my dear Emily.

Em. Adieu.—Oh, Bell!

[Exit in tears, with BELL.]

Tam. [Assuming his natural air and manner.] Ha, ha, ha!—Well, Belford, what is your opinion now? Will she stand the test or no?

Belf. If she does, it is more than you deserve. I could wish she would give you up with all my heart, if I did not think you would run stark mad with vexation.

Tam. Why so?

Belf. Because, as I have often told you before, this is a most absurd and ridiculous scheme, a mere trick to impose upon yourself, and most probably end in your losing the affections of an amiable lady.

Tam. You know, Belford, there is an excess of sensibility in my temper—

Belf. That will always make you unhappy.

Tam. Rather say, it will insure the future happiness of my life. Before I bind myself to abide by a woman at all events, and in all circumstances, I must be assured that she will, at all events, and in all circumstances, retain her affection for me.

Belf. 'Sdeath, I have no patience to hear you. Have not you all the reason in the world to rest assured, that Emily entertains a most sincere passion for you?

Tam. Perhaps so; but then I am not equally assured of the basis on which that passion is founded.

Belf. Her folly, I am afraid.

Tam. Nay, but I am serious, major.

Belf. You are very ridiculous, colonel.

Tam. Well, well; it does not signify talking. I must be convinced that she loves me for my own sake, for myself alone; and that, were I divested of every desirable gift of fortune and of nature, and she was to be addressed by fifty others who possessed them all in the most eminent degree, she would continue to prefer me to all the rest of mankind.

Belf. Most precious refinement, truly! This is the most high-flown metaphysics in sentiment I ever heard in my life—picked up in one of your expeditions to the coast of France, I suppose—No plain Englishman ever dreamed of such a whim—Love you for *yourself*! for *your own sake*!—not she, truly.

Tam. How then?

Belf. Why, for her *own*, to be sure—and so would any body else. I am your friend, and love you as a friend; and why? because I am glad to have commerce with a man of talents, honour, and honesty. Let me once see you behave like a poltroon or a villain, and you know I would cut your throat, colonel!

Tam. I don't doubt you, major; but if she don't love me for my *own* sake, for *myself*, as I said, how can I ever be certain that she will not transfer that love to another?

Belf. "For your *own* sake! for *yourself*, again!"—Why what, in the common name of sense, is this *self* of yours, that you make such a rout about? Your birth, your fortune, your character, your talents, and perhaps, sweet colonel, that sweet person of yours—all these may have taken her—and habitude, and continual intercourse, must increase her partiality for them in you, more than in any other person. But, after all, none of these things are *yourself*. You are but the ground; and these qualities are woven into your frame. Yet it is not the stuff, but the richness of the work, that stamps a value on the piece.

Tam. Why, this is downright sermonizing, major. Give you pudding-sleeves and a grizzle wig, you might be chaplain to the regiment. Yet

matrimony is a leap in the dark indeed, if we cannot beforehand make ourselves at all certain of the fidelity and affection of our wives.

Belf. Marriage is precarious, I grant you, and must be so. You may play like a weary gamester, 'tis true. I would not marry a notorious profligate, nor a woman in a consumption; but there is no more answering for the continuance of her good disposition, than that of her good health.

Tam. Fine maxims! make use of them yourself; they won't serve me. A fine time, indeed, to experience a woman's fidelity—after marriage; a time when every thing conspires to render it her interest to deceive you! No, no; no fool's paradise for me, Belford.

Belf. A fool's paradise is better than a wise-acre's purgatory.

Tam. 'Sdeath, Belford, who comes here?—I shall be discovered.

[*Resuming his counterfeit manner.*]

Enter PRATTLE.

Prat. Gentlemen, your most obedient; mighty sorry, extremely concerned, to hear the lady's taken ill—I was sent for in a violent hurry—had forty patients to visit—resolved to see her, however—Major Belford, I rejoice to see you in good health—Have I the honour of knowing this gentleman?

[*Pointing to TAMPER and going up to him.*]

Tam. Hum, hum!

[*Limping away from PRATTLE.*]

Belf. An acquaintance of mine, Mr. Prattle. You don't know him, I believe—A little hurt in the service—that's all.

Prat. Accidents, accidents, will happen—No less than seven brought into our infirmary yesterday, and ten into the hospital—Did you hear, Major Belford, that poor lady Di Racket broke her arm last night, by an overturn, from her horses taking fright among the vast crowd of coaches getting in at Lady Thunder's rout: and yesterday morning, Sir Helder Skelter, who is so remarkably fond of driving, put out his collar-bone by a fall from his own coach-box.

Tam. Pox on his chattering! I wish he'd be gone!

Belf. But your fair patient, Mr. Prattle—I am afraid we detain you.

Prat. Not at all;—I'll attend her immediately—[*Going, returns.*].—You have not heard of the change in the ministry!

Tam. Psha!

Belf. I have.

Prat. Well, well—[*Going, returns.*].—Lady Sarah Melville brought to-bed within these two hours—a boy—Gentlemen, your servant, your very humble servant.

Tam. Chattering jackanapes!

Belf. So, the apothecary's come already—we shall have a consultation of physicians, the knocker tied up, and straw laid in the street shortly—But are you not ashamed, Tamper, to give her all this uneasiness?

Tam. No matter—I'll make her ample amends at last—What could possess them to send for this blockhead? He'll make her worse and worse—He will absolutely talk her to death.

Belf. Oh, the puppy's in fashion, you know.

Tam. It is lucky enough the fellow did not know me. He's a downright he-gossip!—and any thing he knows might as well be published

in the Daily Advertiser. But come, for fear of discovery, we had better decamp for the present. March!

Belf. You'll expose yourself confoundedly, Tamper.

Tam. Say no more. I am resolved to put her affection to the trial. If she's thorough proof, I'm made for ever. Come along. [*Going.*]

Belf. Tamper!

Tam. Oh, I am lame—I forgot. [*Limping.*]

Belf. Lord, Lord! what a fool self-love makes of a man! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—EMILY'S Dressing-Room.

EMILY, BELL, PRATTLE, *sitting on a Sofa.*

Bell. I think you seem to be a good deal recovered, Emily?

Em. I am much better than I was, I thank you—heigh ho!

Prat. Ay, ay, I knew we should be better by and by—These little nervous disorders are very common all over the town—merely owing to the damp weather, which relaxes the tone of the whole system. The poor Duchess of Porcelain has had a fever on her spirits these three weeks—Lady Teaser's case is absolutely hysterical; and Lady Betty Dawdle is almost half mad with lowness of spirits, headaches, tremblings, vain fears, and wanderings of the mind.

Em. Pray, Mr. Prattle, how does poor Miss Crompton do?

Prat. Never better, Ma'am. Somebody has removed her disorder, by prescribing very effectually to the Marquis of Cranford. His intended match with Miss Richman, the hundred thousand pound fortune, is quite off; and so, Ma'am, Miss Crompton is perfectly well again—By the bye too, she has another reason to rejoice: for her cousin, Miss Dorothy, who lives with her, and began, you know, to grow rather old maidish, as we say, Ma'am, made a sudden conquest of Mr. Bumper, a Lancashire gentleman of a great estate, who came up to town for the Christmas; and they were married at Miss Crompton's yesterday evening.

Bell. Is it true, Mr. Prattle, that Sir John Medley is going to the south of France for the recovery of his health?

Prat. Very true, Ma'am, very true that he's going, I promise you; but not for the recovery of his health. Sir John's well enough himself—but his affairs are in a galloping consumption, I assure you. No less than two executions in his house. I heard it for a fact at Lady Modish's. Poor gentleman, I have known his chariot stand at Arthur's till eight o'clock in the morning. He has had a sad run a long time; but that last affair at Newmarket totally undid him. Pray, ladies, have you heard the story of Alderman Manchester's lady?

Bell. Oh, no. Pray, what is it?

Prat. A terrible story indeed—Eloped from her husband, and went off with Lord John Sprightly. Their intention, it seems, was to go over to Holland; but the Alderman pursued them to Harwich, and caught them just as they were going to embark. He threatened Lord John with a prosecution: but Lord John, who knew the Alderman's turn, came down with a thousand pounds:

and so the Alderman received his wife, and all is well again.

Bell. I vow, Mr. Prattle, you are extremely amusing. You know the chit-chat of the whole town.

Prat. Can't avoid picking up a few slight anecdotes, to be sure, Ma'am—Go into the best houses in town—attend the best families in the kingdom—nobody better received—nobody takes more care—nobody tries to give more satisfaction.

Bell. Is there any public news of any kind, Mr. Prattle?

Prat. None at all, Ma'am—except that the officers are most of them returned from the Havannah.

Em. So we hear, Sir.

Prat. I saw Colonel Tamper yesterday. O, ay! and Major Belford, and another gentleman, as I came in here this morning.

Bell. That was Colonel Tamper, Sir.

Prat. That gentleman, Colonel Tamper, Ma'am!

Bell. Yes, Sir.

Prat. Pardon me, Ma'am! I know Colonel Tamper very well.—That poor gentleman was somewhat disabled—had suffered a little in the wars—Colonel Tamper is not so unfortunate.

Em. O yes, that horrid accident!

Prat. What accident?

Bell. His wounds—his wounds—Don't you know, Sir?

Prat. Wounds, Ma'am!—Upon my word, I never heard he had received any.

Bell. No! Why he lost a leg and eye at the siege of the Havannah.

Prat. Did he? Why then, Ma'am, I'll be bold to say he is the luckiest man in the world.

Bell. Why so, Sir?

Prat. Because, Ma'am, if he lost a leg or an eye at the Havannah, they must be grown again, or he has somehow procured others that do the business every whit as well.

Em. Impossible!

Prat. I wish I may die, Ma'am, if the colonel had not yesterday two as good legs and fine eyes as any man in the world. If he lost one of each at the Havannah, we practitioners in physic should be much obliged to him to communicate his receipt, for the benefit of Greenwich and Chelsea hospitals.

Em. Are you sure that the colonel has had no such loss, Sir?

Prat. As sure as that I am here, Ma'am! I saw him going into the what-d'ye-call-him ambassador's, just over against my house, yesterday; and the last place I was at this morning was Mrs. Daylight's, where I heard the colonel was at her route last night, and that every body thought he was rather improved than injured by his late expedition. But, odso! Lack-a-day, lack-a-day, lack-a-day!—now I recollect—ha, ha, ha!

[*Laughing very heartily.*]

Bell. What's the matter, Mr. Prattle?

Prat. Excuse me, ladies; I can't forbear laughing—ha, ha, ha!—the gentleman in the t'other room, Colonel Tamper! ha, ha, ha!—I find the colonel had a mind to pay a visit in masquerade this morning—I spoke to Major Belford—I thought I knew his friend too—but he limped away and hid his face, and would not speak to me.—Upon my word, he did it very well! I could have sworn there had been an amputation—He

would make a figure at a masked ball. Ha, ha, ha!

Em. *Bell.* Ha, ha, ha!

[*Looking at each other and affecting to laugh.*]

Prat. Ha, ha, ha! very comical! Ha, ha, ha!

Bell. A frolic, Mr. Prattle, a frolic: I think, however, you had better not take any notice of it abroad.

Prat. Me! I shall never breathe it, Ma'am: I am close as oak—an absolute free-mason for secrecy—But, Ma'am, [*Rising.*] I must bid you good morning—I have several patients to visit before dinner. Mrs. Tremor, I know, will be dying with the vapours till she sees me; and I am to meet Dr. Valerian at Lord Hectic's in less than half an hour.

Em. Ring the bell, my dear—Mr. Prattle, your servant.

Prat. Ladies, your very humble servant. I shall send you a cordial mixture, Ma'am, to be taken in any particular faintness, or lowness of spirits; and some draughts, for morning and evening. Have a care of catching cold, be cautious in your diet, and I make no doubt but in a few days we shall be perfectly recovered. Ladies, your servant: your most obedient, very humble servant. [*Exit.*]

[*The Ladies sit for some time silent.*]

Bell. Sister Emily.

Em. Sister Bell!

Bell. What d'ye think of Colonel Tamper now, sister?

Em. Why I am so provoked, and so pleased; so angry, and so diverted; that I don't know whether I should be in or out of humour, at this discovery.

Bell. No!—Is it possible you can have so little spirit? This tattling apothecary will tell this fine story at every house he goes into—it will be town-talk—If a lover of mine had attempted to put such an impudent deceit upon me, I would never see his face again.

Em. If you had a lover that you liked, Bell, you would not be quite so violent.

Bell. Indeed, but I should. What! to come here with a Canterbury tale of a leg and an eye, and Heaven knows what, merely to try the extent of his power over you—To gratify his inordinate vanity, in case you should retain your affection for him; or to reproach you for your weakness and infidelity, if you could not reconcile yourself to him on that supposition.

Em. It is abominably provoking, I own; and yet, Bell, it is not a quarter of an hour ago, but I would have parted with half my fortune to have made it certain that there was a trick in the story.

Bell. Well, I never knew one of these men of extraordinary sense, as they are called, that was not in some instances a greater fool than the rest of mankind.

Em. After all, Bell, I must confess that this stratagem has convinced me of the infirmity of my temper. This supposed accident began to make strange work with me.

Bell. I saw that plain enough. I told you what your pure and disinterested passion, sister, would come to, long ago. Yet this is so flagrant an affront, I would not marry him these seven years.

Em. That, perhaps, might be punishing myself, sister.

Bell. We must plague him, and heartily too.

Oh, for a bright thought now, some charming invention to torment him!

Em. Oh, as to that matter, I should be glad to have some comical revenge on him, with all my heart.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Captain Johnson, Ma'am.

Em. Desire him to walk up. [*Exit SERVANT.*] I am fit to see any company now. This discovery will do me more good, I believe, than all Mr. Prattle's cordial mixtures, as he calls them.

Bell. Oh, you're in charming spirits, sister—But Captain Johnson! you abound in the military, captains, colonels, and majors, by wholesale: who is Captain Johnson, pray?

Em. Only the name that Mademoiselle Florival, the Belleisle Lady you saw this morning, goes by.

Bell. Oh, sister, the luckiest thought in the world—such a use to make of this lady.

Em. What d'ye mean?

Bell. Captain Johnson shall be Colonel Tamper's rival, sister!

Em. Hush! here she is.

Enter MADEMOISELLE FLORIVAL.

Em. Give me leave, Madam, to introduce you to my sister.

Bell. I have heard your story, Madam, and take part in your misfortunes.

Flo. I am infinitely obliged both to you and to that lady, Madam.

Em. Oh! Madam, I have been extremely ill since you was here this morning, and terrified almost beyond imagination.

Flo. I am very sorry to hear it; may I ask what has alarmed you?

Em. It is so ridiculous, I scarce know how to tell you.

Bell. Then I will. You must know, Ma'am, that my sister was engaged to an officer, who went out on a late military expedition. He is just returned, but is come home with the strangest conceit that ever filled the brain of a lover. He took it into his head to try my sister's faith by pretending to be maimed and wounded, and has actually visited her this morning in a counterfeit character. We have just now detected the imposition, and want your assistance to be pleasantly revenged on him.

Flo. I cannot bring myself to be an advocate for the lady's cruelty—But you may both command me in any thing.

Em. There is no cruelty in the case; I fear I am gone too far for that. As you are, in appearance, such a smart young gentleman, my sister has waggishly proposed to make you the instrument of exciting Colonel Tamper's jealousy, by your personating the character of a supposed rival—Was not that your device, sister?

Bell. It was; and if this lady will come into it, and you play your part well, we'll tease the wise colonel, and make him sick of his rogueries, I warrant you.

Flo. I have been a mad girl in my time, I confess, and remember when I should have joined in such a frolic with pleasure. At present, I fear I am scarce mistress enough of my temper to maintain my character with any tolerable humour. However, I will summon up all my spirits, and do my best to oblige you.

Bell. Oh, you will have but little to do—The business will lie chiefly on your hands, Emily—You must be most intolerably provoking. If you do but irritate him sufficiently, we shall have charming sport with him.

Em. Never fear me, Bell; Mr. Prattle's intelligence has given me spirits equal to any thing. Now I know it is but a trick, I shall scarce be able to see him limping about without laughing.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Colonel Tamper, Madam.

Em. Show him in! [*Exit SERVANT.*]—Now, ladies!

Bell. Now, sister!—Work him heartily; cut him to the bone, I charge you. If you show him the least mercy, you are no woman.

Enter COLONEL TAMPER.

Tam. This is to have new servants! not at home, indeed!—A pack of blockheads, to think of denying my Emily to me. I knew the poor dear soul was a little out of order indeed—but—[*Seeing FLORIVAL.*]—I beg pardon, Madam! I did not know you had company.

Bell. Oh, this gentleman is a particular friend of my sister's—he's let in at any time.

Tam. Hum!

[*Disordered.*]

Em. I did not expect to see you return so soon, Sir!

Tam. No; I believe I am come somewhat unexpectedly indeed, Madam!

Em. If your return had not been so extremely precipitate, Sir, I should have sent you a message on purpose to prevent your giving yourself that trouble.

Tam. Madam! a message! for what reason?

Em. Because I am otherwise engaged.

[*With indifference.*]

Tam. Engaged! I don't apprehend you, Madam.

Em. No; you are extremely dull then: don't you see I have company? Was you at the opera last night, Captain Johnson?

[*Coquetting with FLORIVAL.*]

Tam. I am thunderstruck. Madam! Miss Emily! Madam!

Em. Sir!—Colonel Tamper!—Sir!

Tam. I say, Madam!—

Em. Sir!

Tam. 'Sdeath, I have not power to speak to her. This strange and sudden alteration in your behaviour, Madam—

Em. Alteration! none at all, Sir; the change is on your side, not mine. I'll be judged by this gentleman. Captain Johnson, here's a miniature of the colonel, which he sat for just before he went abroad—done by a good hand, and reckoned a striking likeness. Did you ever see a poor creature so altered? [*Giving a bracelet.*]

Flo. Why really, Madam, there is, I must own, a very visible difference at present. That black riband [*Looking by turns on the picture and COLONEL TAMPER*] makes a total eclipse of the brilliancy of this right eye—and then, the irregular motion of the leg gives such a twist to the rest of the body, that—

Tam. Sir!—But it is to you I address myself at present, Madam. I was once fond and foolish enough to imagine, that you had a heart truly generous and sensible; and flattered myself that

it was above being shaken by absence, or affected by events. How have I been deceived! I find that—

Em. Pardon me, Sir, I never deceived you; nay, you see that I disdained the thought of deceiving you even for a day. Out of respect to our late mutual attachment, I am resolved to deal openly with you. In a word, then, every thing between us must now be at an end.

Tam. Confusion!—Every thing at an end! and can you, you, Emily, have the courage to tell me so?

Em. Why not? Come, come, Colonel Tamper, vanity is your blind side.

Tam. Zounds, Madam!

Em. Don't be in a passion—Do but consider the matter calmly; and though it may rather be displeasing, yet when you have duly weighed all circumstances I'm sure you must do me the justice to acknowledge my sincerity.

Tam. I shall run mad—Is it possible, Emily?—Sincerity do you call this?—Dissimulation—damned dissimulation!

Em. Have patience, Sir! The loss of your whole fortune would have been trifling to me; but how can I reconcile myself to this mangling of your figure?—Let me turn the tables on you for a moment—Suppose now, colonel, that I had been so unfortunate as to have lost a leg and an eye, should you, d'ye think, have retained your affection inviolable for me.

Tam. False, false woman!—Have a care, Emily! have a care I say, or you'll destroy your fame and happiness for ever. Consider what you are doing, ere you make a final resolution—You'll repent your inconstancy, I tell you beforehand—upon my soul, you will—you'll have more reason to repent it, than you can possibly imagine.

Em. Why will you oblige me now to say shocking things to you? It goes against me to tell you so, but I can't even see you now without horror; nay, was I even, from a vain point of honour, to adhere to my engagements with you, I could never conquer my disgust. It would be a most unnatural connection. Would not it, Captain Johnson?

Tam. Hell! 'sdeath! confusion!—How steadily she persists in her perfidy! Madam! Madam!—I shall choke with rage—But one word, and I am gone for ever—for ever, for ever, Madam!

Em. What would you say, Sir.

Tam. Tell me then—and tell me truly: have not you received the addresses of that gentleman?

Em. He has honoured me with them, I confess, Sir; and every circumstance is so much in his favour, that I could have no manner of objection to him, but my unfortunate engagements to you—But since your ill fortune has invincibly divorced us from each other, I think I am at liberty to listen to him.

Tam. Matchless confidence!—Mighty well, Madam!—It is not then the misfortunes that have befallen me, but the charms you have found in that gentleman, which have altered your inclination.

Flo. Well, Sir! and what then, Sir! the lady, I presume, is not included, like an old mansion-house, in the rent-roll of your estate, or the inventory of your goods and chattles. Her hand, I hope, is still her own property, and she may bestow it on you or me, or any body else, just as she pleases.

Tam. You are a villain, Sir!—Withdraw.

Bell. Oh heavens! here will be murder—Don't stir, I beg you, Sir.

Flo. O never fear me, Madam; I am not such a poltroon as to contend with that gentleman—Do you think I would set my strength and skill against a poor blind man, and a cripple?

Tam. Follow me, Sir; I'll soon teach you to use your own legs.

Flo. Oh, the sturdy beggar! stir your stumps and begone; here's nothing for you, fellow!

Tam. Villain!

Flo. Poor man!

Tam. Scoundrel!

Flo. Prithee, man, don't expose yourself.

Tam. Puppy!

Flo. Poor wretch!

Em. What, quarrel before ladies! Oh, for shame, colonel!

Tam. This is beyond all sufferance. I can contain no longer—Know then, Madam, [*To Emily.*] to your utter confusion, I am not that mangled thing which you imagine me—You may see Madam—[*Resuming his natural manner.*]

Em. *Bell.* *Flo.* Ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Laughing violently.*]

Em. A wonderful cure of lameness and blindness—Your case is truly curious, Sir;—and attested by three credible witnesses—Will you give us leave to print it in the public papers?

Tam. Madam, Madam!

Flo. I think the story would make a figure in the Philosophical Transactions.

Tam. Sir!

Bell. A pretty leg, indeed. Will you dance a minuet with me, colonel?

Em. Your wounds are not mortal, I hope, colonel.

Tam. No, Madam! my person, I thank Heaven, is still unhurt. I have my legs, both legs, Madam; and I will use them to transport me as far as possible from so false a woman—I have my eyes, too—my eyes, Madam—but they shall never look on you again, but as the most faithless and ungrateful of your sex.

Em. If I'm not surprised how he could act it so well! Pray, let us see you do it over again, colonel—How was it, eh? [*Mimicking.*] hip-hop-hip-hop, like Prince Volscious, I think.

Tam. I took that method, Madam, to try your truth, constancy, and affection. I have found you void of all those qualities, and shall have reason to rejoice at the effect of my experiment as long as I live.

Em. If you meant to separate yourself from me, you have indeed taken an excellent method. And a mighty proof you have given of your own affection, truly! Instead of returning, after an anxious absence, with joy into my presence, to come home with a low and mean suspicion, with a narrow jealousy of mind, when the frankness and generosity of my behaviour ought to have engaged you to repose the most unlimited confidence in me!

Tam. The event, Madam, has but well warranted my experiment.

Em. And shall justify it, Sir, still more: for here, before your face, I give my hand to this gentleman;—solemnly declaring, that it shall never be in your power to dissolve the connection formed between us.

Tam. As to you, Madam, your infidelity be

your punishment. But that gentleman shall hear from me.

Flo. I defy you, Sir!

Em. Nothing further remains between us—leave me, Sir!

Tam. I am gone, Madam! and so help me Heaven, never, never to return— [Going.

Enter MAJOR BELFORD.

Belf. How! going in a passion?—Hold, Tamper—All in confusion!—I thought so—and came to set matters to rights again.

Flo. What do I see! Major Belford!—Major Belford! oh! [Faints.

Belf. Ha, my name, and fainting?—What can this mean? [Runs and takes her in his arms.] By heavens, a woman! May I hope that—Hold, she recovers—It is, it is she! my dear Florival herself!—and we shall still be happy.

Tam. Belford's Belleisle lady, as I live!—My rival a woman! I begin to feel myself very ridiculous.

Belf. What wonder, my love, has brought you hither, and in this habit?

Flo. Oh, Sir, I have a long story to relate. At present, let it suffice to say, that that lady's brother has been the noblest of friends to me; and she herself this morning generously vouchsafed to take me under her protection.

Belf. I am bound to them for ever. At my return I found letters from your father, who, supposing you was in England with me, wrote to acquaint me that he was inconsolable for your loss, and that he would consent to our union if I would but assure him that you was safe and well. The next post shall acquaint him of our good fortune. Well, Tamper, am not I a lucky fellow?

Tam. Oh, Belford! I am the most miserable dog in the world.

Belf. What, have you dropped your mask, I see—you're on your legs again—I met Prattle in the street—He stopped his chariot to speak to me about you, and I found that he had blown you up, and discovered to the ladies that you was returned quite unhurt from the Havannah.

Tam. Did that coxcomb betray me? That accounts for all Emily's behaviour—Oh, major, I

am ruined past redemption—I have behaved most extravagantly, both to your lady and Emily. I shall never be able to look them in the face again.

Belf. Ay, ay, I foresaw this. Did not I tell you that you would expose yourself confoundedly?—However, I'll be an advocate for you—my Florival shall be an advocate for you; and I make no doubt but you will be taken into favour again.

Em. Does he deserve it, major?

Belf. Why, Madam, I can't say much for him—or myself either, faith—We must rely entirely on your goodness.

Flo. He's a true penitent, I see, Madam, and I'll answer for it, he loves you to excess. Nay, look on him.

Em. Was it well done, colonel, to cherish a mean distrust of me? to trifle with the partiality I had shown to you? and to endeavour to give me pain, merely to secure a poor triumph over my weakness to yourself?

Tam. I am ashamed to answer you.

Bell. Ashamed! and so you well may indeed.

Tam. I see my absurdity; all I wish is to be laughed at, and forgiven.

Belf. A very reasonable request. Come, Madam, pity the poor fellow, and admit him to your good graces again.

Flo. Let us prevail on you, dear Madam.

Em. Well; now I see he is most heartily mortified, I am half inclined to pity him.

Tam. Generous Emily!

Em. Go, you provoking wretch! 'tis more than you deserve. [To TAMPER

Tam. It shall be the future study of my life to deserve this pardon.—[Kissing her hand.]—Belford, I give you joy—Madam—[To FLORIVAL.]—I have behaved so ill to you, I scarce know how to give you joy as I ought.

Belf. Come, come, no more of this at present—Now we have on all sides ratified the preliminaries, let us settle the definitive treaty as soon as we can—We have been two lucky fellows, Tamper—I have been fortunate in finding my mistress, and you as fortunate in not losing yours.

Tam. So we have, Belford; and I wish every brave officer in his majesty's service had secured to himself such comfortable winter-quarters, as we have, after a glorious campaign. [Exeunt

GUSTAVUS VASA:

OR,

THE DELIVERER OF HIS COUNTRY.

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY HENRY BROOKE, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS tragedy was accepted at Drury-Lane theatre in 1739, and, during the rehearsals, excited great expectations of success; a prohibitory order from the lord chamberlain, however, deprived the author of his expected laurels on the stage, but rendered his production so popular, that, on its publication the same year, not less than a thousand pounds are said to have been the clear produce. The present ministry allowed its representation in 1805, when Master Betty attempted the character of Gustavus.

The genuine lover of liberty will here meet with those noble principles of action which elevate humanity and have expanded the energies of free minds in free countries; but it cannot be concealed, that the play is deficient in interest, bustle, and incidents for the prevailing dramatic taste. The following extract will furnish the plot:—“Gustavus I. king of Sweden, known by the name of Gustavus Vasa, was born in 1490. He was the son of Eric Vasa, Duke of Gripsholm, and descended from the ancient kings of Sweden. Christiern II. king of Denmark, having got Gustavus into his hands, in the war in which he reduced Sweden, kept him several years prisoner at Copenhagen. He, at length, made his escape, and having prevailed on the Dalecarlians to throw off the Danish yoke, he put himself at their head.”—*Modern Universal History*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN, 1805.		COVENT GARDEN, 1805.	
GUSTAVUS,.....	Master Betty.	MESSENGER,.....	Mr. Jefferies.
CHRISTIERN,.....	Mr. Murray.	OFFICER,.....	Mr. Treby.
ARVIDA,.....	Mr. Johnston.	CHRISTINA,.....	Mrs. H. Johnston.
PETERSON,.....	Mr. Brunton.	AUGUSTA,.....	Mrs. St. Ledger.
LAERTES,.....	Mr. Claremont.	GUSTAVA,.....	Miss Brunton.
ANDERSON,.....	Mr. Bennett.	MARIANA,.....	Mrs. Humphries.
SIVARD,.....	Mr. Chapman.		
ARNOLDUS,.....	Mr. Cresswell.		

Soldiers, Peasants, Messengers, and Attendants.
SCENE.—Dalecarlia, a Northern Province in Sweden.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The inside of the Copper Mines in Dalecarlia.

Enter ANDERSON and ARNOLDUS.—GUSTAVUS lying down in the distance.

And. You tell me wonders.

Arn. Soft, behold, my lord—

[*Points to GUSTAVUS.*]

Behold him stretch'd, where reigns eternal night,
The flint his pillow, and cold damps his cov'ring
Yet, bold of spirit, and robust of limb,
He throws inclemency aside, nor feels
The lot of human frailty.

And. What horrors hang around! the savage
race
Ne'er hold their den but where some glimmering
ray

May bring the cheer of morn—What then is he?
His dwelling marks a secret in his soul,
And whispers somewhat more than man about him.

Arn. Draw but the veil of his apparent wretchedness,

And you shall find, his form is but assum'd,
To hoard some wondrous treasure, lodg'd within.

And. Let him bear up to what thy praises speak him,

And I will win him, spite of his reserve,
Bind him with sacred friendship to my soul,
And make him half myself.

Arn. 'Tis nobly promised;

For worth is rare, and wants a friend in Sweden;
And yet I tell thee, in her age of heroes,
When, nursed by freedom, all her sons grew great,
And every peasant was a prince in virtue,
I greatly err, or this abandon'd stranger
Had stepp'd the first for fame—though now he seeks

To veil his name, and cloud his shine of virtues;
For there is danger in them.

And. True, Arnol'dus.

Were there a prince throughout the sceptred globe,
Who search'd out merit for its due preferment,
With half that care our tyrant seeks it out
For ruin,—happy, happy were that state,
Beyond the golden fable of those pure
And earliest ages—

When came this stranger hither?

Arn. Six moons have chang'd upon the face of night,

Since here he first arriv'd, in servile weeds,
But yet of mien majestic. I observ'd him,
And, ever as I gaz'd, some nameless charm,
A wondrous greatness, not to be conceal'd,
Broke through his form, and aw'd my soul before him.

Amid these mines he earns the hireling's portion;
His hands out-toil the hind, while on his brow
Sits patience, bath'd in the laborious drop
Of painful industry.—I oft have sought,
With friendly tender of some worthier service,
To win him from his temper; but he shuns
All offers, yet declin'd with graceful act,
Engaging beyond utterance; and at eve,
When all retire to some domestic solace,
He only stays, and, as you see, the earth
Receives him to her dark and cheerless bosom.

And. Has no unwary moment e'er betray'd
The labours of his soul, some fav'rite grief,
Whereon to raise conjecture?

Arn. I saw, as some bold peasants late deplor'd
Their country's bondage, sudden passion seiz'd,
And bore him from his seeming ease; strait his
Was turn'd to terror, ruin fill'd his eye,
And his proud step appear'd to awe the world:
But sadness soon usurp'd upon his brow,
And the big tear roll'd graceful down his visage.

And. Forbear—he rises—Heavens, what majesty!

GUSTAVUS comes forward.

Your pardon, stranger, if the voice of virtue,
If cordial amity from man to man,
And somewhat that should whisper to the soul,
To seek and cheer the sufferer, led me hither,
Impatient to salute thee. Be it thine
Alone to point the path of friendship out;
And my best power shall await upon thy fortunes.

Gust. There is a wondrous test,

The truest, worthiest, noblest, cause of friendship
Dearer than life, than interest, or alliance,
And equal to your virtues.

And. Say—unfold.

Gust. Art thou a soldier, a chief lord in Sweden,
And yet a stranger to thy country's voice,
That loudly calls the hidden patriot forth!
But what's a soldier? What's a lord in Sweden?
All worth is fled, or fallen—nor has a life
Been spar'd, but for dishonour; spar'd to breed
More slaves for Denmark, to beget a race
Of new-born virgins for th' unsated lust
Of our new masters.—Sweden! thou'rt no more!
Queen of the North! thy land of liberty,
Thy house of heroes, and thy seat of virtues,
Is now the tomb where thy brave sons lie speechless.

And. O 'tis true.

But wherefore? To what purpose?

Gust. Think of Stockholm!

When Christiern seiz'd upon the hour of peace,
And drench'd the hospitable floor with blood;
Then fell the flower of Sweden, mighty names!
Her hoary senators, and gasping patriots!
The tyrant spoke, and his licentious band
Of blood-train'd ministry were loos'd to ruin.
Husbands, sons, and sires,
With dying ears drank in the loud despair
Of shrieking chastity. Is there a cause for this?
For sin without temptation, calm, cool villany,
Deliberate mischief, unimpassion'd lust,
And smiling murder? Lie thou there, my soul,
Sleep, sleep upon it, image not the form
Of any dream but this, 'till time grows pregnant,
And thou canst wake to vengeance.

And. Thou'st greatly mov'd me. Ha! thy tears start forth.
Yes, let them flow, our country's fate demands them;

But wherefore talk of vengeance? 'Tis a word
Should be engraven on the new-fallen snow,
Where the first beam may melt it from observance.
Vengeance on Christiern? Norway and the Dane,
The sons of Sweden, all the peopled North,
Bend at his nod! my humbler boast of power
Meant not to cope with crowns.

Gust. Then what remains

Is briefly this: your friendship has my thanks,
But must not my acceptance:—no—
First sink, thou baleful mansion, to the centre!
And be thy darkness doubled round my head;
Ere I forsake thee for the bliss of paradise,
To be enjoy'd beneath a tyrant's sceptre.

And. Nor I, while I can hold it; but, alas!
That is not in our choice.

Gust. Why? where's that power, whose engines are of force

To bend the brave and virtuous man to slavery?
He has debauch'd the genius of our country,
And rides triumphant, while her captive sons
Await his nod! the silken slaves of pleasure,
Or fetter'd in their fears.

And. No doubt, a base submission to our wrongs
May well be term'd a voluntary bondage;
But, think, the heavy hand of power is on us;
Of power, from whose imprisonment and chains
Not all our free-born virtue can protect us.

Gust. 'Tis there you err, for I have felt their force;

And had I yielded to enlarge these limbs,
Or share the tyrant's empire, on the term
Which he propos'd—I were a slave indeed.

No—in the deep and poisonous damp of dungeons,
The soul can rear her sceptre, smile in anguish,
And triumph o'er oppression.

And. O glorious spirit! think not I am slack
To relish what thy noble scope intends;
But then the means, the peril, and the consequence!

Great are the odds, and who shall dare the trial?

Gust. I dare.

O wert thou still that gallant chief,
Whom once I knew! I could unfold a purpose,
Would make the greatness of thy heart to swell,
And burst in the conception.

And. Give it utterance.—You say you know me;
But give a tongue to such a cause as this,
And, if you hold me tardy in the call,
You know me not.—But thee, I've surely known;
For there is somewhat in that voice and form,
Which has alarm'd my soul to recollection;
But, 'tis as in a dream, and mocks my reach.

Gust. Then name the man, whom it is death
to know,

Or, knowing, to conceal—and I am he.

And. Gustavus! Heavens! 'Tis he, 'tis he
himself!

Enter ARVIDA, speaking to a SERVANT.

Arv. I thank you, friend, he's here, you may
retire. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

And. Good morning to my noble guest, you're
early! [*GUSTAVUS walks apart.*]

Arv. I come to take a short and hasty leave:
'Tis said, that from the mountain's neighb'ring
brow

The canvass of a thousand tents appears,
Whiteuing the vale—Suppose the tyrant there;
You know my safety lies not in the interview—
Ha! What is he, who, in the shreds of slavery,
Supports a step, superior to the state
And insolence of ermine?

Gust. Sure that voice

Was once the voice of friendship and Arvida!

Arv. Ha! Yes—'tis he!—ye powers! it is
Gustavus!

Gust. Thou brother of adoption! In the bond
Of every virtue wedded to my soul,
Enter my heart: it is thy property.

Arv. I'm lost in joy and wondrous circumstance.

Gust. Yet, wherefore, my Arvida, wherefore
is it,

That, in a place and at a time like this,
We should thus meet? Can Christiern cease
from cruelty?

say, whence is this, my brother? How escap'd you?
Did I not leave thee in the Danish dungeon?

Arv. Of that hereafter. Let me view thee first.
How graceful is the garb of wretchedness,
When worn by virtue! Fashions turn to folly;
Their colours tarnish, and their pomps grow poor
To her magnificence.

Gust. Yes, my Arvida,
Beyond the sweeping of the proudest train
That shades a monarch's heel, I prize this humble
dress,

For it is sacred to my country's freedom.
A mighty enterprize has been conceiv'd,
And thou art come auspicious to the birth,
As sent to fix the seal of Heaven upon it.

Arv. Point but thy purpose—let it be to bleed—

Gust. Your hands, my friends!

All. Our hearts.

Gust. I know they're brave.

Of such the time has need, of hearts like yours,
Faithful and firm, of hands inur'd and strong,
For we must ride upon the neck of danger,
And plunge into a purpose big with death.

And. Here let us kneel, and bind us to thy side.

Gust. No, hold,—if we want oaths to join us,
Swift let us part, from pole to pole asunder.
A cause like ours is its own sacrament;
Truth, justice, reason, love, and liberty,
Th' eternal links that clasp the world, are in it;
And he, who breaks their sanction, breaks all
law,

And infinite connection.

Arn. True, my lord.

And. And such the force I feel.

Arv. And I.

Arn. And all.

Gust. Know, then, that ere our royal Stenon fell,
While this my valiant cousin and myself
By chains and treachery lay detained in Denmark,
Upon a dark and unsuspected hour
The bloody Christiern sought to take my head.

I escap'd,
Led by a generous arm, and some time lay
Conceal'd in Denmark; for my forfeit head
Became the price of crowns, each port and path
Was shut against my passage, 'till I heard
That Stenon, valiant Stenon, fell in battle,
And freedom was no more. O then what bounds
Had power to hem the desperate? I o'erpass'd them,
Travers'd all Sweden, thro' ten thousand foes,
Impending perils, and surrounding tongues,
That from himself inquired Gustavus out.

Witness, my country, how I toil'd to wake
Thy sons to liberty! in vain—for fear,
Cold fear, had seiz'd on all.—Here last I came
And shut me from the sun, whose hateful beams
Serv'd but to show the ruins of my country.
When here, my friends, 'twas here at length I
found,

What I had left to look for, gallant spirits,
In the rough form of untaught peasantry.

And. Indeed they once were brave; our Dale-
carlians

Have oft been known to curb despotic sway:
And, as their only wealth has been their liberty,
From all th' unmeasur'd graspings of ambition
They've held that gem untouch'd—though now
'tis fear'd—

Gust. It is not fear'd—I say, they still shall
hold it.

I've search'd these men, and find them like the soil,
Barren without, and to the eye unlovely,
But they've their minds within; and this the day,
In which I mean to prove them.

Arn. O Gustavus!

Most aptly hast thou caught the passing hour,
Upon whose critical and fated hinge
The state of Sweden turns.

Gust. And to this hour

I've therefore held me in this darksome womb,
That sends me forth as to a second birth
Of freedom, or through death to reach eternity.
This day, return'd with every circling year,
In thousands pours the mountain peasants forth,
Each with his batter'd arms and rusty helm,
In sportive discipline well train'd and prompt
Against the day of peril—Thus disguised,
Already have I stirr'd their latent sparks
Of slum'ring virtue, apt as I could wish
To warm before the lightest breath of liberty

Arn. How will they kindle, when, confess'd to view,
Once more their lov'd Gustavus stands before them!

Arr. It cannot fail.

And. It has a glorious aspect.

Arr. Now, Sweden! rise and re-assert thy rights,
Or be for ever fallen.

And. Then be it so.

Arn. Lead on, thou arm of war,
To death or victory.

Gust. Why thus, my friends, thus join'd in such a cause,

Are we not equal to a host of slaves?
You say, the foe's at hand—Why, let them come;
Steep are our hills, not easy of access,
And few the hours we ask for their reception.
For I will take these rustic sons of liberty
In the first warmth and hurry of their souls;
And, should the tyrant then attempt our heights,
He comes upon his fate.—Arise, thou sun!
Haste, haste to rouse thee to the call of liberty,
That shall once more salute thy morning beam,
And hail thee to thy setting.

Arr. Were it not worth a hazard of a life,
To know if Christiern leads his powers in person,
And what his scope intends? Be mine that task.
Even to the tyrant's tent I'll win my way,
And mingle with his councils.

Gust. Go, my friend.

Dear as thou art, whene'er our country calls,
Friends, sons, and sires, should yield their treasure up,

Nor own a sense beyond the public safety.

But, tell me, my Arvida, ere thou goest,
Tell me what hand has made thy friend its debtor,
And given thee up to freedom and Gustavus?

Arr. Ha! let me think of that, 'tis sure she loves him. [*Aside.*]

Away, thou skance and jaundic'd eye of jealousy,
That tempts my soul to sicken at perfection;
Away! I will unfold it.—To thyself
Arvida owes his freedom.

Gust. How, my friend?

Arr. Some months are pass'd, since, in the Danish dungeon,

With care emaciate, and unwholesome damps,
Sick'ning I lay, chain'd to my flinty bed,
And call'd on death to ease me—straight a light
Shone round, as when the ministry of Heaven
Descends to kneeling saints. But, oh! the form
That pour'd upon my sight.—Ye angels, speak!
For ye alone are like her; or present
Such visions pictured to the nightly eye
Of fancy tranç'd in bliss. She then approach'd,
The softest pattern of embodied meekness,
For pity had divinely touch'd her eye,
And harmoniz'd her motions.—Ah, she cried,
Unhappy stranger, art not thou the man,
Whose virtues have endear'd thee to Gustavus?

Gust. Gustavus, did she say?

Arr. Yes.

Loos'd from my bonds, I rose at her command;
When, scarce recovering speech, I would have kneel'd,

But, haste thee, haste thee for thy life, she cried,
And oh, if e'er thy envied eyes behold
Thy lov'd Gustavus; say, a gentle foe
Has given thee to thy friendship.

Gust. You've much amaz'd me! is her name a secret?

Arr. To me it is—but you, perhaps, may guess.

Gust. No, on my word.

Arr. You too had your deliverer. [*friends,*

Gust. A kind, but not a fair, one—Well, my
Our cause is ripe, and calls us forth to action.
Tread ye not lighter? Swells not every breast
With ampler scope to take your country in,
And breathe the cause of virtue? Rise, ye
Swedes!

Rise greatly equal to this hour's importance.

On us the eyes of future ages wait,

And this day's close decides our country's fate. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Camp.

Enter CHRISTIERN, Attendants, &c. PETERSON
meets him.

Christ. What from Dalecarlia?

Peter. Late last night,
I sent a trusty slave,
And hourly wait some tidings.

Christ. Sure
The wretches will not dare such quick perdition.
I cannot think it.

Peter. I think they will not.—Though of old
I know them,

All born to broils, the very sons of tumult;
Waste is their wealth, and mutiny their birthright,
And this the yearly fever of their blood,
Their holiday of war; a day apart,
Torn out from peace, and sacred to rebellion.
Oft has their battle hung upon the brow
Of yon wild steep, a living cloud of mischiefs,
Pregnant with plagues, and empty'd on the heads
Of many a monarch.

Enter ARVIDA, guarded, and a GENTLEMAN.

Arr. Now, fate I'm caught, and what remains
is obvious.

Gent. A prisoner, good my lord.

Christ. When taken?

Gent. Now, even here, before your tent;
I mark'd his careless action, but his eye
Of studied observation—then his port
And base attire ill-suited—I inquir'd,
But found he was a stranger.

Christ. A sullen scorn
Knits up his brow, and frowns upon our presence.
What—ay—thou wouldst be thought a mystery,
Some greatness in eclipse—whence art thou, slave?
Silent! nay, then—bring forth the torture!
A smile! damnation!—How the wretch assumes
The wreck of state, the suffering soul of majesty!
What, have we no pre-eminence, no claim?
Dost thou not know thy life is in our power?

Arr. 'Tis therefore I despise it.

Christ. Matchless insolence!

What art thou? speak!

Arr. Be sure, no friend to thee; for I'm a foe
to tyrants.

Christ. Friends and fire!—

A whirlwind tear thee, most audacious traitor.

Arr. Do rage and chase, thy wrath's beneath
me, Christiern.

How poor thy power, how empty is thy happiness,
When such a wretch, as I appear to be,
Can ride thy temper, harrow up thy form,
And stretch thy soul upon the rack of passion!

Christ. I will know thee!—Bear him hence!
Why, what are kings, if slaves can brave us thus?
Go, Peterson, hold him to the rack—Tear, search
Sting him deep.— [*him,*]

[*Exit* PETERSON with ARVIDA guarded.]

Enter a MESSENGER.

What wouldst thou, fellow?

Mess. O, my sovereign lord,
I am come fast and far, from even 'till morn,
Five times I've cross'd the shade of sleepless night,
Impatient of thy presence.

Christ. Whence?

Mess. From Denmark.

Commended from the consort of thy throne
To speed and privacy.

Christ. Your words would taste of terror—

Mess. A secret malady, my gracious liege,
Some factious vapour, rising from off the skirts
Of southmost Norway, has diffus'd its bane,
And rages now within the heart of Denmark.

Christ. It must not, cannot, 'tis impossible!
What, my own Danes!

Enter PETERSON, who kneels and gives a letter.
CHRISTIERN reads it.

Christ. Gustavus!

So near us, and in arms! [time;
What's to be done? Now, Peterson, now's the
Waken all the wondrous statesman in thee.

This curs'd Gustavus
Invades my shrinking spirits, awes my heart,
And sits upon my slumbers—All in vain
Has he been daring, and have I been vigilant;
He still evades the hunter,
And, if there's power in heaven or hell, it guards
him.

His name's a host, a terror to my legions.
And by my triple crown, I swear, Gustavus,
I'd rather meet all Europe for my foe,
Than see thy face in arms!

Peter. Be calm, my liege,
And listen to a secret big with consequence,
That gives thee back the second man on earth
Whose valour could plant fears around thy throne:
Thy prisoner—

Christ. What of him?

Peter. The Prince Arvida.

Christ. How!

Peter. The same.

Christ. My royal fugitive!

Peter. Most certain. [hither.

Christ. Now, then, 'tis plain who sent him

Peter. Yes. [cross me;

Pray give me leave, my lord—a thought comes
If so, he must be ours— [Pauses.

Your pardon for a question—Has Arvida
E'er seen your beauteous daughter, your Christina?

Christ. Never—yes—possibly he might, that day
When the proud pair, Gustavus and Arvida,
Through Copenhagen drew a length of chain,
And graced my chariot wheels.—But why the
question?

Peter. I'll tell you: while even now he stood
before us,

I mark'd his high demeanour, and my eye
Claim'd some remembrance of him, though in
clouds

Doubtful and distant, but a nearer view
Renew'd the characters effac'd by absence.

Yet, lest he might presume upon a friendship
Of ancient league between us, I dissembled,
Nor seem'd to know him. On he proudly strode,
As who should say,—back, fortune, know thy
distance!

'Thus steadily he pass'd, and mock'd his fate.
When, lo! the princess to her morning walk
Came forth attended. Quick amazement seiz'd

Arvida at the sight; his steps took root,
A tremor shook him; and his alter'd cheek
Now sudden flush'd, then fled its wonted colour,
While with an eager and intemperate look,
He bent his form, and hung upon her beauties.

Christ. Ha! did our daughter note him?

Peter. No, my lord:

She pass'd regardless. Straight his pride fell from
And at her name he started; [him
Then heav'd a sigh, and cast a look to heaven,
Of such a mute, yet eloquent, emotion,
As seem'd to say—Now, Fate, thou hast prevail'd,
And found one way to triumph o'er Arvida!

Christ. But whither would this lead?

Peter. To this, my lord—

While thus his soul's unseated, shook by passion,
Could we engage him to betray Gustavus—

Christ. O empty hope! impossible!

Do I not know him, and the curs'd Gustavus?
Both fix'd in resolution deep as hell.

Peter. Ah, my liege,

No mortal footing treads so firm in virtue,
As always to abide the slippery path,
Nor deviate with the bias. Some have few,
But each man has his failing, some defect,
Wherein to slide temptation.—Leave him to me.

Christ. If thou canst bend this proud one to our
purpose,

And make the lion crouch, 'tis well—if not,
Away at once, and sweep him from remembrance.

Peter. Then I must promise deep.

Christ. Ay, any thing; outbid ambition.

Peter. Love!—

Christ. Ha! yes—our daughter too—if she can
bribe him:

But then to win him to betray his friend!

Peter. Oh, doubt it not, my lord: for if he loves,
As sure he greatly does, I have a stratagem
That holds the certainty of fate within it.
Love is a passion whose effects are various.
It ever brings some change upon the soul,
Some virtue, or some vice, till then unknown,
Degrades the hero, and makes cowards valiant.

Christ. True; when it pours upon a youthful
temper,

Open and apt to take the torrent in,
It owns no limits, no restraint it knows,
But sweeps all down, though Heaven and Hell
oppose. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—A Prison.

ARVIDA discovered in chains; Guards preparing
instruments of death and torture.—He advances
in confusion.

Arv. Off, off, vain cumbrance, ye conflicting
thoughts!

Leave me to Heaven.—O peace!—It will not be—
Just when I rose above mortality,
To pour her wondrous weight of charms upon me!
At such a time, it was—it was too much!—
For every pang these tortur'd limbs shall feel,
Descend in tenfold blessings on Gustavus! [joy,
Yes, bless him, bless him! Crown his hours with
His head with glory, and his arms with conquest;
Set his firm foot upon the neck of tyrants,
And be his name the balm of every lip
That breathes through Sweden! Worthiest to be
styled [king
Their friend, their chief, their father, and thei

Enter PETERSON.

Peter. Unbind your prisoner.

Arr. How!

Peter. You have your liberty,
And may depart unquestion'd.

Arr. Do not mock me.

It is not to be thought, while power remains,
That Christiern wants a reason to be cruel.
But let him know, I would not be oblig'd.
He, who accepts the favours of a tyrant,
Shares in his guilt; they leave a stain behind them.

Peter. You wrong the native temper of his
soul;

Cruel of force, but never of election;
Prudence compell'd him to a show of tyranny;
Howe'er, those politics are now no more,
And mercy in her turn shall shine on Sweden.

Arr. Indeed! it were a strange, a bless'd reverse,
Devoutly to be wish'd: but then, the cause,
The cause, my lord, must surely be uncommon.
May I presume?—
Perhaps a secret?

Peter. No—or, if it were,
The boldness of thy spirit claims respect,
And should be answered.—Know, the only man,
In whom our monarch ever knew repulse,
Is now our friend; that terror of the field,
Th' invincible Gustavus.

Arr. Ha! Friend to Christiern?—Guard thy-
self, my heart!

Nor seem to take alarm—[*Aside.*—Why, good
my lord,

What terror is there in a wretch proscrib'd,
Naked of means, and distant as Gustavus?

Peter. There you mistake—Nor knew we, till
this hour,

The danger was so near.—From yonder hill
He sends proposals, back'd with all the powers
Of Dalecarlia, those licentious resolute,
Who, having nought to hazard in the wreck,
Are ever foremost to foment a storm.

Arr. I were too bold to question on the terms.

Peter. No—trust me, valiant man, whose'er
thou art,

I would do much to win a worth like thine,
By any act of service, or of confidence.—
The terms Gustavus claims, indeed are haughty;
The freedom of his mother, and his sister,
His forfeit province, Gothland, and the isles
Submitted to his sceptre—But the league,
The bond of amity and lasting friendship,
Is, that he claims Christina for his bride.—
You start, and seem surpris'd.

Arr. A sudden pain
Just struck athwart my breast.—But say, my lord,
I thought you nam'd Christina?

Peter. Yes.

Arr. O torture! [*Aside.*

What of her, my good lord?

Peter. I said, Gustavus claim'd her for his bride.

Arr. His bride! his wife!
You did not mean his wife!—Do fiends feel this?

[*Aside.*
Down, heart, nor tell thy anguish!—Pray excuse
me,

Did you not say, the princess was his wife?
Whose wife, my lord?

Peter. I did not say what was, but what must be.

Arr. Touching Gustavus, was it not?

Peter. The same.

Arr. His bride!

Peter. I say his bride, his wife; his lov'd
Christina!

Christina, fancied in the very prime

And youthful smile of nature; form'd for joys
Unknown to mortals. You seem indispos'd.

Arr. The crime of constitution—Oh Gustavus!
[*Aside.*

This is too much!—And think you then, my lord—
What, will the royal Christiern e'er consent
To match his daughter with his deadliest foe?

Peter. What should he do? War else must
be eternal.

Besides, some rumours from his Danish realms
Make peace essential here.

Arr. Yes, peace has sweets
That Hybla never knew; it sleeps on down,
Cull'd gently from beneath the cherub's wings;
No bed for mortals—Man is warfare.—All
A hurricane within; yet friendship stoops,
And gilds the gloom with falsehood—Undone!
undone Arvida!

Peter. Is't possible, my lord! the prince Ar-
vida! My friend! [*Embraces him.*

Arr. Confusion to the name! [*Turns.*

Peter. Why this, good Heaven? And where-
fore thus disguis'd?

Arr. Yes, that accomplish'd traitor, that Gus-
tavus;

While he sat planning private scenes of happiness,
Oh, well dissembled! he, he sent me hither;
My friendly, unsuspecting heart a sacrifice,
To make death sure, and rid him of a rival.

Peter. A rival! Do you then love Christiern's
daughter?

Arr. Name her not, Peterson, since she can't
be mine:

Gustavus! how, ah! how hast thou deceiv'd me!
Who could have look'd for falsehood from thy
brow,

Whose heavenly arch was as the throne of virtue!
Thy eye appear'd a sun, to cheer the world,
Thy bosom truth's fair palace, and thy arms,
Benevolent, the harbour for mankind.

Peter. What's to be done? Believe me, va-
liant prince,

I know not which most sways me to thy interests,
My love to thee, or hatred to Gustavus.

Arr. Would you then save me? Think, con-
trive it quickly! [*Vengeance,*

Lend me your troops—by all the powers of
Myself will face this terror of the North,
This son of fame—this—O, Gustavus—What?
Where had I wander'd! Stab my bleeding country!
Save, shield me from that thought!

Peter. Retire, my lord;

For, see, the princess comes!

Arr. Where, where?

Ha! Yes, she comes indeed! her beauties drive
Time, place, and truth, and circumstance before
them!

Perdition pleases there—pull—tear me from her!
Yet must I gaze—but one—but one look more,
And I were lost for ever. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—An Apartment in CHRISTIERN'S
Palace.

Enter CHRISTINA and MARIANA.

Christina. Forbid it, shame! Forbid it, virgin
modesty!

No, no, my friend, Gustavus ne'er shall know it.
O! I am overpaid with conscious pleasure:
The sense but to have sav'd that wondrous man,
Is still a smiling cherub in my breast,
And whispers peace within. [*consequence,*

Mar. 'Tis strange, a man, of his high note and

Should so evade the busy search of thousands;
That six long months have shut him from inquiry,
And not an eye can trace him to his covert.

Christina. Once 'twas not so; each infant
lisp'd, Gustavus!

It was the favourite name of every language.
His slightest motions fill'd the world with tidings;
Wak'd he, or slept, fame watch'd th' important
hour,

And nations told it round.

Mar. Madam, I've heard, that when
Gustavus lay detain'd in Denmark,
Your royal father sought the hero's friendship,
And offer'd ample terms of peace and amity.

Christina. He did: he offer'd that, my Mariana,
For which contending monarchs sued in vain;
He offer'd me, his darling, his Christina;
But I was slighted, slighted by a captive,
Though kingdoms swell'd my dower.

Mar. Amazement fix me!

Rejected by Gustavus!

Christina. Yes, Mariana;—but rejected nobly.
Not worlds could win him to betray his country!
Had he consented, I had then despis'd him.
What's all the gaudy glitter of a crown?
What, but the glaring meteor of ambition,
That leads a wretch benighted in his errors,
Points to the gulf, and shines upon destruction.

Mar. You wrong your charms, whose power
might reconcile

Things opposite in Nature—Had he seen you?

Christina. I'll tell thee—Yet while inexperienced
of years,

I heard of bloody spoils, the waste of war,
And dire conflicting man; Gustavus' name
Superior rose, still dreadful in the tale:
Then first he seiz'd my infancy of soul,
As somewhat fabled of gigantic fierceness,
Too huge for any form; he scar'd my sleep,
And fill'd my young idea. Not the boast
Of all his virtues (graces only known
To him and heavenly natures!) could erase
The strong impression, 'till that wondrous day
In which he met my eyes.
What then was my amazement! he was chain'd:
Was chain'd! Like the robes
Of coronation, worn by youthful kings,
He drew his shackles. The Herculean nerve
Brac'd his young arm; and, soften'd in his cheek,
Lived more than woman's sweetness! Then his
eye!

His mien! his native dignity! He look'd,
As though he had captivity in chains,
And we were slaves around.

Mar. Did he observe you?

Christina. He did: for, as I trembled, look'd,
and sigh'd,

His eyes met mine; he fix'd their glories on me.
Confusion thrill'd me then, and secret joy,
Fast throbbing, stole its treasures from my heart,
And, mantling upward, turn'd my face to crimson.
I wish'd—but did not dare to look—he gaz'd;
When sudden, as by force, he turn'd away,
And would no more behold me.

Enter LAERTES

Laer. Ah, bright imperial maid! my royal
mistress!

Christina. What wouldst thou say? Thy
looks speak terror to me.

Laer. Oh, you are ruin'd, sacrific'd, undone!

I heard it all; your cruel, cruel father,
Has sold you, given you up a spoil to treason,
The purchase of the noblest blood on earth—
Gustavus!

Christina. Ah! What of him? Where, where
is he?

Laer. In Dalecarlia, on some great design,
Doom'd in an hour to fall by faithless hands:
His friend, the brave, the false, deceiv'd Arvida,
Even now prepares to lead a band of ruffians
Beneath the winding covert of the hill,
And seize Gustavus, obvious to the snares
Of friendship's fair dissemblance. And your father
Has vow'd your beauties to Arvida's arms,
The purchase of his falsehood.

Christina. Shield me, Heaven!
Is there no let, no means of quick prevention?

Laer. Behold my life, still chain'd to thy decree—
My will shall have a wing for every word [tion];
That breathes thy mandate.

Christina. Will you, good Laertes?

Alas! I fear to overtask thy friendship.
Say, will you save me then—Oh, go, haste, fly!
Acquaint Gustavus—if, if he must fall,
Let hosts that hem this single lion in,
Let nations hunt him down—let him fall nobly.

Laer. I go, and Heaven direct me to him.

[Exit.]

Christina. Ye powers! if deaf to all the vows I
Yet shield Gustavus, for Gustavus' sake; [make,
Protect his virtues from a faithless foe,
And save your only image left below. [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Mountains of Dalecarlia.

Enter GUSTAVUS as a peasant; SIVARD and Dalecarlians following.

Gust. Ye men of Sweden, wherefore are ye come?
See ye not yonder, how the locusts swarm,
To drink the fountains of your honour up,
And leave your hills a desert?—Wretched men!
Why came ye forth? Is this a time for sport?
Or are ye met with song and jovial feast, [ants?
To welcome your new guests, your Danish visit-
To stretch your supple necks beneath their feet,
And fawning, lick the dust?—Go, go my country-
men,

Each to your several mansions, trim them out,
Cull all the tedious earnings of your toil, [ters,
To purchase bondage.—Bid your blooming daugh-
And your chaste wives, to spread their beds with
softness;

Then go ye forth, and with your proper hands
Conduct your masters in; conduct the sons
Of lust and violation—O, Swedes! Swedes!
Heavens! are ye men, and will ye suffer this?
There was a time, my friends, a glorious time!
When, had a single man of your forefathers
Upon the frontier met a host in arms,
His courage scarce had turn'd; himself had stood,
Alone had stood, the bulwark of his country.
Come, come ye on then. Here I take my stand!
Here on the brink, the very verge, of liberty;
Although contention rise upon the clouds,
Mix heaven with earth, and roll the ruin onward,
Here will I fix, and breast me to the shock,
Till I or Denmark fall.

Siv. And who art thou,
That thus wouldst swallow all the glory up,
That should redeem the times? Behold this breast,
The sword has till'd it; and the stripes of slaves

Shall ne'er trace honour here; shall never blot
The fair inscription.—Never shall the cords
Of Danish insolence bind down these arms,
That bore my royal master from the field.

Gust. Ha! Say you, brother? Were you there.—
Oh, grief!

Where liberty and Stenon fell together?

Siv. Yes, I was there.—A bloody field it was,
Where conquest gasp'd, and wanted breath to tell
Its o'er-toil'd triumph. There our bleeding king,
There Stenon on this bosom made his bed,
And, rolling back his dying eyes upon me,
Soldier, he cried, if e'er it be thy lot
To see my gallant cousin, great Gustavus,
Tell him—for once, that I have fought like him,
And would like him have—
Conquer'd.

Gust. Oh, Danes! Danes!

You shall weep blood for this. Shall they not,
brother?

Yes, we will deal our might with thrifty vengeance,
A life for every blow, and, when we fall,
There shall be weight in't; like the tott'ring
That draw contiguous ruin. [towers,

Siv. Brave, brave man!

My soul admires thee.—By my father's spirit,
I would not barter such a death as this
For immortality! Nor we alone—

Here be the trusty gleanings of that field,
Where last we fought for freedom; here's rich
poverty, [nions;

Though wrapp'd in rags, my fifty brave compa-
Who through the force of fifteen thousand foes
Bore off their king, and sav'd his great remains.

Gust. Why, captain,

We could but die alone, with these we'll conquer.
My fellow lab'ers to—What say ye, friends?
Shall we not strike for't?

Siv. Death! Victory or death!

All. No bonds! no bonds!

Arn. Spoke like yourselves.—Ye men of Dale-
carlia,

Brave men and bold! Whom every future age
Shall mark for wondrous deeds, achievements won
From honour's dangerous summit, warriors all!
Say, might ye choose a chief—

Speak, name the man,
Who then should meet your wish?

Siv. Forbear the theme. [weight

Why wouldst thou seek to sink us with the
Of grievous recollection? Oh, Gustavus!
Could the dead wake, thou wert the man.

Gust. Didst thou know Gustavus?

Siv. Know him! Oh, Heaven! what else,
who else was worth

The knowledge of a soldier? That great day,
When Christiern, in his third attempt on Sweden,
Had summ'd his powers, and weigh'd the scale
of fight;

On the bold brink, the very push of conquest,
Gustavus rush'd, and bore the battle down;
In his full sway of prowess, like Leviathan
That scoops his foaming progress on the main,
And drives the shoals along—forward I sprang,
All emulous, and lab'ring to attend him;
Fear fled before, behind him rout grew loud,
And distant wonder gaz'd.—At length he turn'd,
And having eyed me with a wondrous look [ble!
Of sweetness mix'd with glory—Grace inestima-
He pluck'd this bracelet from his conquering arm,
And bound it here.—My wrist seem'd treble nerv'd:
My heart spoke to him, and I did such deeds.

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As best might thank him.—But from that bless'd
day

I never saw him more—yet still to this,
I bow, as to the relics of my saint:
Each morn I drop a tear on every bead,
Count all the glories of Gustavus o'er,
And think I still behold him.

Gust. Rightly thought;

For so thou dost, my soldier.

Behold your general,
Gustavus! come once more to lead you on
To laurel'd victory, to fame, to freedom!

Siv. Strike me, ye powers!—It is illusion all!
It cannot—It is, it is!

[Falls and embraces his knees

Gust. Oh, speechless eloquence!

Rise to my arms, my friend.

Siv. Friend! say you, friend?

O, my heart's lord! my conqueror! my—

Gust. Approach, my fellow soldiers, your Gus-
Claims no precedence here. [tavus

Haste, brave men!

Collect your friends, to join us on the instant;
Summon our brethren to their share of conquest,
And let loud echo, from her circling hills,
Sound freedom, till the undulation shake
The bounds of utmost Sweden.

[Exeunt Dalecarlians, shouting

Enter LAERTES.

Laer. Thy presence nobly speaks the man I
wish, Gustavus.

Gust. Thou hast a hostile garb;

Ha! say—art thou Laertes? If I err not,
There is a friendly semblance in that face,
Which answers to a fond impression here,
And tells me I'm thy debtor—

Laer. No, valiant prince, you over-rate my
service;

There is a worthier object of your gratitude,
Whom yet you know not.—Oh, I have to tell—
But then, to gain your credit, must unfold
What haply should be secret.—Be it so;
You are all honour.

Gust. Let me to thy mind,

For thou hast wak'd my soul into a thought
That holds me all attention.

Laer. Mightiest man!

To me alone you held yourself oblig'd
For life and liberty.—Had it been so,
I were more bless'd, with retribution just
To pay thee for my own.—For on the day
When by your arm the mighty Thracas fell,
Fate threw me to your sword.—You spar'd my
And, in the very whirl and rage of fight, [youth,
Your eye was taught compassion—from that hour
I vow'd my life the slave of your remembrance;
And often as Christina, heavenly maid!
The mistress of my service, question'd me
Of wars and vent'rous deeds, my tidings came
Still freighted with thy name, until the day
In which yourself appear'd, to make praise speech
Christina saw you then, and on your fate [less.
Dropp'd a kind tear; and, when your noble scorn:
Of proffer'd terms provok'd her father's rage
To take the deadly forfeit, she she only,
Whose virtues watch'd the precious hour of
mercy,

All trembling, sent my secret hand to save you,
Where, through a pass unknown to all vici-
keepers,

I led you forth and gave you to your liberty

Gust. Oh, I am sunk, o'erwhelm'd with wondrous goodness,
But were I rich and free as open mines,
That teem their golden wealth upon the world,
Still I were poor, unequal to her bounty.
Nor can I longer doubt, whose generous arm
In my Arvida, in my friend's deliverance,
Gave double life and freedom to Gustavus.

Laer. A fatal present! Ah, you know him not;
Arvida is misled; undone by passion;
False to your friendship, to your trust unfaithful.

Gust. Ha! hold!

Laer. I must unfold it.

Gust. Yet forbear.

This way—I hear some footing—pray you, soft—
If thou hast aught to urge against Arvida,
The man of virtue, tell it not the wind;
Lest slander catch the sound, and guilt should triumph
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Mountains of Dalecarlia.

Enter ARVIDA, speaking to a MESSENGER.

Arr. He's here —bear back my orders to your
That not a man, on peril of his life, [fellows,
Advance in sight 'till call'd.

Mess. My lord, I will. [Exit.

Arr. Have I not vow'd it, faithless as he is,
Have I not vow'd his fall? Yet, good Heaven!
Why start these sudden tears? On, on I must,
For I am half way down the dizzy steep, [now—
Where my brain turns.—A draught of Lethe
Oh, that the world would sleep—to wake no more!
Or that the name of friendship bore no charm
To make my nerve unsteady, and this steel
Fly backward from its task! it shall be done.—
Empire! Christina! though th' affrighted sun
Start back with horror of the direful stroke,
It shall be done. Ha! he comes!
How steadily he looks, as Heaven's own book,
The leaf of truth, were open'd on his aspect!
Up, up dark minister—his fate calls out
[*Puts up the dagger.*

To nobler execution; for he comes
In opposition, singly, man to man,
As though he brav'd my wish.

Enter GUSTAVUS.

[*They look for some time on each other; ARVIDA lays his hand on his Sword, and withdraws it by turns; then advances irresolutely.*]

Gust. Is it then so?

Arr. Defend thyself.

Gust. No—strike—

I would unfold my bosom to thy sword,
But that I know, the wound you give this breast
Would doubly pierce thy own.

Arr. I know thee not—

It is the time's eclipse, and what should be
In nature, now is nameless.

Gust. Ah, my brother!

Arr. What wouldst thou?

Gust. Is it thus we two should meet?

Arr. Art thou not false? Deep else, oh, deep
Were my damnation. [indeed,

Gust. Dear, unhappy man!

My heart bleeds for thee. False I'd surely been,
Had I like thee been tempted.

Arr. Ha! Speak, speak,

Didst thou not send to treat with Christiern?

Gust. Never.

I know thy error, but I know the arts,
The frauds, the wiles, that practis'd on thy virtue;
Firm how you stood, and tower'd above mortality;
Till, in the fond unguarded hour of love,
The wily undermining tempter came,
And won thee from thyself—a moment won thee—
For still thou art Arvida, still the man
On whom thy country calls for her deliverance.
Already are her bravest sons in arms; [Shout.
Mark how they shout, impatient of our presence,
To lead them on to a new life of liberty,
To name, to conquest.—Ha! Heaven guard my brother!

Thy cheek turns pale, thy eye looks wild upon me;
Wilt thou not answer me?

Arr. Gustavus!

Gust. Speak.

Arr. Have I not dream'd?

Gust. No other I esteem it.

Where lives the man, whose reason slumbers not?
Still pure, still blameless, if, at wonted dawn,
Again he wakes to virtue.

Arr. Oh, my dawn

Must soon be dark. Confusion dissipates,
To leave me worse confounded.

Gust. Think no more on't.

Come to my arms, thou dearest of mankind!

Arr. Stand off! Pollution dwells within my touch,

And horror hangs around me.—Cruel man!
Oh, thou hast doubly damn'd me with this good-
For resolution held the deed as done, [ness;
That now must sink me.—Hark! I'm summon'd hence,

My audit opens! Poise me! for I stand
Upon a spire, against whose sightless base
Hell breaks his wave beneath. Down, down I dare not,
And up I cannot look, for justice fronts me.—
Thou shalt have vengeance; though my purpling blood

Were nectar for Heaven's bowl, as warm and rich,
As now 'tis base, it thus should pour for pardon.

[*GUSTAVUS catches his arm, and in the struggle the dagger falls.*

Gust. Ha! hold, Arvida.—No, I will not lose thee—

Forbid it, Heaven! thou shalt not rob me so;
No, I will struggle with thee to the last,
And save thee from thyself. Oh, answer me!
Wilt thou forsake me? Answer me, my brother.

Arr. Expose me, cage me, brand me for the tool
Of crafted villains, for the veriest slave,
On whom the bend of each contemptuous brow
Shall look with loathing. Ah, my turpitude
Shall be the vile comparative of knaves
To boast and whiten by!

Gust. Not so, not so.

He, who knows no fault, knows no perfection.
The rectitude, that Heaven appoints to man,
Leads on through error; and the kindly sense
Of having stray'd, endears the road to bliss;
It makes Heaven's way more pleasing! O my
'Tis hence a thousand cordial charities [brother,
Derive their growth, their vigour, and their sweetness.

This short lapse
Shall to thy future foot give cautious treading,
Erect and firm in virtue.

Arr. Give me leave.

[*Offers to pass.*

Gust. You shall not pass.

Arr. I must.

Gust. Whither?

Arr. I know not—O Gustavus!

Gust. Speak.

Arr. You can't forgive me.

Gust. Not forgive thee!

Arr. No:

Look there. [*Points to the Dagger.*]

And yet, when I resolv'd to kill thee,

I could have died—indeed I could—for thee,

I could have died, Gustavus!

Gust. Oh, I know it.

[*passion.*]
A generous mind, though sway'd a while by
Is like the steely vigour of the bow,

Still holds its native rectitude, and bends

But to recoil more forceful. Come, forget it.

Enter SIVARD.

Siv. My lord, as now I pass'd the mountain's
brow,

I spy'd some men, whose arms, and strange attire,
Give cause for circumspection.

Gust. Danes, perhaps;

Haste, intercept their passage to the camp.

[*Exit SIVARD.*]

Arr. Those are the Danes, that witness to my
shame.

[*Arvida;*]
Gust. Perish th' opprobrious term! not so,
Myself will be the guardian of thy fame;

Trust me, I will—But see, our friends approach—

Oh, clear,

While I attend them, clear that cloud, my brother,
That sits upon the morning of thy youth.

*Enter ANDERSON, ARNOLDUS, SIVARD,
OFFICERS, &c.*

And. Let us all see him!

[*hearts,*]
Gust. Amazement, I perceive, hath fill'd your
And joy, for that your lost Gustavus, 'scap'd
Through wounds, imprisonments, and chains, and
deaths,

Thus sudden, thus unlook'd for, stands before ye.

As one escap'd from cruel hands I come,

From hearts that ne'er knew pity;

And know no music but the groans of Sweden.

Yet, not for that my sister's early innocence

And mother's age now grind beneath captivity;

Nor that one bloody, one remorseless hour

Swept my great sire and kindred from my side;

For them, Gustavus weeps not;

But, O great parent, when I think on thee!

Thy numberless, thy nameless, shameful infamies,

My widow'd country! Sweden! when I think

Upon thy desolation, spite of rage—

And vengeance that would choke them—tears
will flow.

And. Oh, they are villains, every Dane of them,
Practis'd to stab and smile; to stab the babe,
That smiles upon them.

Arr. What accursed hours

Roll o'er those wretches, who, to fiends like these,
In their dear liberty have barter'd more

Than worlds will rate for?

Gust. O liberty, Heaven's choice prerogative!

True bond of law, thou social soul of property,

Thou breath of reason, life of life itself!

For thee the valiant bleed. O sacred liberty!

Wing'd from the summer's snare, from flattering
ruin,

Like the bold stork you seek the wintery shore,

Leave courts, and pomps, and palaces to slaves,

Cleave to the cold, and rest upon the storm.

Upborne by thee, my soul disdain'd the terms
Of empire—are ye not at the hands of tyrants?
Are ye not mark'd, ye men of Dalecarlia,
Are ye not mark'd by all the circling world
As the last stake; what but liberty, [years,
Through the fam'd course of thirteen hundred
Alloof hath held invasion from your hills,
And sanctified their shame?—And will ye, will ye
Shrink from the hopes of the expecting world;
Bid your high honours stoop to foreign insult,
And in one hour give up to infamy
The harvest of a thousand years of glory?

And. Die all first!

Gust. Yes, die by piecemeal!

Leave not a limb o'er which a Dane may triumph
Now from my soul I joy, I joy my friends,
To see ye fear'd; to see, that even your foes
Do justice to your valour!—There they be,
The powers of kingdoms, summ'd in yonder host,
Yet kept aloof, yet trembling to assail ye.

And, oh, when I look round and see you here,
Of number short, but prevalent in virtue,
My heart swells high, and burns for the encounter.

True courage but from opposition grows;
And what are fifty, what a thousand slaves,
Match'd to the sinew of a single arm
That strikes for liberty? that strikes to save
His fields from fire, his infants from the sword,
His couch from lust, his daughters from pollution,
And his large honours from eternal infamy?
What doubt we then? Shall we, shall we stand
here!

Let us on!

Oh, yes, I read your lovely fierce impatience!

You shall not be withheld; we will rush on them—
This is indeed to triumph.

And. Oh, lead us on, Gustavus; one word more
Is but delay of conquest.

Gust. Take your wish.

He, who wants arms, may grapple with the foe,
And so be furnish'd. You, most noble Anderson,
Divide our powers, and with the fam'd Olaus
Take the left route—You, Eric, great in arms!
With the renown'd Nederbi, hold the right,
And skirt the forest down; then wheel at once,
Confess'd to view, and close upon the vale:
Myself, and my most valiant cousin here,
Th' invincible Arvida, gallant Sivard,
Arnoldus, and these hundred hardy veterans,
Will pour directly on, and lead the onset.
Bold are our hearts, and nervous are our hands.
With us, truth, justice, fame, and freedom close,
Each singly equal to a host of foes. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

*Enter CHRISTIERN, CHRISTINA, MARIANA, and
PETERSON.*

Christina. I heard, it was your royal pleasure
I should attend your highness. [*Sir*]

Christ. Yes, Christina,
But business interferes.

[*Exeunt CHRISTINA and MARIAN*]

Enter an OFFICER.

Off. My sovereign liege,
Wide o'er the western shelving of yon hill,
We think, though indistinctly, we can spy.
Like men in motion mustering on the heath,
And there is one, who saith he can discern
A few of martial gesture, and bright arms,
Who this way bend their action.

Christ. Friends, perhaps,
For fies it were too daring.—Haste thee, Peterson,
Detach a thousand of our Danish horse
To rule their motions—we will out ourself,
And hold our powers in readiness.—Lead on.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Another Apartment in the Palace.

Enter CHRISTINA and MARIANA.

Mar. Ha! did you mark, my princess, did you mark?

Should some reverse, some wondrous whirl of fate,
Once more return Gustavus to the battle,
New nerve his arm, and wreath his brow with conquest;

Say, would you not repent that e'er you sav'd
This dreadful man, the foe of your great race;
Who pours impetuous in his country's cause
To spoil you of a kingdom?

Christina. No, my friend.

Had I to death, or bondage, sold my sire,
Or had Gustavus on our native realms
Made hostile inroad; then, my Mariana,
Had I then sav'd him from the stroke of justice,
I should not cease my suit to Heaven for pardon.
But if, though in a foe, to reverence virtue,
Withstand oppression, rescue injur'd innocence,
Step boldly in betwixt my sire and guilt,
And save my king, my father, from dishonour;
If this be sin, I have shook hands with penitence.
First perish crowns, dominion, all the shine
And transience of this world, ere guilt shall serve
To buy the vain incumbrance.

Blasted be that royalty, [glorious!
Which murder must make sure, and crimes in-
The bulk of kingdoms, nay, the world is light,
When guilt weighs opposite—Oh, would to Hea-
ven,

The loss of empire would restore his innocence,
Restore the fortunes and the precious lives
Of thousands, fallen the victims of ambition!

Enter LAERTES.

Does he live?

Laer. He does,
But death, ere night, must fill a long account;
The camp, the country's in confusion: war
And changes ride upon the hour that hastes
To intercept my tongue—I else could tell
Of virtues hitherto beyond my ken;
Courage, to which the lion stoops his crest,
Yet grafted upon qualities as soft
As a rock'd infant's meekness; such as tempts
Against my faith, my country, and allegiance,
To wish thee speed, Gustavus.

Christina. Then you found him! [death

Laer. I did; and warn'd him, but in vain; for
'To him appear'd more grateful than to find
His friend's dishonour.

Christina. Give me the manner—quick—soft,
good Laertes!

Enter CHRISTIERN, PETERSON, Danes, &c.

Christ. Damn'd, double traitor! O curs'd, false
Arvida!

Guard well the Swedish prisoners.
Stand to your arms.—Bring forth the captives
there!

Enter AUGUSTA and GUSTAVA, guarded.

Peter. My liege—

Christ. Away!

Fortune! we will not trust the changeling more
But wear her girt upon our armed loins,
Or pointed in our grasp.

Enter an OFFICER.

Off. The foe's at hand.
With gallant show your thousand Danes rode
forth,

But shall return no more!—I mark'd the action.
A band of desperate resolute rushed on them,
Scarce numbering to a tenth, and in midway
They closed; the shock was dreadful, nor your
Danes [stood;
Could bear the madding charge; a while they
They shrunk, and broke and turn'd—When, lo!
behind,

Fast wheeling from the right and left, there pour'd,
Who intercepted their return, and caught
Within the toil they perish'd.

Christ. 'Tis Gustavus!

No mortal else, not Ammon's boasted son,
Not Cæsar, would have dar'd it. Tell me, say,
What numbers in the whole may they amount to?

Off. About five thousand.

Christ. And no more?

Off. No more,
That yet appear.

Christ. We count six times their sum.—

Haste, soldier, take a trumpet, tell Gustavus
We have of terms to offer, and would treat
Touching his mother's ransom; say, her death
Suspended by our grace, but waits his answer.

[*Exit OFFICER.*]

Madam, it should well suit with your authority,

[*To AUGUSTA.*]

To check this frenzy in your son—Look to it,
Or, by the saints, this hour's your last of life!

Aug. Come, my Gustava, come, my little cap-
tive!

We shall be free:

And I will give thee to thy father's fondness,
And to the arms of all thy royal race
In heaven; who sit on thrones, with loves and joys.

Christ. Is this my answer?

Come forth, ye ministers of death, come forth.

*Enter Ruffians, who seize AUGUSTA and
GUSTAVA.*

Pluck them asunder! We shall prove you, lady;
Christina. Ah! I can hold no longer. Royal Sir,

Thus on my knees, and lower, lower still—

Christ. My child! what mean you?

Christina. O my gracious father!

Kill, kill me rather—let me perish first;

But do not stain the sanctity of kings
With the sweet blood of helpless innocence.

Augusta. Ha! who art thou,
That look'st so like the 'habitants of heaven,
Like mercy sent upon the morning's blush,
To glad the heart, and cheer a gloomy world
With light 'till now unknown?

Christ. Away, they come.

I'll hear no more of your ill-timed petitions.

Christina. Oh yet for pity!

Christ. I will none on't, leave me.

Pity! it is the infant fool of nature;

Tear off her hold, and bear her to her tent.

[*Exeunt CHRISTINA, MARIANA, LAERTES
and Attendants.*]

Enter an OFFICER.

Off. My liege, Gustavus, though with much
reluctance,

Consents to one hour's truce. His soldiers rest
Upon their arms, and, follow'd by a few
He comes to know your terms.

Christ. I see.

Be ready, slaves, and on the word,
Plunge deep your daggers in their bosoms.

[*Points to AUGUSTA.*]

Enter GUSTAVUS, ARVIDA, ANDERSON, ARNOLDUS, SIVARD, &c.

Hold!

Gust. Ha! 'tis, it is my mother!

Christ. Tell me, Gustavus, tell me why is this?
That, as a stream diverted from the banks
Of smooth obedience, thou hast drawn those
men

Upon a dry unchannell'd enterprize,
To turn their inundation?—Are the lives
Of my misguided people held so light,
That thus thou'dst push them on the keen rebuke
Of guarded majesty?

Look round, unruly boy, thy battle comes
Like raw, disjointed mustering; feeble wrath!
A war of waters borne against the rock
Of our firm continent, to fume, and chafe,
And shiver in the toil.

Gust. Mistaken man!

I come empower'd, and strengthen'd in thy weakness.

For though the structure of a tyrant's throne
Rise on the necks of half the suffering world,
Fear trembles in the cement!

Christ. Gustavus, wouldst thou yet return to
grace,

And hold thy motions in the sphere of duty,
Acceptance might be found.

Gust. Imperial spoiler!

Give me my father, give me back my kindred,
Give me the fathers of ten thousand orphans,
Give me the sons, in whom thy ruthless sword
Has left our widows childless: mine they were,
Both mine, and every Swede's, whose patriot
breast

Bleeds in his country's woundings! O thou canst
not!

Give me then,
My all that's left, my gentle mother there,
And spare yon little trembler!

Christ. Yes, on terms

Of compact and submission.

Gust. Ha! with thee? [country?

Compact with thee! and mean'st thou for my
For Sweden! No—so hold my heart but firm,
Although it wring for't; though blood drop for
tears,

And at the sight my straining eyes start forth—
They both shall perish first.

Christ. Slaves, do your office.

Gust. Hold yet.—Thou canst not be so damn'd!
my mother!

I dare not ask thy blessing.—Where 's Arvida?
Where art thou? Come, my friend, thou'st known
temptation—

And therefore best canst pity, or support me.

Arr. Alas! I shall but serve to weigh thee
downward,

To pull thee from the dazzling, sightless height,
At which thy virtue soars. For, oh, Gustavus,
My soul is dark, disconsolate and dark;
Sick to the world, and hateful to myself,

I have no country now; I've nought but thee,
And should yield up the interest of mankind,

33*

Where thine 's in question.

Aug. See, my son relents;
Behold, O king! yet spare us but a moment,
His little sister shall embrace his knees,
And these fond arms, around his duteous neck,
Shall join to bend him to us.

Christ. Could I trust ye—

Arr. I'll be your hostage!

Christ. Granted.

Gust. Hold, my friend.

[*Here ARVIDA breaks from GUSTAVUS, and
passes to CHRISTIERN'S party, while
AUGUSTA and GUSTAVA go over to GUSTAVUS.*]

Aug. Is it then given, yet given me, ere I die,
To see thy face, Gustavus? thus to gaze,
To touch, to fold thee thus!—My son, my son!
And have I liv'd to this? It is enough.
All arm'd and, in my country's precious cause,
Terribly beauteous, to behold thee thus!
Why, 'twas my only, hourly suit to Heaven,
And now 'tis granted. O my glorious child,
Bless'd were the throes I felt for thee, Gustavus!
For from the breast, from out your swathing bands
You stepp'd the child of honour.

Gust. O my mother!

[eye?

Aug. Why stands that water trembling in thy
Why heaves thy bosom? Turn not thus away,
'Tis the last time that we must meet, my child,
And I will have the whole. Why, why Gustavus,
Why is this form of heaviness? For me
I trust it is not meant; you cannot think
So poorly of me: I grow old, my son,
And to the utmost period of mortality,
I ne'er should find a death's hour like to this,
Whereby to do thee honour.

Gust. Roman patriots!

Ye Decii, self-devoted to your country!
You gave no mothers up! Will annals yield
No precedent for this, no elder boast
Whereby to match my trial?

Aug. No, Gustavus;

For Heaven still squares our trial to our strength,
And thine is of the foremost.—Noble youth!
Even I, thy parent, with a conscious pride,
Have often bow'd to thy superior virtues.
Oh, there is but one bitterness in death,
One only sting—

Gust. Speak, speak!

Aug. 'Tis felt for thee.

Too well I know thy gentleness of soul,
Melting as babes; even now the pressure 's on thee,
And bends thy loveliness to earth—Oh, child!
The dear but sad foretaste of thy affliction
Already kills thy mother—But behold,
Behold thy valiant followers, who to thee,
And to the faith of thy protecting arm,
Have given ten thousand mothers, daughters too;
Who in thy virtue yet may learn to bear
Millions of freeborn sons to bless thy name,
And pray for their deliverer—Oh farewell!
This and but this, the very last adieu!
Heaven sit victorious on thy arm, my son!
And give thee to thy merits!

Christ. Ah, thou trait'ress!

Aug. See, Gustavus,

My little captive waits for one embrace.

Gust. Come to my arms, thou lamblike sacrifice;
Oh, that they were of force to fold thee ever,
To let thee to my heart! there lock thee close,
But 'twill not be!

Arr. Hear me, thou most dear Gustavus!
Thus low I bend my prayer, reject me not:

If once, if ever, thou didst love Arvida,
Oh leave me here to answer to the wrath
Of this fell tyrant. Save thy honour'd mother
And that sweet lamb from slaughter!

Gust. Cruel friendship!

Christ. And by my life I'd take thee at thy word,
But that I know 'twould please thee.

Aug. No, generous prince, thy blood shall never be

The price of our dishonour. Come, my child;
Weep not, sweet babe, there shall no harm come
nigh thee.

Christ. 'Tis well, proud dame; you are return'd,
I see—

Each to his charge—Here break we off, Gustavus;
For to the very teeth of thy rebellion
We dash defiance back.

Gust. Alas, my mother!

Grief chokes up utterance, else I have to say
What never tongue unfolded—Yet return,
Come back, and I will give up all to save thee;
Thou fountain of my life!

Dearer than mercy is to kneeling penitence,
My early blessing, first and latest joy;
Return, return and save thy lost Gustavus!

Christ. No more, thou trifler!

Aug. Oh, farewell for ever!

[*Exeunt CHRISTIERN and his party.* GUSTAVUS and his party remain.]

Gust. Then she is gone—Arvida! Anderson!
For ever gone—Arnoldus, friends, where are ye?
Help here, heave, heave this mountain from me—
Oh—

Heaven keep my senses!—So—We will to battle;

But let no banners wave—Be still, thou trump!
And every martial sound, that gives the war
To pomp or levity; for vengeance now
Is clad with heavy arms, sedately stern,
Resolv'd, but silent as the slaughter'd heaps
O'er which my soul is brooding.

Arn. O Gustavus!

Is there a Swede of us, whose sword and soul
Grapple not to thee, as to all they hold
Of earthly estimation? Said I more,
It were but half my thought.

And. On thee we gaze,

As one unknown till this important hour;
Pre-eminent of men!

Siv. Accurs'd be he,

Who, in thy leading, will not fight and strive,
And bleed, and gasp with pleasure!

And. We are thine.

Arn. Though, to yield us up,
Had scarce been less than virtue.

Gust. O my friends!

I see, 'tis not for man to boast his strength
Before the trial comes—This very hour,
Had I a thousand parents, all seem'd light,
When weigh'd against my country; and but now,
One mother seem'd of weight to poise the world,
I though conscious truth and reason were against
her.

For, oh, howe'er the partial passions sway,
High Heaven assigns but one unbiass'd way;
Direct through every opposition leads,
Where shelves decline, and many a steep impedes.
Here hold we on—though thwarting fiends alarm,
Here hold we on—though devious syrens charm;
In Heaven's disposing power events unite,
Nor aught can happen wrong to him, who acts
aright. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Royal Tent, near the Field of Battle.

Enter CHRISTINA and MARIANA.

Christina. Hark! Mariana, list!—No—all is silent—

It was not fancy, sure—didst thou not hear?

Mar. Too plain, the voice of terror seiz'd my ear,

And my heart sinks within me.

Christina. Oh, I fear

The war is now at work.—As winds, methought,
Long borne through hollow vaults, the sound approach'd;

One sound, yet laden with a thousand notes
Of fearful variation; then it swell'd

To distant shouts, now coming on the gale;
Again borne backward with a parting groan,
All sunk to horrid stillness.

Enter LAERTES.

Laer. Christina, fly! thou royal virgin,
This morn beheld thee mistress of the north,
Bright heir of Scandinavia; and this hour
Has left thee not, throughout thy wide dominions,
Whereon to rest thy foot.

Christina. Now, praise to Heaven!
Say, but my father lives!

Laer. At your command

I went; and, from a neighb'ring summit, view'd
Where either host stood adverse, sternly wedg'd;
Reflecting, on each other's gloomy front,
Fell hate and fix'd defiance.—When at once
The foe mov'd on, attendant to the steps
Of their Gustavus—He, with mournful pace,
Came slow and silent; till two hapless Danes
Prick'd forth, and on his helm discharg'd their
fury;

Then rous'd the lion! To my wondering sight
His stature grew twofold, before his eye
All force seem'd wither'd, and his horrid plume
Shook wild dismay around; as Heaven's dread
bolt

He shot, he pierc'd our legions; in his strength
His shouting squadron gloried, rushing on
Where'er he led their battle—Full five times,
Hemm'd by our mightier host, the foe seem'd lost,
And swallow'd from my sight; five times again,
Like flames they issued to the light—And thrice
These eyes beheld him, they beheld Gustavus
Unhorsed, and by a host girt singly in;
And thrice he broke through all.

Christina. My blood runs chill.

Laer. With such a strenuous, such a labour'd
conflict,

Sure never field was fought! until Gustavus
Aloud cried, Victory! and on his spear
High rear'd th' imperial diadem of Denmark;
Then slack'd the battle; then recoil'd our host;
His, echoed, Victory! and now would know
No bounds; rout follow'd, and the face of fight—
She heeds me not.

Christina. Oh, ill-starr'd royalty!

My father! cruel, dear, unhappy father!
Summon'd so sudden! fearful, fearful thought!

Enter CHRISTIERN, flying, without his helmet, in disorder, his Sword broke, and his garments bloody; he throws away his Sword.

Christ. Give us new arms of proof—fresh
horses—quick!

A watch without there—Set a standard up
To guide our scatter'd powers! Haste, my friends,
haste!

We must be gone—Oh for some cooling stream,
To slake a monarch's thirst!

Laer. A post, my liege,
A second post from Denmark, says—
Christ. All's lost.

Is it not so? Be gone,
Give me a moment's solitude—Thought, thought,
Where wouldst thou lead?

Christina. He sees me not—Alas, alas my
father!

Oh, what a war there lives within his eye!
Where greatness struggles to survive itself.

I tremble to approach him; yet I fain
Would bring peace to him—Dont you know me,
Sir?

Christ. My child!

Christina. I am.

Christ. Curse me, then! curse me! join with
Heaven, and earth,
And hell, to curse!

Christina. Patience and peace
Possess thy mind! Not all thy pride of empire
E'er gave such bless'd sensations, as one hour
Of penitence, though painful—Let us hence—
Far from the blood and bustle of ambition.
Be it my task to watch thy rising wish,
To smooth thy brow, find comfort for thy cares,
And for thy will, obedience; still to cheer
The day with smiles, and lay the nightly down
Beneath thy slumbers.

Christ. Oh! thou all that's left me!
Even in the riot, in the rage of fight,
Thy guardian virtues watch'd around my head,
When else no arm could aid; for through my
ranks,

My circling troops, the fell Gustavus rush'd;
Vengeance! he cried, and with one eager hand
Grip'd fast my diadem—his other arm,
High rear'd the deathful steel—suspended yet;
For in his eye, and through his varying face,
Conflicting passions fought—he look'd—he stood
In wrath reluctant—then, with gentler voice;
Christina, thou hast conquer'd! Go, he cried,
I yield thee to her virtues. *[Exeunt.]*

*Enter GUSTAVUS, ANDERSON, ARNOLDUS, SI-
VARD, &c. in triumph. GUSTAVUS advances,
and the rest range themselves on each side of
the Stage.*

Gust. That we have conquer'd, first we bend
to Heaven!

And. And next to thee!

All. To thee, to thee, Gustavus!

Gust. No, matchless men! my brothers of the
war!

Be it my greatest glory to have mix'd
My arms with yours, and to have fought for once
Like to a Dalecarlian; like to you,
The sires of honour, of a new born fame.
To be transmitted, from your great memorial,
To climes unknown, to age succeeding age,
Till time shall verge upon eternity,
And patriots be no more—

Arn. Behold, my lord,
The Danish prisoners, and the traitor Peterson,
Attend their fate.

Gust. Send home the Danes with honour,
And let them better learn, from our example,
To treat whom next they conquer with humanity.

And. But then, for Peterson?

Gust. His crimes are great;

A single death were a reward for treason,
Let him still languish—let him be exiled,
No more to see the land of liberty,
The hills of Sweden, nor the native fields
Of known, endear'd Idea.

And. Royal Sir,
This is to pardon, to encourage villains:
And hourly to expose that sacred life,
Where all our safety centres.

Gust. Fear them not.

The fence of virtue is a chief's best caution;
And the firm surety of my people's hearts
Is all the guard that e'er shall wait Gustavus.
I am a soldier from my youth;
Trust me, my friend,
Except in such a cause as this day's quarrel,
I would not shed a single wretch's blood,
For the world's empire!

Arn. O exalted Sweden!
Bless'd people! Heaven! wherein have we deserv'd
A man like this to rule us?

*Enter ARVIDA, leading in CHRISTINA—he runs
to GUSTAVUS.*

Gust. My Arvida!

Arn. My king! O hail! Thus let me pay my
homage. *[Kneels]*

Christina. Renown'd Gustavus! Mightiest
among men!

If such a wretch, the captive of thy arms,
Trembling and awed in thy superior presence,
May find the grace, that every other finds,
(For thou art said to be of wondrous goodness!)
Then hear, and oh, excuse a foe's presumption,
While low, thus low, you see a suppliant child
Now pleading for a father; for a dear,
Much lov'd, if cruel, yet unhappy father.
If he with circling nations could not stand
Against thee single; singly, what can he
When thou art fenc'd with nations?

Gust. Ha! that posture!

Oh, rise—surpris'd, my eye perceiv'd it not.
I've much to say, but that my tongue, my thoughts
Are troubled; warr'd on by unusual passions.
'Twas hence thou had'st it in thy power to ask
Ere I could offer—Come, my friend, assist,
Instruct me to be grateful. O Christina,
I fought for freedom, not for crowns, thou fair one,
They shall sit brighter on that beauteous head,
Whose eye might awe the monarchs of the earth,
And light the world to virtue—My Arvida!

Arn. I read thy soul, I see the generous conflict,
And come to fix, not trouble, thy repose.
Could you but know with what an eager haste
I sprung to execute thy late commands;
To shield this lovely object of thy cares,
And give her thus, all beauteous, to thy eyes!
For I've no bliss but thine, have lost the form
Of every wish that's foreign to thy happiness.

Gust. Alas! your cheek is pale—you bleed, my
brother!

Arn. I do indeed—to death.

Gust. You have undone me:
Rash, headstrong man!—Oh, was this well, Ar-
vida?

Arn. Pardon, Gustavus! mine's the common lot,
The fate of thousands fallen this day in battle.
I had resolv'd on life, to see you bless'd;
To see my king and his Christina happy.
Turn, thou lov'd, thou honour'd next to Heaven,

And to thy arms receive a penitent,
Who never more shall wrong thee.

Gust. O Arvida!

Friend! Friend!

[*Embraces him.*]

Arv. Thy heart beats comfort to me! in this
breast,

Let thy Arvida, let thy friend, survive.
Oh, strip his once lov'd image of its frailties,
And strip it too of every fonder thought,
That may give thee affliction—Do, Gustavus;
It is my last request; for Heaven and thou
Art all the care, and business—of Arvida.

[*Dies.*]

Gust. Wouldst thou too leave me?
Not if the heart, the arms, of thy Gustavus,
Have force to hold thee.

Christina. O delightful notes!
That I do love thee, yes, 'tis true, my lord.
The bond of virtue, friendship's sacred tie,
The lover's pains, and all the sister's fondness;
But I have a father,
If cruel, yet a father:

Abandon'd now by every supple wretch,
That fed his years with flattery. I am all
That 's left to calm, to sooth, his troubled soul
To penitence, to virtue. [*Exit.*]

[*GUSTAVUS looks after CHRISTINA, then turns
and looks on ARVIDA:—ANDERSON, AR-
NOLDUS, &c. advance.*]

Gust. Come, come, my brothers all! Yes, I
will strive

To be the sum of every title to ye,
And you shall be my sire, my friend reviv'd
My sister, mother, all that 's kind and dear;
For so Gustavus holds ye.—Oh, I will
Of private passions all my soul divest,
And take my dearer country to my breast.
To public good transfer each fond desire,
And clasp my Sweden, with a lover's fire.
Well pleas'd, the weight of all her burdens bear,
Dispense all pleasure, but engross all care.
Still quick to find, to feel, my people's woes,
And wake, that millions may enjoy repose.

[*Exeunt.*]

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY DR. GOLDSMITH.

REMARKS.

It has been observed, that no man took less pains with his compositions than Goldsmith, and yet produced so powerful an effect: a happy originality distinguishes all his writings. Nature and Genius preside over the comedy before us, which restored to the stage, wit, gaiety, incident, and character, in the place of that over-dose of sentimentality and affectation which so long prevailed.

"The language throughout is easy and characteristical; the manners of the times are slightly, but faithfully, represented; the satire is not ostentatiously displayed, but involved in the business of the play; and the suspense of the audience is artfully kept up to the last."—*Davies*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at COVENT GARDEN, 1773.

DRURY LANE, 1814.

SIR CHARLES MARLOW,.....	<i>Mr. Gardner</i>	<i>Mr. R. Phillips</i> .
HARDCASTLE,.....	<i>Mr. Shuter</i>	<i>Mr. Downton</i> .
YOUNG MARLOW,.....	<i>Mr. Lee Lewis</i>	<i>Mr. Decamp</i> .
HASTINGS,.....	<i>Mr. Du Bellamy</i>	<i>Mr. Holland</i> .
TONY LUMPKIN,.....	<i>Mr. Quick</i>	<i>Mr. Tokely</i> .
STINGO,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Maddocks</i> .
DIGGORY,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Ebsworth</i> .
ROGER,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Chatterley</i> .
RALPH,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Buxton</i> .
GREGORY,.....	.....	<i>Mr. J. West</i> .
TOM TWIST,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Sparks</i> .
JACK SLANG,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Evans</i> .
TIM TICKLE,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Cooke</i> .
JEREMY,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Fisher</i> .
MAT MUGGINS,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Bennett</i> .
SERVANT,.....	.....	<i>Mr. Lee</i> .

MRS. HARDCASTLE,.....	<i>Mrs. Green</i>	<i>Mrs. Sparks</i> .
MISS HARDCASTLE,.....	<i>Mrs. Buckley</i>	<i>Mrs. Davison</i> .
MISS NEVILLE,.....	<i>Mrs. Kniveton</i>	<i>Mrs. Orger</i> .
MAID,.....	.....	<i>Miss Tidswell</i> .

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Chamber in an old-fashioned House.

Enter HARDCASTLE and MRS. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. H. I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country, but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbour, Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

Hard. Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why

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London cannot keep its own fools at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs. H. Ay, your times were fine times indeed, you have been telling us of them for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripple-gate, the lame dancing-master; and all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

Hard. And I love it. I love every thing that's old; old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and I believe, Dorothy, [*Taking her hand.*] you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs. H. Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothys and your old wives. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

Hard. Let me see; twenty added to twenty makes just fifty and seven.

Mrs. H. It's false, Mr. Hardcastle: I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hard. Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught him finely.

Mrs. H. No matter; Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

Hard. Learning, quotha! a mere composition of tricks and mischief.

Mrs. H. Humour, my dear; nothing but humour. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

Hard. I'd sooner allow him a horsepond. If burning the footman's shoes, frightening the maids, worrying the kittens, be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I pop'd my bald head into Mrs. Frizzle's face.

Mrs. H. And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

Hard. Latin for him! a cat and a fiddle. No, no, the alehouse and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to.

Mrs. H. Well, we must not snub the poor boy now; for I believe we sha'n't have him long among us. Any body that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

Hard. Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

Mrs. H. He coughs sometimes.

Hard. Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

Mrs. H. I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

Hard. And truly, so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking-trumpet—[*TONY hallooing behind the scenes.*—O there he goes—A very consumptive figure, truly.

Enter TONY, crossing the stage.

Mrs. H. Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovee?

Tony. I'm in haste, mother, I can't stay.

Mrs. H. You sha'n't venture out this raw evening, my dear; you look most shockingly.

Tony. I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expect me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

Hard. Ay; the alehouse, the old place: I thought so.

Mrs. H. A low, paltry set of fellows.

Tony. Not so low, neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse-

doctor, little Aminidab that grinds the music-box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter-platter.

Mrs. H. Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night at least.

Tony. As for disappointing them, I should not so much mind: but I can't abide to disappoint myself.

Mrs. H. [*Detaining him.*] You sha'n't go.

Tony. I will, I tell you.

Mrs. H. I say, you sha'n't.

Tony. We'll see which is strongest, you or I.

[*Exeunt.*]

Hard. Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors? There's my pretty darling Kate; the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze and French frippery, as the best of them.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Blessings on my pretty innocence!—Dressed out as usual, my Kate. Goodness! what a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

Miss H. You know our agreement, Sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening, I put on my housewife's dress to please you.

Hard. Well, remember I insist on the terms of our agreement: and by the by, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

Miss H. I protest, Sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

Hard. Then to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

Miss H. Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I sha'n't like him; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

Hard. Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of excellent understanding.

Miss H. Is he?

Hard. Very generous.

Miss H. I believe I shall like him.

Hard. Young and brave.

Miss H. I'm sure I shall like him.

Hard. And very handsome.

Miss H. My dear papa, say no more; [*Kissing his hand.*] he's mine, I'll have him.

Hard. And, to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in the world.

Miss H. Eh! you have frozen me to death again. That word reserved has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband

Hard. On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

Miss H. He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so every thing, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

Hard. Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It's more than an even wager he may not have you.

Miss H. My dear papa, why will you mortify one so?—Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery; set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

Hard. Bravely resolved! In the mean time I'll go prepare the servants for his reception; as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. *[Exit.]*

Miss H. Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young, handsome; these he puts last; but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natured; I like all that. But then reserved and sheepish; that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes, and can't I—But I vow I'm disposing of the husband, before I have secured the lover.

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss H. I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there any thing whimsical about me? Is it one of my well looking days, child? am I in face to-day?

Miss N. Perfectly, my dear. Yet now I look again—bless me! surely no accident has happened among the canary birds or the gold fishes. Has your brother or the cat been meddling? Or has the last novel been too moving?

Miss H. No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover.

Miss N. And his name—

Miss H. Is Marlow.

Miss N. Indeed!

Miss H. The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss N. As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, my admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

Miss H. Never.

Miss N. He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue, he is the modestest man alive; but his acquaintance give him a very different character among creatures of another stamp: you understand me.

Miss H. An odd character indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw, think no more of him; but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual?

Miss N. I have just come from one of our agreeable *tete-a-tetes*. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss H. And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss N. A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son, and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss H. My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss N. It is a good natured creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to any body but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. Allon's, courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss H. Would it were bed time, and all were well.

SCENE II.—An Alehouse Room.

Several shabby fellows, with punch and tobacco.

TONY at the head of the table.

Omnes. Hurra, hurra, hurra, bravo.

1 Fel. Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

Omnes. Ay, a song, a song.

Tony. Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this alehouse, the Three Pigeons.

Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain,

With grammar, and nonsense, and learning;

Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,

Gives genius a better discerning.

Let them brag of their heathenish gods,

Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians,

Their quins, and their quass, and their quods,

They're all but a parcel of pigeons.

Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

When methodist preachers come down

A preaching that drinking is sinful,

I'll wager the rascals a crown,

They always preach best with a skinful.

But when you come down with your pence,

For a slice of their scurvy religion,

I'll leave it to all men of sense.

But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.

Toroddle, &c.

Then come, put the jorum about,

And let us be merry and clever;

Our hearts and our liquors are stout,

Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.

Let some cry up woodcock or hare,

Your busters, your ducks, and your widgeons,

But of all the birds in the air,

Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.

Toroddle, &c.

Omnes. Bravo, bravo.

1 Fel. The squire has got spunk in him.

2 Fel. I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's low.

3 Fel. O, damn any thing that's low; I can't bear it.

4 Fel. The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time, if so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

3 Fel. I like the maxum of it, master Muggins. What though I am obligated to dance a pear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this

be my poison if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelst of tunes;—"Water parted," or the minuet in Ariadne.

2 *Fel.* What a pity it is the squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him.

Tony. Ecod, and so it would, master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

2 *Fel.* Oh, he takes after his own father for that. To be sure old 'squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls, in the whole country.

Tony. Ecod, and when I'm of age I'll be no bastard, I promise you. I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's gray mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning. Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

Enter LANDLORD.

Land. There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way up o' the forest, and they are talking something about Mr. Hardcastle.

Tony. As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners?

Land. I believe they may. They look woundily like Frenchmen.

Tony. Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling. [*Exit LANDLORD.*] Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. [*Exeunt Mob.*] Father-in-law has been calling me whelp, and hound, this half year. Now if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid!—of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of that if he can.

Enter LANDLORD, conducting MARLOW and HASTINGS.

Mar. What a tedious, uncomfortable day have we had of it. We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore.

Hast. And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us inquire more frequently on the way.

Mar. I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet; and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

Hast. At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

Tony. No offence, gentlemen; but I'm told you have been inquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle, in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

Hast. Not in the least, Sir; but should thank you for information.

Tony. Nor the way you came?

Hast. No, Sir; but if you can inform us—

Tony. Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you is, that—you have lost your way.

Mar. We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

Tony. Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

Mar. That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

Tony. No offence: but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow, with an ugly face, a daughter, and a pretty son?

Hast. We have not seen the gentleman, but he has the family you mention.

Tony. The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole—the son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that every body is fond of.

Mar. Our information differs in this: the daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

Tony. He-he-hem—Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you wont reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

Hast. Unfortunate!

Tony. It's a damned long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's; [*Winking upon the LANDLORD.*] Mr. Hardcastle's, of Quagmire-marsh, you understand me.

Land. Master Hardcastle's! Lack-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash-lane.

Mar. Cross down Squash-lane.

Land. Then you were to keep straight forward till you came to four roads.

Mar. Come to where four roads meet?

Tony. Ay, but you must be sure to take only one of them.

Mar. Oh, Sir, you're facetious.

Tony. Then keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crack-skull common: there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward till you come to farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then the right about again, till you find out the old mill—

Mar. Sounds, man! we could as soon find out the longitude!

Hast. What's to be done, Marlow?

Mar. This house promises but a poor reception; though perhaps the landlord can accommodate us.

Land. Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

Tony. And, to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. [*After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.*] I have hit it; don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fireside, with—three chairs and a bolster?

Hast. I hate sleeping by the fireside.

Mar. And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

Tony. You do, do you?—then let me see—what—if you go on a mile farther, to the Buck's Head, the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole country?

Hast. O ho! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

Land. [*Apart to TONY.*] Sure you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

Tony. Mum, you fool you; let them find that out. [*To them.*] You have only to keep on straight forward till you come to a large house by the road side: you'll see a pair of large horns over the door: that's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

Hast. Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way?

Tony. No, no: but I tell you, though, the landlord is rich, and going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he, he, he! He'll be for giving you his company, and ecod if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace.

Land. A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but a keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

Mar. Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connection. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

Tony. No, no, straight forward. I'll just step myself, and show you a piece of the way. [*To Land.*] Mum.

Land. Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant—damned mischievous son of a whore. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An old-fashioned House.

Enter **HARDCASTLE**, followed by three or four awkward **SERVANTS**.

Hard. Well, I hope you're perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can show that you have been used to good company, without stirring from home.

Omnes. Ay, ay.

Hard. When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frightened rabbits in a warren.

Omnes. No, no.

Hard. You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a show at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger, and from your head, you blockhead you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

Dig. Ay, mind how I hold them: I learned to hold my hands this way when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill—

Hard. You must not be too talkative, Diggory; you must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

Dig. By the laws, your worship, that's perfectly impossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forwards, ecod he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

Hard. Blockhead! is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlour? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

Dig. Ecod I thank your worship; I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

Hard. Diggory you are too talkative. Then if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a laughing, as if you made part of the company.

Dig. Then ecod your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gun-room: I can't help laughing at that—he, he, he!—for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha, ha, ha!

Hard. Ha, ha, ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, Sir, if you please. [*To Diggory.*]—Eh, why don't you move?

Dig. Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

Hard. What, will nobody move?

1 *Serv.* I'm not to leave this place.

2 *Serv.* I'm sure it's no place of mine.

3 *Serv.* Nor mine, for sartin.

Dig. Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine.

Hard. You numskulls! and so while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. Oh, you dunces! I find I must begin all over again. But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads. I'll go in the mean time and give my old friend's son a hearty welcome at the gate. [*Exit.*]

Dig. By the elevens, my place is gone quite out of my head.

Roger. I know that my place is to be every where.

1 *Serv.* Where the devil is mine?

2 *Serv.* My place is to be nowhere at all; and so I've got about my business.

[*Exeunt* **SERVANTS**, running.]

Enter **MARLOW** and **HASTINGS**.

Hast. After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house; antique, but creditable.

Mar. The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good house-keeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

Hast. As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good sideboard, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame the bill confoundedly.

Mar. Travellers, George, must pay in all places; the only difference is, that in good inns you pay dearly for luxuries; in bad inns you are fleeced and starved.

Hast. You have lived pretty much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised, that you, who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

Mar. The Englishman's malady; but tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation, that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single woman except my mother. But among females of another class, you know—

Hast. Ay, among them you are impudent enough of all conscience.

Mar. They are of us, you know.

Hast. But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

Mar. Why, man, that's because I do want to steal out of the room. 'Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

Hast. If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the barmaid of an inn, or even a college bed-maker—

Mar. Why, George, I can't say fine things to them. They freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle; but to me a modest woman, dress'd out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

Hast. Ha, ha, ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry?

Mar. Never, unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad start-question of, Madam, will you marry me? No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you.

Hast. I pity you; but how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

Mar. As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low. Answer yes, or no, to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face till I see my father's again.

Hast. I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

Mar. To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you; the family don't know you; as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hurd. Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow? Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire; I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate: I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

Mar. [*Aside.*] He has got our names from the servants already. [*To HARDCASTLE.*] We approve your caution and hospitality, Sir. [*To HASTINGS.*] I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning; I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

Hurd. I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

Hast. I fancy, George, you're right: the first blow is half the battle.

Hurd. Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no restraint in this house. This is Liberty-hall, gentlemen; you may do just as you please here.

Mar. Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. We must show our generalship, by securing, if necessary, a retreat.

Hurd. Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow,

puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when he went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison.

Mar. Ay, and we'll summon your garrison, old boy.

Hurd. He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men.

Hast. Marlow, what's o'clock.

Hurd. I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men.

Mar. Five minutes to seven.

Hurd. Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. Now, says the Duke of Marlborough, to George Brooks that stood next to him—You must have heard of George Brooks—I'll pawn my dukedom; says he, but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood. So—

Mar. What, my good friend, if you give us a glass of punch in the mean time, it would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

Hurd. Punch, Sir!—This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with.

[*Aside.*

Mar. Yes, Sir, punch. A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable.

Enter SERVANT, with a tankard.

This is Liberty-hall, you know.

Hurd. Here's a cup, Sir.

Mar. So this fellow, in his Liberty-hall, will only let us have just what he pleases. [*Aside.*

Hurd. [*Taking the cup.*] I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, Sir? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is to our better acquaintance. [*Drinks.*

Mar. A very impudent fellow this! but he's a character, and I'll humour him a little. [*Aside.*] Sir, my service to you. [*Drinks, and gives the cup to HASTINGS.*

Hast. I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman. [*Aside.*

Mar. From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose.

[*Gives the tankard to HARDCASTLE.*

Hurd. No, Sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there's no business for us that sell ale.

[*Gives the tankard to HASTINGS.*

Hast. So then you have no turn for politics, I find.

Hurd. Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about who's in or who's out, than I do about John Nokes and Tom Stiles. So my service to you.

Hast. So that with eating above stairs and drinking below, with receiving your friends within and amusing them without, you lead a good, pleasant, bustling life of it.

Hurd. I do stir about a good deal, that's certain.

Half the differences in the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.

Mar. [*After drinking.*] And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster-hall.

Hard. Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

Mar. Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy. [*Aside.*]

Hast. So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack them with your philosophy; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher. [*Drinks.*]

Hard. Good, very good, thank you; ha, ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of prince Eugene when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

Mar. Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I think it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

Hard. For supper, Sir!—Was ever such a request to a man in his own house! [*Aside.*]

Mar. Yes, Sir, supper, Sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

Hard. Such a brazen dog sure my eyes never beheld. [*Aside.*] Why really, Sir, as for supper, I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cookmaid settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

Mar. You do, do you?

Hard. Entirely. By the by, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

Mar. Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their privy council. It's a way I have got. When I travel I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, Sir.

Hard. O no, Sir, none in the least: yet I don't know how, our Bridget, the cookmaid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

Hast. Let's see the list of the larder then. I ask it as a favour. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

Mar. [*To HARDCASTLE, who looks at them with surprise.*] Sir, he's very right, and it's my way too.

Hard. Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper. I believe it's drawn out. Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

[*Servant brings bill of fare, and exit.*]

Hast. All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel! we shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of peace. But let's hear the bill of fare. [*Aside.*]

Mar. [*Perusing.*] What's here? For the first course; for the second course; for the desert. The devil, Sir, do you think we have brought down the whole joiners' company, or the corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

Hast. But let's hear it.

Mar. [*Reading.*] For the first course; at the top, a pig and prune sauce.

Hast. Damn your pig, I say.

Mar. And damn your prune sauce, say I.

Hard. And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig, with prune sauce, is very good eating.—Their impudence confounds me. [*Aside.*]

Gentlemen, you are my guests, make what alteration you please. Is there any thing else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

Mar. Item. A pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream!

Hast. Confound your made dishes! I shall be as much at a loss in this house, as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

Hard. I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like; but if there be any thing you have a particular fancy to—

Mar. Why really, Sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

Hard. I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

Mar. Leave that to you! I protest, Sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

Hard. I must insist, Sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

Mar. You see I'm resolv'd on it.—A very troublesome fellow, as ever I met with. [*Aside.*]

Hard. Well, Sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you.—This may be modern modesty, but I never saw any thing look so like old-fashioned impudence. [*Exeunt MARLOW and HARDCASTLE.*]

Hast. So I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry with those assiduities which are meant to please him? Ha! what do I see? Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss N. My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident, am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

Hast. Rather let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constantia at an inn.

Miss N. An inn! sure you mistake! my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

Hast. My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow, whom we accidentally met at a house hard by, directed us hither.

Miss N. Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often; ha, ha, ha, ha!

Hast. He whom your aunt intends for you? He of whom I have such just apprehensions?

Miss N. You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

Hast. Thou dear dissembler! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with the journey, but

hey'll soon be refreshed; and then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France, where even among slaves the laws of marriage are respected.

Miss N. I have often told you, that, though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by uncle, the India Director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I am very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession, you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

Hast. Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the mean time, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that, if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

Miss N. But how shall we keep him in the deception? *Miss Hardcastle* is just returned from walking; what if we persuade him she is come to this house as to an inn?—Come this way.

[*They confer.*]

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself, but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family—What have we got here?—

Hast. My dear Charles, let me congratulate you—The most fortunate accident!—Who do you think has just alighted?

Mar. Cannot guess.

Hast. Our mistresses, boy; *Miss Hardcastle* and *Miss Neville*. Give me leave to introduce *Miss Constance Neville* to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighbourhood, they called on their return to take fresh horses here. *Miss Hardcastle* has just stepped into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky? eh!

Mar. I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

[*Aside.*]

Hast. Well! but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

Mar. Oh! yes. Very fortunate—a most joyful encounter.—But our dresses, George, you know, are in disorder.—What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow?—To-morrow at her own house—it will be very convenient—and rather more respectful—To-morrow let it be.

[*Offering to go.*]

Miss N. By no means, Sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will show the ardour of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

Mar. Oh! the devil! how shall I support it? Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous. Yet, hang it! I'll take courage. Hem!

Hast. Pshaw, man! 'tis but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman you know.

Mar. And of all women she that I dread most to encounter

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, returned from walking.

Hast. [*Introducing them.*] *Miss Hardcastle*, Mr. Marlow. I'm proud of bringing two persons together, who only want to know, to esteem each other.

Miss H. [*Aside.*] Now, for meeting my modest gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own manner. [*After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted.*] I'm glad of your safe arrival, Sir—I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Mar. Only a few, Madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, Madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry, Madam—or, rather glad of an accident—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

Hast. [*To MAR.*] You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll ensure you the victory.

Miss H. I'm afraid you flatter, Sir. You that have seen so much of the finest company, can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

Mar. [*Gathering courage.*] I have lived, indeed, in the world, Madam; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, Madam, while others were enjoying it.

Miss H. An observer, like you, upon life, were I fear disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

Mar. Pardon me, Madam; I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of my mirth than uneasiness.

Hast. [*To MAR.*] Bravo, bravo! Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well! *Miss Hardcastle*, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

Mar. Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company of all things. [*To HAST.*] Zounds! George, sure you won't go! How can you leave us?

Hast. Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. [*To MAR.*] You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little *tete-a-tete* of our own.

[*Exeunt.*]

Miss H. [*After a pause.*] But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, Sir? The ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

Mar. [*Relapsing into timidity.*] Pardon me Madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to deserve them.

Miss H. And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them.

Mar. Perhaps so, Madam; but I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex—But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

Miss H. Not at all, Sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself; I could hear it for ever. Indeed I have often been surprised how a man of sentiment could ever admire those light airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

Mar. It's—a disease—of the mind, Madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish—for—um—a—um.

Miss H. I understand you, Sir. There must be some who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

Mar. My meaning, Madam; but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing that in this age of hypocrisy—a—

Miss H. Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent upon some occasions! [*Aside.*] You were going to observe, Sir—

Mar. I was observing, Madam—I protest, Madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

Miss H. I vow, and so do I. [*Aside.*] You were observing, Sir, that in this age of hypocrisy, something about hypocrisy, Sir.

Mar. Yes, Madam; in this age of hypocrisy there are few who upon inquiry do not—a—a—

Miss H. I understand you perfectly, Sir.

Mar. 'Egad! and that's more than I do myself.

[*Aside.*]

Miss H. You mean that in this hypocritical age there are few that do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

Mar. True, Madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms. But I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

Miss H. I protest, Sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray go on.

Mar. Yes, Madam, I was—but she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honour to attend you.

Miss H. Well then, I'll follow.

Mar. This pretty smooth dialogue has done for me.

[*Aside, exit.*]

Miss H. Ha, ha, ha! Was there ever such a sober, sentimental interview? I'm certain he scarce looked me in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—that, faith, is a question I can scarce answer.

[*Exit.*]

Enter TONY and MISS NEVILLE, followed by MRS. HARCADLE and HASTINGS.

Tony. What do you follow me for, cousin Con? I wonder you're not asham'd to be so very engaging.

Miss N. I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

Tony. Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me though: but it wont do. I tell you, cousin Con, it wont do; so I beg you'll keep your distance; I want no nearer relationship.

[*She follows, coquetting him.*]

Mrs. H. Well! I vow, Mr. Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

Hast. Never there! you amaze me! from your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James', or Tower-wharf.

Mrs. H. O! Sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics; but who can have a manner that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort? all I can do, is to enjoy London at second-hand.

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I take care to know every *tete-a-tete* from the Scandalous Magazine, and have all the fashions as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked-lane. Pray how do you like this head, Mr. Hastings?

Hast. Extremely elegant and *degagee*, upon my word, Madam. Your *friseur* is a Frenchman, I suppose.

Mrs. H. I protest, I dressed it myself from a print in the Ladies' Memorandum-book for the last year.

Hast. Indeed! Such a head in a side-box at the playhouse, would draw as many gazers as my lady mayoress at a city ball.

Mrs. H. One must dress a little particular, or one may escape in the crowd.

Hast. But that cannot be your case, Madam, in any dress.

[*Bowing.*]

Mrs. H. Yet what signifies my dressing, when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr. Hardcastle? all I can say will not argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bad to plaster it over, like my lord Pately, with powder.

Hast. You are right, Madam; for, as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

Mrs. H. But what do you think his answer was? Why, with his usual Gothic vivacity, he said I only wanted him to throw off his wig to convert it into a *tete* for my own wearing.

Hast. Intolerable! at your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

Mrs. H. Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

Hast. Some time ago, forty was all the mode; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

Mrs. H. Seriously. Then I shall be too young for the fashion.

Hast. No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, Miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, a mere maker of samplers.

Mrs. H. And yet Mrs. Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels, as the oldest of us all.

Hast. Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman a brother of yours, I should presume?

Mrs. H. My son, Sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. [*To them.*] Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance this evening?

Tony. I have been saying no soft things; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod! I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself but the stable.

Mrs. H. Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

Miss N. There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

Tony. That's a damned confounded—crack.

Mrs. H. Ah! he's a sly one. Don't you think they're like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings? The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. - They're of a size too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you. Come, Tony.

Tony. You had as good not make me, I tell you

Miss N. O lud! he has almost cracked my head.

Mrs. H. O the monster! for shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so!

Tony. If I'm a man, let me have my fortune. Ecod! I'll not be made a fool of any longer.

Mrs. H. Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education? I, that have rocked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon! Did not I work that waistcoat to make you genteel?

Tony. But, ecod! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. H. Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

Tony. I wish you'd let me and my good alone then. Snubbing this way when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

Mrs. H. That's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the alehouse or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable wild notes, unfeeling monster!

Tony. Ecod! mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

Mrs. H. Was ever the like? But I see he wants to break my heart, I see he does.

Hast. Dear Madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

Mrs. H. Well, I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation; was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking undutiful boy. [Exeunt MRS. HARDCASTLE and MISS NEVILLE.]

Tony. [Singing.] *There was a young man riding by,
And fain would have his will. Rang do dillo de.*

Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, and they said they liked the book the better, the more it made them cry.

Hast. Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

Tony. That's as I find 'em.

Hast. Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer? And yet she appears to me a pretty well-tempered girl.

Tony. That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod! I know every inch about her; and there's not a more bitter cantankerous toad in all Christendom.

Hast. Pretty encouragement this for a lover.

[Aside.]

Tony. I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt, in the first day's breaking.

Hast. To me she appears sensible and silent.

Tony. Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

Hast. But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

Tony. Yes; but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in the ditch.

Hast. Well, but you must allow her a little beauty—Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

Tony. Bandbox! she's all a made up thing, nun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of

these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod, she has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

Hast. Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

Tony. Anon.

Hast. Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

Tony. Ay; but where is there such a friend, for who would take her?

Hast. I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

Tony. Assist you! Ecod, I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise, that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and may be get you a part of her fortin, beside, in jewels, that you little dream of.

Hast. My dear 'squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

Tony. Come along then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. [Singing.]

We are the boys

That fears no noise

Where thundering cannons roar.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Same

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. What could my old friend, Sir Charles, mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears as the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fireside already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter—She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, plainly dressed.

Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress, as I bid you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

Miss H. I find such a pleasure, Sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

Hard. And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my modest gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

Miss H. You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

Hard. I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

Miss H. I never saw any thing like it; and a man of the world too!

Hard. Ay, he learned it all abroad.

Miss H. It seems all natural too him.

Hard. A good deal assisted by bad company, and a French dancing-master.

Miss H. Sure you mistake, papa! a French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look—that awkward address—that bashful manner—

Hard. Whose look? whose manner, child?

Miss H. Mr. Marlow's! his *mauvaise honte*, his timidity, struck me at the first sight.

Hard. Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses.

Miss H. Sure, Sir, you rally! I never saw any one so modest.

Hard. And can you be serious? I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

Miss H. Surprising! he met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

Hard. He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

Miss H. He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow, and, Madam, I would not for the world detain you.

Hard. He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before. Asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer. Interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun; and when I was in my best story of the duke of Marlborough and prince Eugene, he asked me if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch.

Miss H. One of us must certainly be mistaken.

Hard. If he be what he has shown himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

Miss H. And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

Hard. In one thing then we are agreed—to reject him.

Miss H. Yes, but upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man—Certainly we don't meet many such at a horse race in the country.

Hard. If we should find him so? But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

Miss H. And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance. But as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make farther discoveries?

Hard. Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.

Miss H. And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong. [Exeunt.]

Enter TONY, running with a casket.

Tony. Ecod! I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother sha'n't cheat the poor souls out of their fortune, neither. O! my genius, is that you?

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last: our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

Tony. And here's something to bear your charges by the way. [Giving the casket.] Your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them, and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them.

Hast. But how have you procured them from your mother?

Tony. Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

Hast. Thousands do it every day. But, to be plain with you, Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

Tony. Well, keep them, till you know how it will be. But I know how it will be, well enough; she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

Hast. But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

Tony. Never you mind her resentment, leave me to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! there they are. Morrice; prance. [Exit HASTINGS.]

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE and MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs. H. Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels! It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

Miss N. But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, Madam.

Mrs. H. Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my lady Kill-day-light, and Mr. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back.

Miss N. But who knows, Madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my finery about me?

Mrs. H. Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if, with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear, does your cousin Con want any jewels, in your eyes to set off her beauty?

Tony. That's as hereafter may be.

Miss N. My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

Mrs. H. A parcel of old fashioned rose and table cut things. They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe I can't readily come at them. They may be missing, for aught I know to the contrary.

Tony. [Apart to MRS. HARDCASTLE.] Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them. Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

Mrs. H. [Apart to TONY.] You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So, if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? he, he, he!

Tony. Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with mine own eyes.

Miss N. I desire them but for a day, Madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

Mrs. H. To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing I assure you. Lost, for

ought I know; but we must have patience whenever they are.

Miss N. I'll not believe it! this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they're too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss.

Mrs. H. Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

Tony. That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't.

Mrs. H. You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

Miss N. Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

Mrs. H. Now I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them; and, in the mean time, you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

Miss N. I detest garnets.

Mrs. H. The most becoming things in the world, to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You shall have them. *[Exit.]*

Miss N. I dislike them of all things. You sha'n't stir—Was ever any thing so provoking, to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear trumpery.

Tony. Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

Miss N. My dear cousin.

Tony. Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catharine wheel.

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. H. Confusion! thieves! robbers! We are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone.

Tony. What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family.

Mrs. H. We are robbed. My bureau has been broke open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

Tony. Oh! is that all? Ha, ha, ha! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Écod, I thought you was ruin'd in earnest, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. H. Why, boy, I am ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broke open, and all taken away.

Tony. Stick to that! ha, ha, ha! stick to that; call me to bear witness.

Mrs. H. I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined for ever.

Tony. Sure I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

Mrs. H. My dearest Tony, but hear me.—They're gone, I say.

Tony. By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha, ha, ha! I know who took them well enough, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. H. Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest. I tell you I'm not in jest, booby.

Tony. That's right, that's right: you must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will

suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

Mrs. H. Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand and thieves on the other!

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. H. Bear witness again, you blockhead! you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of her! Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. H. Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will.

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

[Runs off; Mrs. HARDCASTLE follows him.]

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE and MAID.

Miss H. What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn, ha, ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

Maid. But what is more, Madam, the young gentleman, as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the bar-maid? He mistook you for the bar-maid, Madam.

Miss H. Did he? Then as I live I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the Beaux' Stratagem?

Maid. It's the dress, Madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

Miss H. And are you sure he does not remember my face or person?

Maid. Certain of it.

Miss H. I vow I thought so; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such, that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

Maid. But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake?

Miss H. In the first place, I shall be seen; and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance; and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and like an invisible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

Maid. But are you sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice, so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person.

Miss H. Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant—Did your honour call?—Attend the Lion there—Pipes and tobacco for the Angel—The Lamb has been outrageous this half hour.

Maid. It will do, Madam, but he's here.

[Exit.]

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. What a bawling in every part of the house! I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story. If I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her courtesy down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection.

[Walks and muses]

Miss H. Did you call, Sir? did your honour call?

Mar. [*Musing.*] As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss H. Did your honour call?

[*She still places herself before him, he turning away.*]

Mar. No, child. [*Musing.*] Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss H. I'm sure, I heard the bell ring.

Mar. No, no. [*Musing.*] I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll tomorrow please myself by returning.

[*Takes his tablets and reads.*]

Miss H. Perhaps the other gentleman called, Sir.

Mar. I tell you, no.

Miss H. I should be glad to know, Sir. We have such a parcel of servants.

Mar. No, no, I tell you. [*Looks full in her face.*] Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted—I wanted—I vow, child, you are vastly handsome.

Miss H. O la, Sir, you'll make one ashamed.

Mar. Never saw a more sprightly, malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—what d'ye call it, in the house?

Miss H. No, Sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

Mar. One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that too.

Miss H. Nectar! nectar! that's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, Sir.

Mar. Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss H. Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

Mar. Eighteen years! why one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

Miss H. O! Sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

Mar. To guess at this distance, you can't be much above forty. [*Approaching.*] Yet nearer I don't think so much. [*Approaching.*] By coming close to some women they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed—

[*Attempting to kiss her.*]

Miss H. Pray, Sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

Mar. I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can ever be acquainted?

Miss H. And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle that was here awhile ago in this obstreperous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you look'd dash'd, and kept bowing to the ground, and talk'd, for all the world, as if you was before a justice of the peace.

Mar. 'Egad! she has hit it, sure enough. [*Aside.*] In awe of her, child? Ha, ha, ha! A mere awkward, squinting thing. No, no. I find you don't know me. I laugh'd, and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me!

Miss H. O! then, Sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies?

Mar. Yes, my dear, a great favourite. And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the ladies' club in town, I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons. Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service.

[*Offering to salute her.*]

Miss H. Hold, Sir, you were introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there, you say?

Mar. Yes, my dear. There's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Longhorns, old Miss Biddy Bucksin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

Miss H. Then it's a very merry place, I suppose?

Mar. Yes, as merry as cards, supper, wine, and old women can make us.

Miss H. And their agreeable Rattle, ha, ha, ha!

Mar. 'Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. [*Aside.*] You laugh, child!

Miss H. I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

Mar. All's well, she don't laugh at me. [*Aside.*] Do you ever work, child?

Miss H. Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

Mar. Odso! Then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me. [*Seizing her hand.*]

Miss H. Ay, but the colours don't look well by candle-light. You shall see all in the morning.

[*Struggles.*]

Mar. And why not now, my angel? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.—Pshaw! the father here! My old luck! I never nick'd seven that I did not throw ames ace three times following. [*Exit.*]

Enter *HARDCASTLE*, who stands in surprise.

Hard. So, Madam! So I find this is your modest lover. This is your humble admirer, that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

Miss H. Never trust me, my dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for: you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

Hard. By the hand of my body I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milkmaid? and now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

Miss H. But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

Hard. The girl would actually make one run mad; I tell you I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarcely been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence and call it modesty. But my son-in-law, Madam, must have very different qualifications.

Miss H. Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

Hard. You shall not have half the time; for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hou.

Miss H. Give me that hour then, and I hope to satisfy you.

Hard. Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An old-fashioned House.

Enter MARLOW, followed by a SERVANT.

Mar. I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

Serv. Yes, your honour.

Mar. She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

Serv. Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me how I came by it? and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself. [Exit.]

Mar. Ha, ha, ha! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little bar-maid, though, runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at the bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and inspirits too!

Mar. Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadew me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

Hast. Some women, you mean. But what success has your honour's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

Mar. Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely, little thing that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

Hast. Well! and what then?

Mar. She's mine, you rogue you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips—but, egad! she would not let me kiss them though.

Hast. But are you so sure, so very sure of her?

Mar. Why, man, she talked of showing me ner work above stairs, and I'm to improve the pattern.

Hast. But how can you, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honour?

Mar. Pshaw! pshaw! We all know the honour of the bar-maid of an inn. I don't intend to rob her, take my word for it; there's nothing in this house I sha'n't honestly pay for.

Hast. I believe the girl has virtue.

Mar. And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

Hast. You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? It's in safety?

Mar. Yes, yes. It's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door a place of safety? Ah, numskull! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself—I have—

Hast. What!

Mar. I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

Hast. To the landlady!

Mar. The landlady.

Hast. You did?

Mar. I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

Hast. Yes, she'll bring it forth, with a witness. *Mar.* Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion.

Hast. He must not see my uneasiness. [Aside.]

Mar. You seem a little disconcerted though, methinks. Sure nothing has happened?

Hast. No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge?

Mar. Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but, through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha, ha, ha!

Hast. He, he, he! They're safe, however.

Mar. As a guinea in a miser's purse.

Hast. So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. [Aside.] Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty bar-maid, and, he, he, he! may you be as successful for yourself as you have been for me. [Exit.]

Mar. Thank ye, George; I ask no more. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer; and yet from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. [Aside.] Mr. Marlow, your servant, I'm your humble servant. [Bowing low.]

Mar. Sir, your humble servant.—What's to be the wonder now?

Hard. I believe, Sir, you must be sensible, Sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, Sir. I hope you think so.

Mar. I do from my soul, Sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

Hard. I believe you do, from my soul, Sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

Mar. I protest, my very good Sir, that's no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, they are to blame: I order'd them not to spare the cellar; I did, I assure you. [To the side Scene.] Here, let one of my servants come up. [To HARD.] My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

Hard. Then they had your orders for what they do! I'm satisfied.

Mar. They had, I assure you: you shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter SERVANT, drunk.

You, Jeremy! Come forward, sirrah! What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

Hard. I begin to lose my patience. [Aside.]

Jer. Please your honour, liberty and Fleet-street for ever, though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man; I'll drink for no man before supper, Sir, damme! Good liquor will sit

upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon—hiccup—upon my conscience, Sir.

Mar. You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer barrel.

Hard. Zounds! he'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer. [*Aside.*] Mr. Marlow, Sir, I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, Sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

Mar. Leave your house!—Sure you jest, my good friend? What, when I'm doing what I can to please you?

Hard. I tell you, Sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

Mar. Sure you cannot be serious. At this time o'night, and such a night? You only mean to banter me.

Hard. I tell you, Sir, I'm serious; and, now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, Sir; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

Mar. Ha, ha, ha! A puddle in a storm. I sha'n't stir a step, I assure you. [*In a serious tone.*] This your house, fellow! It's my house. This is my house. Meanwhile I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, Sir? I never met with such impudence, curse me, never in my whole life before.

Hard. Nor I, confound me if I ever did. To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, this house is mine, Sir. By all that's impudent it makes me laugh. Ha, ha, ha! Pray, Sir, [*Bantering.*] as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a firescreen, and a pair of bellows, perhaps you may take a fancy to them?

Mar. Bring me your bill, Sir, bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

Hard. There are a set of prints too. What think you of the Rake's Progress for your own apartment?

Mar. Bring me your bill, I say; and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

Hard. Then there's a bright, brazen warming-pan, that you may see your own brazen face in.

Mar. My bill, I say.

Hard. I had forgot the great chair, for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

Mar. Zounds! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

Hard. Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred, modest man, as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it. [*Exit.*]

Mar. How's this? sure I have not mistaken the house! Every thing looks like an inn. The servants cry, coming! The attendance is awkward; the bar-maid too to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me. Whither so fast, child? a word with you.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE.

Miss H. Let it be short then; I'm in a hurry.—

I believe he begins to find out his mistake, but it's too soon quite to undeceive him. [*Aside.*]

Mar. Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in the house be?

Miss H. A relation of the family, Sir.

Mar. What, a poor relation?

Miss H. Yes, Sir. A poor relation appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

Mar. That is, you act as the bar-maid of this inn.

Miss H. Inn! O law—What brought that in your head? One of the best families in the county to keep an inn. Ha, ha, ha! Old Mr. Hardcastle's house an inn!

Mar. Hardcastle's house! Is this house Mr. Hardcastle's house, child?

Miss H. Ay, Sir, whose else should it be?

Mar. So then all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. O, confound my stupid head, I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricatura in all the print shops. The Dullissimo Maccaroni. To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an inn-keeper. What a swaggering puppy must he take me for. What a silly puppy do I find myself. There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the bar-maid.

Miss H. Dear me! dear me! I am sure there's nothing in my behaviour to put me on a level with one of that stamp.

Mar. Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw every thing the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over.—This house I no more show my face in.

Miss H. I hope, Sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I am sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I am sure I should be sorry [*Pretending to cry.*] if he left the family upon my account. I am sure I should be sorry people said any thing amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

Mar. By Heaven, she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. [*Aside.*]

Miss H. I am sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's, and though I am poor, that is no great misfortune to a contented mind, and until this moment I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

Mar. And why now, my pretty simplicity?

Miss H. Because it puts me at a distance from one, that, if I had a thousand pounds, I would give it all to.

Mar. This simplicity bewitches me, so that if I stay I am undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. [*Aside.*] Excuse me, my lovely girl, you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education make an honourable connexion impossible; and I can never harbour a thought of bringing ruin upon one, whose only fault was being too lovely. [*Exit.*]

Miss H. I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I will still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer, but

will undeceive my papa, who perhaps may laugh him out of his resolution. *[Exit.]*

Enter TONY and MISS NEVILLE.

Tony. Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time; I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that is a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

Miss N. But, my dear cousin, sure you wont forsake us in this distress. If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

Tony. To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistle-jacket, and I am sure you cannot say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes; we must court a bit or two more for fear she should suspect us. *[Seem to fondle.]*

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. H. Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I sha'n't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see? Fondling together, as I am alive. I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves! What, billing, exchanging stolen glances, and broken murmurs? Ah!

Tony. As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

Mrs. H. A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter!

Miss N. Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed, he sha'n't leave us any more. It wont leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

Tony. O! it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pond, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

Miss N. Agreeable cousin! who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless—*[Patting his cheek.]* Ah! it's a bold face.

Mrs. H. Pretty innocence!

Tony. I am sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that over the harpsicholls, like a parcel of bobbins.

Mrs. H. Ah, he would charm a bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY.

Digg. Where's the 'squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

Tony. Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

Digg. I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

Tony. Who does it come from?

Digg. Your worship mun ask that o'the letter 'tself.

Tony. I could wish to know, though.

[Turning the letter, and gazing on it.]
Miss N. *[Aside.]* Undone, undone. A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her employed a little, if I can. *[To MRS. HARDCASTLE.]* But I have not told you, Madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed—You must know, Madam—this way a little, for he must not hear us.

[They confer.]

Tony. *[Still gazing.]* A damned cramped piece of penmanship as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print-hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. *[To ANTHONY LUMPKIN, Esq.]* It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, plain enough. But when I come to open it, it is all—buz. That's hard, very hard: for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

Mrs. H. Ha ha ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher.

Miss N. Yes, Madam; but you must hear the rest, Madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

Mrs. H. He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

Tony. *[Still gazing.]* A damned up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. *[Reading.]* Dear Sir, Ay, that's that. Then there's an M, and a T, and an S, but whether the next be an izzard or an R, confound me, I cannot tell.

Mrs. H. What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

Miss N. Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. *[Twitching the letter from her.]* Do you know who it is from?

Tony. Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger, the feeder.

Miss N. Ay, so it is *[Pretending to read.]* Dear 'squire, hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of the Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—um—old battle—um—long fighting—um—here, here, it's all about cocks, and fighting; it's of no consequence, here, put it up, put it up. *[Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.]*

Tony. But I tell you, Miss, it's of all the consequence in the world. I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea. Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence!

[Giving MRS. HARDCASTLE the letter.]

Mrs. H. How's this? *[Reads.]*

Dear 'Squire,—I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden; but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist me with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the hag ay, the hag, your mother, will otherwise suspect us. Yours,
HASTINGS.

Grant me patience. I shall run distracted. My rage chokes me.

Miss N. I hope, Madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design that belongs to another.

Mrs. H. *[Courtlesying very low.]* Fine spoken,

Madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, Madam. [*Changing her tone.*] And you, your great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut, were you too joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, Madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with me. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, Sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory; I'll show you, that I wish you better than you do yourselves. [*Exit.*]

Miss N. So now I am completely ruined.

Tony. Ay, that's a sure thing.

Miss N. What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him?

Tony. By the laws, Miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shake-bags and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. So, Sir, I find by my servant, that you have shown my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

Tony. Here's another. Ask Miss there who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. So, I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill-manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

Tony. Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss N. And there, Sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

Mar. What can I say to him, a mere booby, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection.

Hast. A poor, contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

Miss N. Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with our embarrassments.

Hast. An insensible cub.

Mar. Replete with tricks and mischief.

Tony. Baw! damme, but I'll fight you both, one after the other—with baskets.

Mar. As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

Hast. Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

Mar. But, Sir—

Miss N. Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, Madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. [*Exit.*]

Miss N. I come. O, Mr. Marlow! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill nature

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lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity.

Mrs. H. [*Within.*] Miss Neville. Constance why, Constance, I say.

Miss N. I'm coming. Well, constancy. Remember, constancy is the word. [*Exit.*]

Hast. My heart, how can I support this? To be so near happiness, and such happiness!

Mar. [*To TONY.*] You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

Tony. [*From a reverie.*] Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. Your hands. Yours and yours, my poor Sulky. Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good natur'd fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain. Come along. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An old-fashioned House.

Enter SIR CHARLES MARLOW and HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Ha, ha, ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands.

Sir C. And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances.

Hard. And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

Sir C. Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper, ha, ha, ha!

Hard. Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of any thing but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary; and though my daughter's fortune is but small—

Sir C. Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to me? My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good, virtuous girl to share his happiness, and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do—

Hard. If, man. I tell you they do like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

Sir C. But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

Hard. I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your ifs, I warrant him.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. I come, Sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

Hard. Tut, boy, a trifle. You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again.—She'll never like you the worse for it.

Mar. Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

Hard. Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me?

Mar. Really, Sir, I have not that happiness.

Hard. Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what, as well as you that are younger. I know what has passed between you; but mum.

Mar. Sure, Sir, nothing has passed between us but the most profound respect on my side,

and the most distant reserve on hers. You don't think, Sir, that my impudence has been passed upon all the rest of the family.

Hard. Impudence! No, I don't say that—Not quite impudence.—Girls like to be played with, and rumbled too sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you.

Mar. May I die, Sir, if I ever—

Hard. I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her,—

Mar. Dear Sir, I protest, Sir—

Hard. I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you.

Mar. But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting.

Hard. This fellow's formal, modest impudence is beyond bearing.

[*Aside.*]

Sir C. And you never grasp'd her hand, or made any protestations?

Mar. As Heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no further proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications.

[*Exit.*]

Sir C. I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

Hard. And I'm astonished at the deliberate intractability of his assurance.

Sir C. I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

Hard. Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Kate; come hither, child. Answer me sincerely, and without reserve; has Mr. Marlow made you any professions of love and affection?

Miss H. The question is very abrupt, Sir: but since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

Hard. [*To Sir C.*] You see.

Sir C. And pray, Madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

Miss H. Yes, Sir, several.

Hard. [*To Sir C.*] You see.

Sir C. But did he profess any attachment?

Miss H. A lasting one.

Sir C. Did he talk of love?

Miss H. Much, Sir.

Sir C. Amazing! and all this formally?

Miss H. Formally.

Hard. Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

Sir C. And how did he behave, Madam?

Miss H. As most professed admirers do.—Said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine: mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

Sir C. Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed. I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, canting, ranting manner by no means describes him, and I'm confident he never sat for that picture.

Miss H. Then what, Sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half an hour, will place yourselves

behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

Sir C. Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end.

[*Exit.*]

Miss H. And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The back of a Garden.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow, who probably takes delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he, and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY, booted and spattered.

My honest squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

Tony. Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding, by night, by the by, is curiously tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage coach.

Hast. But how? Where did you leave your fellow travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

Tony. Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half, is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it. Rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox, than ten with such varment.

Hast. Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

Tony. Left them! Why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

Hast. This is a riddle.

Tony. Riddle me this, then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

Hast. I'm still astray.

Tony. Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place, but they can tell the taste of.

Hast. Ha, ha, ha! I understand; you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought them home again.

Tony. You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed-lane, where we stuck fast in the mud.—I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down hill—I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree-heath—and from that with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horsepond at the bottom of the garden.

Hast. But no accident, I hope.

Tony. No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So, if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

Hast. My dear friend, how can I be grateful.

Tony. Ay, now it's dear friend, noble squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn your way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we shake hands and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I

should be dead, and you might go shake hands with the hangman.

Hast. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville! If you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

[*Exit.*]

Tony. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish! She's got into the pond, and is dragged up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. H. Oh, Tony, I'm killed! Shook! Battered to death! I shall never survive it. That last jolt that laid us against the quickset-hedge has done my business.

Tony. Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

Mrs. H. I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way. Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

Tony. By my guess, we should be upon Crackskull-common, about forty miles from home.

Mrs. H. O lud! O lud! the most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

Tony. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree. Don't be afraid.

Mrs. H. The fright will certainly kill me.

Tony. Do you see any thing like a black hat moving behind the thicket.

Mrs. H. O death!

Tony. No, it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma! don't be afraid.

Mrs. H. As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I am sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

Tony. Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. [*Aside.*] Ah, it's a highwayman with pistols as long as my arm. A damned ill-looking fellow.

Mrs. H. Good Heaven defend us! he approaches.

Tony. Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough and cry hem. When I cough be sure to keep close.

[*MRS. HARDCASTLE hides behind a tree in the back scene.*]

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I'm mistaken, or I heard the voices of people in want of help. O, Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

Tony. Very safe, Sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

Mrs. H. [*From behind.*] Ah, death! I find there's danger.

Hard. Forty miles in three hours; sure, that's too much, my youngster.

Tony. Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem.

Mrs. H. [*From behind.*] Sure, he'll do the dear boy no harm.

Hard. But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came?

Tony. It was I, Sir, talking to myself, Sir. I was saying that forty miles in three hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure it was. Hem. I have got a sort of a cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please. Hem.

Hard. But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved [*Raising his voice.*] to find the other out.

Mrs. H. [*Running forward from behind.*] Oh lud, he'll murder my poor boy, my darling.—Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman, spare my child, if you have any mercy.

Hard. My wife! as I am a Christian. From whence can she come, or what does she mean?

Mrs. H. [*Kneeling.*] Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice, indeed we wont, good Mr. Highwayman.

Hard. I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know me?

Mrs. H. Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home?—What has brought you to follow us?

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits. So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door. [*To TONY.*] This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue you. [*To MRS. H.*] Don't you know the gate and the mulberry-tree; and don't you remember the horsepond, my dear?

Mrs. H. Yes, I shall remember the horsepond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it. [*To TONY.*] And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

Tony. Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

Mrs. H. I'll spoil you, I will. [*Beats him off.*]

Hard. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Parlour.

Enter SIR CHARLES MARLOW and MISS HARDCASTLE.

Sir C. What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss H. I am proud of your approbation, and to show I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir C. I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment. [*Exit.*]

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave; nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss H. [*In her own natural manner.*] I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, Sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness,

by showing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

Mar. This girl every moment improves upon me. [*Aside.*] It must not be, Madam. I have already trifled too long with my heart, and nothing can restore me to myself, but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss H. Then go, Sir. I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit, and my education I hope not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter *HARDCASTLE* and *SIR CHARLES MARLOW* from behind.

Mar. By Heavens, Madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion. But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence, and conscious virtue. I am now determined to stay, Madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

Miss H. Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity, but seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connexion where I must appear mercenary, and you imprudent? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer?

Mar. [*Kneeling.*] Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, Madam, every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue—

Sir C. I can hold it no longer. [*Coming forward.*] Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation?

Hard. Your cold contempt; your formal interview? What have you to say now?

Mar. That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

Hard. It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure. That you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter.

Mar. Daughter!—This lady your daughter?

Hard. Yes, Sir, my only daughter, my Kate. Whose else should she be?

Mar. Oh, the devil.

Miss H. Yes, Sir, that very identical, tall, squinting lady you were pleased to take me for. [*Courtesying.*] She that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the ladies' club, ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Zounds! there's no bearing this.

Miss H. In which of your characters, Sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy; or

the loud, confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap, and old Mrs. Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning, ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Oh, curse on my noisy head! I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

Hard. By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, Sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Wont you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man.

[*They retire, she teasing him.*]

Enter *MRS. HARDCASTLE* and *TONY*.

Mrs. H. So, so, they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

Hard. Who's gone?

Mrs. H. My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town; he who came down with our modest visitor here.

Sir C. Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Hard. Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connexion.

Enter *HASTINGS* and *MISS NEVILLE*.

Mrs. H. What! returned so soon? I begin not to like it. [*Aside.*]

Hast. [*To* *HARDCASTLE.*] For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

Miss N. Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready even to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I'm now recovered from the delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connexion.

Hard. Be it what it will, I'm glad they are come back to claim their due. Come, hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand, whom I now offer you?

Tony. What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

Hard. While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare you have been of age these three months.

Tony. Of age! Am I of age, father?

Hard. Above three months.

Tony. Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. [*Taking* *MISS NEVILLE's* hand.] Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of Blank-place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constantia Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again.

Sir C. O brave squire!

Hast. My worthy friend!

Mrs. H. My undutiful offspring!

Mar. Joy, my dear George, I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail on my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

Hast. [*To Miss HARDCASTLE.*] Come, Madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

Hard. [*Joining their hands.*] And I say so too. And, Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper. To-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the mistakes of the night shall be crowned with a merry morning; so, boy, take her: and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife. [*Exeunt.*]

BON TON:

OR,

HIGH LIFE ABOVE STAIRS.

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

REMARKS.

This agreeable after-piece, which abounds with pleasantry, and possesses an excellent moral, was first performed at Drury Lane theatre, 1775, to recognise (in the words of the author) "the merit and integrity of Mr. Thomas King, by bringing it out for his benefit, as a token of regard."

It is an additional proof of Mr. Garrick's useful talents, and always commands a well-deserved applause.— "This is a well-timed satirical piece, in which the profligate fashions of the age, imported from France and Italy, and greedily swallowed by the high-born fools of London, are well contrasted with the plain downright manners of an honest country gentleman, who, by an accidental visit to the metropolis, discovers a most shocking metamorphosis in the morals of both sexes, and more especially exemplified among his own relations."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.
LORD MINIKIN,.....	Mr. R. Palmer.
SIR J. TROTLEY,	Mr. Downton.
JESSAMY,.....	Mr. De Camp.
COLONEL TIVY,.....	Mr. Holland.
DAVY,.....	Mr. Mathews.
LADY MINIKIN....	Mrs. Dormer
MISS TITTUP,.....	Miss Mellon.
GYMP,.....	Miss Tidswell.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter LADY MINIKIN and MISS TITTUP.

Lady M. It is not, my dear, that I have the least regard for my lord; I had no love for him before I married him, and, you know, matrimony is no breeder of affection; but it hurts my pride, that he should neglect me, and run after other women.

Miss T. Ha, ha, ha! how can you be so hypocritical, Lady Minikin, as to pretend to uneasiness at such trifles! but pray have you made any new discoveries of my lord's gallantry?

Lady M. New discoveries! why, I saw him myself yesterday morning in a hackney-coach,

with a minx in a pink cardinal; you shall absolutely burn yours, Tittup, for I shall never bear to see one of that colour again.

Miss T. Sure she does not suspect me! [*Aside.*] And where was your ladyship, pray, when you saw him?

Lady M. Taking the air with Colonel Tivy in his vis-a-vis.

Miss T. But, my dear Lady Minikin, how can you be so angry that my lord was hurting your pride, as you call it, in the hackney-coach, when you had him so much in your power, in the vis-a-vis?

Lady M. What, with my lord's friend, and my friend's lover! [*Takes her by the hand.*] O fie, Tittup!

Miss T. Pooh, pooh, love and friendship are

very fine names to be sure, but they are mere visiting acquaintance; we know their names indeed, talk of 'em sometimes, and let 'em knock at our doors, but we never let 'em in, you know.

[*Looking roguishly at her.*]

Lady M. I vow, Tittup, you are extremely polite.

Miss T. I am extremely indifferent in these affairs, thanks to my education. We must marry, you know, because other people of fashion marry; but I should think very meanly of myself, if, after I was married, I should feel the least concern at all about my husband.

Lady M. I hate to praise myself, and yet I may with truth aver, that no woman of quality ever had, can have, or will have, so consummate a contempt for her lord, as I have for my most honourable and puissant Earl of Minikin, Viscount Periwinkle, and Baron Titmouse—ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. But is it not strange, Lady Minikin, that merely his being your husband, should create such indifference; for certainly, in every other eye, his lordship has great accomplishments?

Lady M. Accomplishments! thy head is certainly turned; if you know any of 'em, pray let's have 'em; they are a novelty, and will amuse me.

Miss T. Imprimis, he is a man of quality.

Lady M. Which, to be sure, includes all the cardinal virtues—poor girl! go on!

Miss T. He is a very handsome man.

Lady M. He has a very bad constitution.

Miss T. He has wit.

Lady M. He is a lord, and a little goes a great way.

Miss T. He has great good nature.

Lady M. No wonder—he's a fool.

Miss T. And then his fortune, you'll allow—

Lady M. Was a great one—but he games, and if fairly, he's undone; if not, he deserves to be hanged—and so, exit my Lord Minikin—and now, let your wise uncle, and my good cousin, Sir John Trotley, baronet, enter: where is he, pray?

Miss T. In his own room, I suppose, reading pamphlets, and newspapers, against the enormities of the times; if he stays here a week longer, notwithstanding my expectations from him, I shall certainly affront him.

Lady M. I am a great favourite, but it is impossible much longer to act up to his very righteous ideas of things;—isn't it pleasant to hear him abuse every body, and every thing, and yet always finishing with a—you'll excuse me, cousin? ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. What do you think the Goth said to me yesterday? one of the knots of his tie hanging down his left shoulder, and his fringed cravat nicely twisted down his breast, and thrust through his gold button-hole, which looked exactly like my little Barbet's head in his gold collar—"Niece Tittup," cries he, drawing himself up, "I protest against this manner of conducting yourself, both at home and abroad." What are your objections, Sir John? answered I, a little pertly. "Various and manifold," replied he; "I have no time to enumerate particulars now, but I will venture to prophesy, if you keep whirling round in the vortex of Pantheons, Operas, Festinos, Coteries, Masquerades, and all the Devilades in this town, your head will be giddy, down you will fall, lose the name of Lucretia, and be called nothing but

Tittup ever after—you'll excuse me, cousin?"—and so he left me.

Lady M. O, the barbarian!

Enter GYMP.

Gymp. A card, your Ladyship, from Mrs. Pewitt.

Lady M. Poor Pewitt! if she can be but seen at public places, with a woman of quality, she's the happiest of plebeians. [*Reads the card.*]

"Mrs. Pewitt's respects to Lady Minikin, and Miss Tittup; hopes to have the pleasure of attending them to Lady Filligree's ball this evening. Lady Daisey sees masks." We'll certainly attend her—Gymp, put some message cards upon my toilet, I'll send an answer immediately; and tell one of my footmen, that he must make some visits for me to-day again, and send me a list of those he made yesterday: he must be sure to call at Lady Pettitoes, and if she should unluckily be at home, he must say that he came to inquire after her sprained ankle.

Miss T. Ay, give our compliments to her sprained ankle.

Lady M. That woman's so fat, she'll never get well of it, and I am resolved not to call at her door myself, till I am sure of not finding her at home. I am horribly low spirited to-day; do, send your colonel to play at chess with me,—since he belonged to you, Titty, I have taken a kind of liking to him; I like every thing that loves my Titty. [*Kisses her.*]

Miss T. I know you do, my dear lady.

[*Kisses her.*]

Lady M. That sneer I don't like; if she suspects, I shall hate her: [*Aside.*] Well, dear Titty, I'll go and write my cards, and dress for the masquerade, and if that won't raise my spirits, you must assist me to plague my lord a little. [*Exit.*]

Miss T. Yes, and I'll plague my lady a little, or I am much mistaken: my lord shall know every tittle that has passed: what a poor, blind, half-witted, self-conceited creature this dear friend and relation of mine is! and what a fine spirited gallant soldier my colonel is! my Lady Minikin likes him, he likes my fortune; and my lord likes me, and I like my lord; however not so much as he imagines, or to play the fool so rashly as he may expect. She must be very silly indeed, who can't flutter about the flame without burning her wings—what a great revolution in this family, in the space of fifteen months!—we went out of England, a very awkward, regular, good English family! but half a year in France, and a winter passed in the warmer climate of Italy, have ripened our minds to every refinement of ease, dissipation, and pleasure.

Enter COLONEL TIVY.

Col. T. May I hope, Madam, that your humble servant had some share in your last reverie?

Miss T. How is it possible to have the least knowledge of Colonel Tivy, and not make him the principal object of one's reflections!

Col. T. That man must have very little feeling and taste, who is not proud of a place in the thoughts of the finest woman in Europe.

Miss T. O fie, colonel!

[*Courtesies and blushes.*]

Col. T. By my honour, Madam, I mean what I say.

Miss T. By your honour, colonel! why will you pass off your counters to me? don't I know that you fine gentlemen regard no honour but that which is given at the gaming table; and which indeed ought to be the only honour you should make free with.

Col. T. How can you, Miss, treat me so cruelly? have I not absolutely forsworn dice, mistress, every thing, since I dared to offer myself to you?

Miss T. Yes, colonel, and when I dare to receive you, you may return to every thing again, and not violate the laws of the present happy matrimonial establishment.

Col. T. Give me but your consent, Madam, and your life to come—

Miss T. Do you get my consent, colonel, and I'll take care of my life to come.

Col. T. How shall I get your consent?

Miss T. By getting me in the humour.

Col. T. But how to get you in the humour?

Miss T. O, there are several ways; I am very good natured.

Col. T. Are you in the humour now?

Miss T. Try me.

Col. T. How shall I?

Miss T. How shall I?—you a soldier, and not know the art military?—how shall I?—I'll tell you how;—when you have a subtle, treacherous, polite enemy to deal with, never stand shilly shally, and lose your time in treaties and parleys, but cock your hat, draw your sword;—march, beat drum—dub, dub, a dub—present, fire, piff-pauff—'tis done! they fly, they yield—victoria! victoria!

[*Running off.*]

Col. T. Stay, stay, my dear, dear angel!—

[*Bringing her back.*]

Miss T. No, no, no, I have no time to be killed now; besides, Lady Minikin is in the vapours, and wants you at chess, and my lord is low spirited, and wants me at piquet; my uncle is in an ill humour, and wants me to discard you, and go with him into the country.

Col. T. And will you, Miss?

Miss T. Will I?—no, I never do as I am bid? but you ought—so go to my lady.

Col. T. Nay, but Miss—

Miss T. Nay, but colonel, if you wont obey your commanding officer, you shall be broke, and then my maid wont accept of you; so march, colonel! lookye, Sir, I will command before marriage, and do what I please afterwards, or I have been well educated to very little purpose. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. What a mad devil it is!—now, if I had the least affection for the girl, I should be damnably vexed at this!—but she has a fine fortune, and I must have her if I can.—Tol, lol, lol, &c. [*Exit singing.*]

Enter SIR JOHN TROTLEY, and DAVY.

Sir J. Hold your tongue, Davy; you talk like a fool.

Davy. It is a fine place, your honour, and I could live here for ever!

Sir J. More shame for you:—live here for ever!—what, among thieves and pickpockets!—what a revolution since my time! the more I see, the more I've cause for lamentation; what a dreadful change has time brought about in twenty years! I should not have known the place again, nor the people; all the signs that made so noble an appearance, are all taken down;—not a bob or tye-wig to be seen! all the degrees, from the

parade in St. James' Park, to the stool and brush at the corner of every street, have their hair tied up—the mason laying bricks, the baker with his basket, the post-boy crying newspapers, and the doctors prescribing physic, have all their hair tied up; and that's the reason so many heads are tied up every month.

Davy. I shall have my head tied up to-morrow;—Mr. Whisp will do it for me—your honour and I look like Philistines among 'em.

Sir J. And I shall break your head if it is tied up; I hate innovation;—all confusion and no distinction!—the streets now are as smooth as a turnpike road! no rattling and exercise in the hackney-coaches; those who ride in 'em are all fast asleep; and they have strings in their hands, that the coachman must pull to waken 'em, when they are to be set down—what luxury and abomination!

Davy. Is it so, your honour? 'feckins, I liked it hugely.

Sir J. But you must hate and detest London.

Davy. How can I manage that, your honour, when there is every thing to delight my eye, and cherish my heart?

Sir J. 'Tis all deceit and delusion.

Davy. Such crowding, coaching, carting, and squeezing; such a power of fine sights, fine shops full of fine things, and then such fine illuminations all of a row! and such fine dainty ladies in the streets, so civil and so graceless—they talk of country girls, these here look more healthy and rosy by half.

Sir J. Sirrah, they are prostitutes, and are civil to delude and destroy you: they are painted Jezabels, and they who hearken to 'em, like Jezabel of old, will go to the dogs! If you dare to look at 'em, you will be tainted, and if you speak to 'em you are undone.

Davy. Bless us, bless us!—how does your honour know all this?—were they as bad in your time?

Sir J. Not by half, Davy—in my time, there was a sort of decency in the worst of women;—but the harlots now watch like tigers for their prey; and drag you to their dens of infamy—see, Davy, how they have torn my neckcloth.

[*Shows his neckcloth.*]

Davy. If you had gone civilly, your honour, they would not have hurt you.

Sir J. Well, we'll get away as fast as we can.

Davy. Not this month, I hope, for I have not had half my bellyful yet.

Sir J. I'll knock you down, Davy, if you grow profligate; you sha'n't go out again to-night, and to-morrow keep in my room, and stay till I can look over my things, and see they don't cheat you.

Davy. Your honour then wont keep your word with me? [*Sulkily.*]

Sir J. Why, what did I promise you?

Davy. That I should take sixpen'oth of one of the theatres to-night, and a shilling place at the other to-morrow.

Sir J. Well, well, so I did; is it a moral piece, Davy?

Davy. O yes, and written by a clergyman; it is called the Rival Canaanites, or the Tragedy of Braggadocia.

Sir J. Be a good lad, and I wont be worse than my word; there's money for you—[*Gives him some.*] but come straight home, for I shall want to go to bed.

Davy. To be sure, your honour—as I am to go so soon, I'll make a night of it. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir J. This fellow would turn rake and macaroni if he was to stay here a week longer—bless me, what dangers are in this town at every step! O, that I were once settled safe again at Trotley-place!—nothing but to save my country should bring me back again: my niece, Lucretia, is so be-fashioned and be-devilled, that nothing, I fear, can save her; however, to ease my conscience, I must try; but what can be expected from the young women of these times, but shallow looks, wild schemes, saucy words, and loose morals!—they lie a-bed all day, sit up all night; if they are silent, they are gaming; and if they talk, 'tis either scandal or infidelity; and that they may look what they are, their heads are all feather, and round their necks are twisted rattlesnake tippets—*O tempora, O mores!*

SCENE II.

LORD MINIKIN discovered in his powdering gown, with JESSAMY and MIGNON.

Lord M. Pr'ythee, Mignon, don't plague me any more; dost think that a nobleman's head has nothing to do but be tortured all day under thy infernal fingers? give me my clothes.

Mig. Ven your loss your monee, my lor, you no goot humour; the devil may dress your cheveu for me! [*Exit.*]

Lord M. That fellow's an impudent rascal, but he's a genius, so I must bear with him. Our beef and pudding enrich their blood so much, that the slaves in a month forget their misery and soup-maigre—O, my head!—a chair, Jessamy!—I must absolutely change my wine-merchant: I can't taste his champagne, without dis-ordering myself for a week!—heigho. [*Sighs.*]

Enter MISS TITTUP.

Miss T. What makes you sigh, my lord?

Lord M. Because you were so near me, child.

Miss T. Indeed! I should rather have thought my lady had been with you—by your looks, my lord, I am afraid Fortune jilted you last night.

Lord M. No, faith; our champagne was not good yesterday. I am vapoured like our English November; but one glance of my Tittup can dispel vapours like—like—

Miss T. Like something very fine, to be sure; but pray keep your smile for the next time;—and harkye—a little prudence will not be amiss; Mr. Jessamy will think you mad, and me worse. [*Half aside.*]

Jes. O, pray don't mind me, Madam.

Lord M. Gadso, Jessamy, look out my domino, and I'll ring the bell when I want you.

Jes. I shall, my lord;—Miss thinks that every body is blind in the house but herself.

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Miss T. Upon my word, my lord, you must be a little more prudent, or we shall become the town talk.

Lord M. And so I will, my dear; and therefore to prevent surprise, I'll lock the door. [*Locks it.*]

Miss T. What do you mean, my lord?

Lord M. Prudence, child, prudence. I keep all my jewels under lock and key.

Miss T. You are not in possession yet, my lord; I can't stay two minutes; I only came to tell you, that Lady Minikin saw us yesterday in

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the hackney-coach; she did not know me, I believe; she pretends to be greatly uneasy at your neglect of her; she certainly has some mischief in her head.

Lord M. No intentions, I hope, of being fond of me?

Miss T. No, no, make yourself easy; she hates you most unalterably.

Lord M. You have given me spirits again.

Miss T. Her pride is alarmed, that you should prefer any of the sex to her.

Lord M. Her pride then has been alarmed ever since I had the honour of knowing her.

Miss T. But, dear my lord, let us be merry and wise; should she ever be convinced that we have a tendre for each other, she certainly would proclaim it, and then—

Lord M. We should be envied, and she would be laughed at, my sweet cousin.

Miss T. Nay, I would have her mortified too—for though I love her ladyship sincerely: I cannot say, but I love a little mischief as sincerely: but then if my uncle, Trotley, should know of our affairs, he is so old-fashioned, prudish, and out of the way, he would either strike me out of his will, or insist upon my quitting the house.

Lord M. My good cousin is a queer mortal, that's certain; I wish we could get him handsomely into the country again—he has a fine fortune to leave behind him.

Miss T. But then he lives so regularly, and never makes use of a physician, that he may live these twenty years.

Lord M. What can we do with the barbarian?

Miss T. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I am really in fear of him: I suppose, reading his formal books when I was in the country with him, and going so constantly to church, with my elbows stuck to my hips, and my toes turned in, has given me these foolish prejudices.

Lord M. Then you must affront him, or you'll never get the better of him.

SIR JOHN TROTLEY, knocking at the door.

Sir J. My lord, my lord, are you busy?

[*Lord M. goes to the door, softly.*]
Miss T. Heavens! 'tis that detestable brute, my uncle!

Lord M. That horrid dog, my cousin!

Miss T. What shall we do, my lord? [*Softly*]

Sir J. [*At the door.*] Nay, my lord, my lord, I heard you; pray let me speak with you.

Lord M. Ho, Sir John, is it you? I beg your pardon, I'll put up my papers, and open the door.

Miss T. Stay, stay, my lord, I would not meet him now for the world; if he sees me here alone with you, he'll rave like a madman; put me up the chimney; any where. [*Alarmed.*]

Lord M. I'm coming, Sir John! here, here, get behind my great chair; he sha'n't see you, and you may see all; I'll be short and pleasant with him.

[*Puts her behind the chair, and opens the door.*]

Enter SIR JOHN.

During this scene LORD M. turns the chair, as SIR JOHN moves, to conceal TITTUP.

Sir J. You'll excuse me, my lord, that I have broken in upon you; I heard you talking pretty loud; what, have you nobody with you? what were you about, cousin? [*Looking about.*]

Lord M. A particular affair, Sir John; I always lock myself up to study my speeches, and

speak 'em aloud for the sake of the tone and action.

Sir J. Ay, ay, 'tis the best way; I am sorry I disturbed you;—you'll excuse me, cousin!

Lord M. I am obliged to you, Sir John; intense application to these things ruins my health; but one must do it for the sake of the nation.

Sir J. May be so, and I hope the nation will be the better for't—you'll excuse me!

Lord M. Excuse you, Sir John, I love your frankness; but why wont you be franker still? we have always something for dinner, and you will never dine at home.

Sir J. You must know, my lord, that I love to know what I eat;—I hate to travel, where I don't know my way; and since you have brought in foreign fashions and figaries, every thing and every body are in masquerade: your men and manners too are as much frittered and fricaseed, as your beef and mutton; I love a plain dish, my lord.

Miss T. I wish I was out of the room, or he at the bottom of the Thames. [*Peeping.*]

Sir J. But to the point;—I came, my lord, to open my mind to you about my niece Tittup; shall I do it freely?

Miss T. Now for it!

Lord M. The freer the better; Tittup's a fine girl, cousin, and deserves all the kindness you can show her.

[*LORD MINIKIN and TITTUP make signs at each other.*]

Sir J. She must deserve it though, before she shall have it; and I would have her begin with lengthening her petticoats, covering her shoulders, and wearing a cap upon her head.

Miss T. O, frightful!

Lord M. Don't you think a taper leg, falling shoulders, and fine hair, delightful objects, Sir John?

Sir J. And therefore ought to be concealed; 'tis their interest to conceal 'em; when you take from the men the pleasure of imagination, there will be a scarcity of husbands; and the taper legs, falling shoulders, and fine hair, may be had for nothing.

Lord M. Well said, Sir John; ha, ha!—your niece shall wear a horseman's coat and jack-boots to please you—ha, ha, ha!

Sir J. You may sneer, my lord, but for all that, I think my niece in a bad way; she must leave me and the country, forsooth, to travel and see good company and fashions; I have seen 'em too, and wish from my heart that she is not much the worse for her journey—you'll excuse me!

Lord M. But why in a passion, Sir John?

[*LORD MINIKIN nods and laughs at Miss*

TITTUP, who peeps from behind.]

Don't you think that my lady and I shall be able and willing to put her into the road?

Sir J. Zounds! my lord, you are out of it yourself; this comes of your travelling; all the town know how you and my lady live together; and I must tell you—you'll excuse me!—that my niece suffers by the bargain; prudence, my lord, is a very fine thing.

Lord M. So is a long neckcloth nicely twisted into a button hole, but I don't choose to wear one—you'll excuse me!

Sir J. I wish that he who first changed long neckcloths for such things as you wear, had the wearing of a twisted neckcloth that I would give him

Lord M. Pr'ythee, baronet, don't be so horribly out of the way; prudence is a very vulgar virtue, and so incompatible with our present ease and refinement, that a prudent man of fashion is now as great a miracle as a pale woman of quality: we got rid of our *mauvaise honte*, at the time that we imported our neighbour's rouge, and their morals.

Sir J. Did you ever hear the like! I am not surprised, my lord, that you think so lightly, and talk so vainly, who are so polite a husband; your lady, my cousin, is a fine woman, and brought you a fine fortune, and deserves better usage.

Lord M. Will you have her, Sir John? she is very much at your service.

Sir J. Profligate! What did you marry her for, my lord?

Lord M. Convenience—Marriage is not now-a-days, an affair of inclination, but convenience; and they who marry for love and such old-fashioned stuff, are to me as ridiculous as those that advertise for an agreeable companion in a post-chaise.

Sir J. I have done, my lord; Miss Tittup shall either return with me into the country, or not a penny shall she have from Sir John Trotley, baronet. [*Whistles and walks about.*]

Miss T. I am frightened out of my wits!

[*LORD MINIKIN sings and sits down.*]

Sir J. Pray, my lord, what husband is this you have provided for her?

Lord M. A friend of mine; a man of wit, and a fine gentleman.

Sir J. May be so, and yet make a damned husband for all that. You'll excuse me!—What estate has he, pray?

Lord M. He's a colonel; his elder brother, Sir Tan Tivy, will certainly break his neck, and then my friend will be a happy man.

Sir J. Here's morals! a happy man, when his brother has broke his neck!—a happy man—mercy on me!

Lord M. Why, he'll have six thousand a year, Sir John—

Sir J. I don't care what he'll have, nor I don't care what he is, nor who my niece marries; she is a fine lady, and let her have a fine gentleman; I sha'n't hinder her; I'll away into the country to-morrow, and leave you to your fine doings; I have no relish for 'em, not I; I can't live among you, nor eat with you, nor game with you: I hate cards and dice; I will neither rob nor be robbed; I am contented with what I have, and am very happy, my lord, though my brother has not broke his neck—you'll excuse me! [*Exit.*]

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Come, fox, come out of your hole! ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. Indeed, my lord, you have undone me; not a foot shall I have of Trotley Manor, that's positive! but no matter, there's no danger of his breaking his neck, so I'll even make myself happy with what I have, and behave to him for the future, as if he was a poor relation.

Lord M. [*Kneeling, snatching her hand, and kissing it.*] I must kneel and adore you for your spirit, my sweet, heavenly Lucretia!

Re-enter SIR JOHN.

Sir J. One thing I had forgot. [*Starts.*]

Miss T. Ha! he's here again!

Sir J. Why, what the devil!—heigho, my niece Lucretia, and my virtuous lord, studying

speeches for the good of the nation. Yes, yes, you have been making fine speeches, indeed, my lord; and your arguments have prevailed, I see. I beg your pardon, I did not mean to interrupt your studies—you'll excuse me, my lord!

Lord M. [*Smiling, and mocking him.*] You'll excuse me, Sir John!

Sir J. O yes, my lord, but I'm afraid the devil wont excuse you at the proper time—Miss Lucretia, how do you, child? You are to be married soon—I wish the gentleman joy, Miss Lucretia; he is a happy man to be sure, and will want nothing but the breaking of his brother's neck to be completely so.

Miss T. Upon my word, uncle, you are always putting bad constructions upon things; my lord has been soliciting me to marry his friend—and having that moment—extorted a consent from me—he was thanking—and—and—wishing me joy,—in his foolish manner. [*Hesitating.*]

Sir J. Is that all!—but how came you here, child? did you fly down the chimney, or in at the window? for I don't remember seeing you when I was here before.

Miss T. How can you talk so, Sir John? You really confound me with your suspicions; and then you ask so many questions, and I have so many things to do, that—that—upon my word, if I don't make haste, I sha'n't get my dress ready for the ball, so I must run—You'll excuse me, uncle! [*Exit, running.*]

Sir J. A fine, hopeful, young lady that, my lord?

Lord M. She's well bred, and has wit.

Sir J. She has wit and breeding enough to laugh at her relations, and bestow favours on your lordship; but I must tell you plainly, my lord—you'll excuse me—that your marrying your lady, my cousin, to use her ill, and sending for my niece, your cousin, to debauch her,—

Lord M. You're warm, Sir John, and don't know the world, and I never contend with ignorance and passion; live with me some time, and you'll be satisfied of my honour and good intentions to you and your family; in the mean time, command my house; I must away immediately to Lady Filligree's—and I am sorry you wont make one with us—here, Jessamy, give me my domino, and call a chair; and don't let my uncle want for any thing; you'll excuse me, Sir John; tol, lol, de rol, &c. [*Exit, singing.*]

Sir J. The world's at an end!—here's fine work! here are precious doings! this lord is a pillar of the state too: no wonder that the building is in danger with such rotten supporters;—heigh ho!—and then my poor Lady Minikin, what a friend and husband she is blessed with!—let me consider!—should I tell the good woman of these pranks? I may only make more mischief, and may hap go near to kill her, for she's as tender as she's virtuous; poor lady! I'll e'en go and comfort her directly, and endeavour to draw her from the wickedness of this town into the country, where she shall have reading, fowling, and fishing, to keep up her spirits, and when I die, I will leave her that part of my fortune, with which I intended to reward the virtues of Miss Lucretia Tittup, with a plague to her! [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. —LADY MINIKIN'S Apartment.

LADY MINIKIN and COLONEL TIVY discovered.

Lady M. Don't urge it, colonel; I can't think

of coming home from the masquerade this evening; though I should pass for my niece, it would make an uproar among my servants; and perhaps from the mistake break off your match with Tittup.

Col. T. My dear Lady Minikin, you know my marriage with your niece is only a secondary consideration; my first and principal object is you—you, Madam!—therefore, my dear lady, give me your promise to leave the ball with me; you must, Lady Minikin; a bold young fellow and a soldier as I am, ought not to be kept from plunder when the town has capitulated.

Lady M. But it has not capitulated, and perhaps never will; however, colonel, since you are so furious, I must come to terms, I think. Keep your eyes upon me at the ball, I think I may expect that, and when I drop my handkerchief, 'tis your signal for pursuing; I shall get home as fast as I can, you may follow me as fast as you can; my lord and Tittup will be otherwise employed. Gymp will let us in the backway. No, no, my heart misgives me.

Col. T. Then I am miserable!

Lady M. Nay, rather than you should be miserable, colonel, I will indulge your martial spirit; meet me in the field; there's my gauntlet.

[*Throws down her glove.*]

Col. T. [*Seizing it.*] Thus I accept your sweet challenge; and, if I fail you, may I hereafter, both in love and war, be branded with the name of coward. [*Kneels and kisses her hand.*]

Enter SIR JOHN, opening the door.

Sir J. May I presume, cousin—

Lady M. Ha! [*Squalls.*]

Sir J. Mercy upon us, what are we at now?

[*Looks astonished.*]

Lady M. How can you be so rude, Sir John, to come into a lady's room without first knocking at the door? you have frightened me out of my wits.

Sir J. I am sure you have frightened me out of mine!

Col. T. Such rudeness deserves death!

Sir J. Death indeed! for I never shall recover myself again. All pigs of the same sty! all studying for the good of the nation!

Lady M. We must soothe him, and not provoke him. [*Half aside to the COL.*]

Col. T. I would cut his throat, if you'd permit me. [*Aside to LADY MINIKIN.*]

Sir J. The devil has got his hoof in the house, and has corrupted the whole family; I'll get out of it as fast as I can, lest he should lay hold of me too. [*Going.*]

Lady M. Sir John, I must insist upon your not going away in a mistake.

Sir J. No mistake, my lady, I am thoroughly convinced—mercy on me!

Lady M. I must beg you, Sir John, not to make any wrong constructions upon this accident; you must know, that the moment you was at the door—I had promised the colonel no longer to be his enemy in his designs upon Miss Tittup,—this threw him into such a rapture,—that upon my promising my interest with you—and wishing him joy—he fell upon his knees, and—and—[*Laughing.*] ha, ha, ha!

Col. T. Ha, ha, ha! yes, yes, I fell upon my knees, and—and—

Sir J. Ay, ay, fell upon your knees, and—and—ha, ha, ha! a very good joke, faith; and the best

of it is, that they are wishing joy all over the house upon the same occasion; and my lord is wishing joy; and I wish him joy, and you, with all my heart.

Lady M. Upon my word, Sir John, your cruel suspicions affect me strongly; and though my resentment is curbed by my regard, my tears cannot be restrained; 'tis the only resource my innocence has left. [*Exit, crying.*]

Col. T. I reverence you, Sir, as a relation to that lady, but as her slanderer I detest you: her tears must be dried, and my honour satisfied; you know what I mean; take your choice;—time, place, sword, or pistol; consider it calmly, and determine as you please. I am a soldier, Sir John. [*Exit.*]

Sir J. Very fine, truly! and so, between the crocodile and the bully, my throat is to be cut; they are guilty of all sorts of iniquity, and when they are discovered, no humility, no repentance!—the ladies have recourse to their tongues or their tears, and the gallants to their swords. That I may not be drawn in by the one, or drawn upon by the other, I'll hurry into the country while I retain my senses, and can sleep in a whole skin. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR JOHN AND JESSAMY.

Sir J. There is no bearing this! what a land are we in! upon my word, Mr. Jessamy, you should look well to the house, there are certainly rogues about it; for I did but cross the way just now to the pamphlet-shop, to buy a Touch of the Times, and they have taken my hanger from my side; ay, and had a pluck at my watch too; but I heard of their tricks, and had it sowed to my pocket.

Jes. Don't be alarmed, Sir John; 'tis a very common thing; and if you walk the streets without convoy, you will be picked up by privateers of all kinds; ha, ha!

Sir J. Not be alarmed when I am robbed!—why, they might have cut my throat with my own hanger! I sha'n't sleep a wink all night; so pray lend me some weapon of defence, for I am sure, if they attack me in the open street, they'll be with me at night again.

Jes. I'll lend you my own sword, Sir John; be assured there's no danger; there's robbing and murder cried every night under my window; but it no more disturbs me, than the ticking of my watch at my bed's head.

Sir J. Well, well, be that as it will, I must be upon my guard. What a dreadful place is this! but 'tis all owing to the corruption of the times; the great folks game, and the poor folks rob; no wonder that murder ensues; sad, sad, sad!—well, let me but get over to-night, and I'll leave this den of thieves to-morrow—how long will your lord and lady stay at this masking and mummery before they come home?

Jes. 'Tis impossible to say the time, Sir; that merely depends upon the spirits of the company and the nature of the entertainment; for my own part, I generally make it myself till four or five in the morning.

Sir J. Why, what the devil! do you make one at these masqueradings?

Jes. I seldom miss, Sir; I may venture to say that nobody knows the trim and small talk of the

place better than I do; I was always reckoned an incomparable mask.

Sir J. Thou art an incomparable coxcomb, I am sure. [*Aside.*]

Jes. An odd, ridiculous accident happened to me at a masquerade three years ago; I was in tip-top spirits, and had drank a little too freely of the Champagne, I believe.

Sir J. You'll be hanged, I believe. [*Aside.*]

Jes. Wit flew about—in short, I was in spirits—at last, from drinking and rattling, to vary the pleasure, we went to dancing, and who do you think I danced a minuet with? he, he! pray guess, Sir John!

Sir J. Danced a minuet with! [*Half aside.*]

Jes. My own lady, that's all; the eyes of the whole assembly were upon us; my lady dances well; and I believe I am pretty tolerable: after the dance, I was running into a little coquetry and small talk with her.

Sir J. With your lady? Chaos is come again. [*Aside.*]

Jes. With my lady—but upon my turning my hand thus [*Conceitedly.*—]—egad, she caught me; whispered me who I was; I would fain have laughed her out of it, but it would not do;—no, no, Jessamy, says she, I am not to be deceived: pray wear gloves for the future; for you may as well go bare-faced, as show that hand and diamond ring.

Sir J. What a sink of iniquity!—Prostitution on all sides! from the lord to the pick-pocket. [*Aside.*] Pray, Mr. Jessamy, among your other virtues, I suppose you game a little, eh, Mr. Jessamy?

Jes. A little whist or so; but I am tied up from the dice; I must never touch a box again.

Sir J. I wish you was tied up somewhere else.

[*Aside.*] I sweat from top to toe! Pray, lend me your sword, Mr. Jessamy; I shall go to my room; and let my lord and lady, and my niece Tittup, know, that I beg they will excuse ceremonies; that I must be up and gone before they go to bed; that I have a most profound respect and love for them, and—and—that I hope we shall never see one another again as long as we live.

Jes. I shall certainly obey your commands—what poor, ignorant wretches these country gentlemen are! [*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir J. If I stay in this place another day, it would throw me into a fever!—Oh!—I wish it was morning! this comes of visiting my relations!

Enter DAVY, drunk.

So, you wicked wretch you—where have you been, and what have you been doing?

Davy. Merry-making, your honour.—London for ever!

Sir J. Did I not order you to come directly from the play, and not be idling and raking about?

Davy. Servants don't do what they are bid, in London.

Sir J. And did I not order you not to make a jackanapes of yourself, and tie your hair up like a monkey?

Davy. And therefore I did it!—no pleasing the ladies without this—my lord's servants call you an old out-of-fashioned codger, and have taught me what's what.

Sir J. Here's an imp of the devil! he is undone, and will poison the whole country—sirrah, get every thing ready, I'll be going directly.

Davy. To bed, Sir?—I want to go to bed myself, Sir.

Sir J. Why, how now—you are drunk too, sirrah.

Davy. I am a little, your honour, because I have been drinking.

Sir J. That is not all—but you have been in bad company, sirrah?

Davy. Indeed your honour's mistaken, I never kept such good company in all my life.

Sir J. The fellow does not understand me—where have you been, you drunkard?

Davy. Drinking, to be sure, if I am a drunkard; and if you had been drinking too, as I have been, you would not be in such a passion with a body—it makes one so good natured.

Sir J. There is another addition to my misfortunes! I shall have this fellow carry into the county as many vices as will corrupt the whole parish.

Davy. I'll take what I can, to be sure, your worship.

Sir J. Get away, you beast you, and sleep off the debauchery you have contracted this fortnight, or I shall leave you behind, as a proper person to make one of his lordship's family.

Davy. So much the better—give me more wages, less work, and the key of the ale-cellar, and I am your servant; if not, provide yourself with another. [*Struts.*]

Sir J. Here's a reprobate!—this is the completion of my misery! but harkye, villain,—go to bed—and sleep off your iniquity, and then pack up the things, or I'll pack you off to Newgate, and transport you for life, you rascal you. [*Exit.*]

Davy. That for you, old codger. [*Snaps his fingers.*] I know the law better than to be frightened with moonshine; I wish that I was to live here all my days,—this is the life indeed! a servant lives up to his eyes in clover; they have wages, and board wages, and nothing to do, but to grow fat and saucy—they are as happy as their master, they play for ever at cards, swear like emperors, drink like fishes, and go a wenching with as much ease and tranquillity, as if they were going to a sermon. Oh! 'tis a fine life! [*Exit, reeling.*]

SCENE II.—A Chamber in LORD MINIKIN'S House.

Enter LORD MINIKIN and MISS TITTUP in Masquerade Dresses, lighted by JESSAMY.

Lord M. Set down the candles, Jessamy; and should your lady come home, let me know—be sure you are not out of the way.

Jes. I have lived too long with your lordship to need the caution—who the devil have we got now? but that's my lord's business, and not mine. [*Exit.*]

Miss T. [*Pulling off her mask.*] Upon my word, my lord, this coming home so soon from the masquerade is very imprudent, and will certainly be observed—I am most inconceivably frightened, I can assure you—my uncle Trotley has a light in his room; the accident this morning will certainly keep him upon the watch—pray, my lord, let us defer our meetings till he goes into the country—I find that my English heart, though it has ventured so far, grows fearful, and awkward to practise the freedoms of warmer climes—[*LORD M. takes her by the hand.*] If you will not desert, my lord—we are separated for ever—the

sight of the precipice turns my head; I have been giddy with it too long, and must turn from it while I can—pray, be quiet, my lord, I will meet you to-morrow.

Lord M. To-morrow! 'tis an age in my situation—let the weak, bashful, coyish whiner be intimidated with these faint alarms, but let the bold experienced lover kindle at the danger, and like the eagle in the midst of storms thus pounce upon his prey. [*Takes hold of her.*]

Miss T. Dear Mr. Eagle, be merciful; pray let the poor pigeon fly for this once.

Lord M. If I do, my dove, may I be cursed to have my wife as fond of me, as I am now of thee. [*Offers to kiss her.*]

Jes. [*Without, knocking at the door.*] My lord, my lord!—

Miss T. Ha! [*Screams.*]

Lord M. Who's there?

Jes. [*Peeping.*] 'Tis I, my lord; may I come in?

Lord M. Damn the fellow! What's the matter?

Jes. Nay, not much, my lord—only my lady's come home.

Miss T. Then I'm undone—what shall I do? I'll run into my own room.

Lord M. Then she may meet you—

Jes. There's a dark deep closet, my lord—Miss may hide herself there.

Miss T. For Heaven's sake, put me into it, and when her ladyship's safe, let me know, my lord.—What an escape have I had!

Lord M. The moment her evil spirit is laid, I'll let my angel out—[*Puts her into the closet.*]—lock the door on the inside—come softly to my room, Jessamy.

Jes. If a board creaks, your lordship shall never give me a laced waistcoat again.

[*Exeunt on tiptoes.*]

Enter GYMP, lighting in LADY MINIKIN and COLONEL TIVY, in Masquerade Dresses.

Gymp. Pray, my lady, go no farther with the colonel, I know you mean nothing but innocence, but I'm sure there will be bloodshed, for my lord is certainly in the house—I'll take my affidavit that I heard—

Col. T. It can't be, I tell you; we left him this moment at the masquerade—I spoke to him before I came out.

Lady M. He's too busy, and too well employed, to think of home—but don't tremble so, Gymp. There is no harm, I assure you—the colonel is to marry my niece, and it is proper to settle some matters relating to it—they are left to us.

Gymp. Yes, yes, madam, to be sure it is proper that you talk together—I know you mean nothing but innocence—but indeed there will be bloodshed.

Col. T. The girl's a fool. I have no sword by my side.

Gymp. But my lord has, and you may kill one another with that—I know you mean nothing but innocence, but I certainly heard him go up the back stairs into his room, talking with Jessamy.

Lady M. 'Tis impossible but the girl must have fancied this—Can't you ask Whip, or Mig-non, if their master is come in?

Gymp. Lord, my lady, they are always drunk before this, and asleep in the kitchen.

Lady M. This frightened fool has made me as ridiculous as herself! hark!—Colonel, I'll swear there is something upon the stairs—now I am in the field I find I am a coward.

Gymp. There will certainly be bloodshed.

Col. T. I'll slip down with *Gymp* this back way then. *[Going.]*

Gymp. O dear, my lady, there is somebody coming up them too.

Col. T. Zounds! I've got between two fires!

Lady M. Run into the closet.

Col. T. *[Runs to the closet.]* There's no retreat—the door is locked!

Lady M. Behind the chimney-board, *Gymp*.

Col. T. I shall certainly be taken prisoner, *[Gets behind the board.]* you'll let me know when the enemy's decamped.

Lady M. Leave that to me—do you, *Gymp*, go down the back stairs, and leave me to face my lord, I think I can match him at hypocrisy.

[Sits down.]

Enter LORD MINIKIN.

Lord M. What, is your ladyship so soon returned from Lady F'iligree's?

Lady M. I am sure, my lord, I ought to be more surprised at your being here so soon, when I saw you so well entertained in a *tete-a-tete* with a lady in crimson—such sights, my lord, will always drive me from my most favourite amusements.

Lord M. You find at least, that the lady, whoever she was, could not engage me to stay, when I found your ladyship had left the ball.

Lady M. Your lordship's sneering upon my unhappy temper may be a proof of your wit, but it is none of your humanity; and this behaviour is as great an insult upon me, as even your falsehood itself. *[Pretends to weep.]*

Lord M. Nay, my dear Lady Minikin, if you are resolved to play tragedy, I shall roar away too, and pull out my cambric handkerchief.

Lady M. I think, my lord, we had better retire to our apartments; my weakness and your brutality will only expose us to our servants—Where is Tittup, pray?

Lord M. I left her with the colonel—a masquerade to young folks, upon the point of matrimony, is as delightful as it is disgusting to those who are happily married, and are wise enough to love home, and the company of their wives.

[Takes hold of her hand.]

Lady M. False man! I had as lieve a toad touched me. *[Aside.]*

Lord M. She gives me the *frisonne*—I must propose to stay, or I shall never get rid of her. *[Aside.]*—I am aguish to-night,—he—he—do my dear, let us make a little fire here, and have a family *tete-a-tete*, by way of novelty. *[Rings a bell.]*

Enter JESSAMY.

Let 'em take away that chimney-board, and light a fire here immediately.

Lady M. What shall I do?—*[Aside, and greatly alarmed.]*—Here, Jessamy, there is no occasion—I am going to my own chamber, and my lord wont stay here by himself. *[Exit JESSAMY.]*

Lord M. How cruel it is, Lady Minikin, to deprive me of the pleasure of a domestic duetto—A good escape, faith! *[Aside.]*

Lady M. I have too much regard for Lord Minikin to agree to any thing that would afford him

so little pleasure—I shall retire to my own apartment.

Lord M. Well, if your ladyship will be cruel, I must still, like the miser, starve and sigh, though possessed of the greatest treasure—*[Bows.]* I wish your ladyship a good night—*[He takes one candle, and LADY MINIKIN the other.]* May I presume—*[Salutes her.]*

Lady M. Your lordship is too obliging—nasty man! *[Aside.]*

Lord M. Disagreeable woman! *[Aside.]*

[Wipe their lips and exeunt different ways.]

Miss T. *[Peeping out of the closet.]* All's silent now, and quite dark; what has been doing here I cannot guess—I long to be relieved; I wish my lord was come—but I hear a noise!

[She shuts the door.]

Col. T. *[Peeping over the chimney-board.]* I wonder my lady does not come—I would not have Miss Tittup know of this—'twould be ten thousand pounds out of my way, and I cannot afford to give so much for a little gallantry.

Miss T. *[Comes forward.]* What would my Colonel say, to find his bride, that is to be, in this critical situation?

Enter LORD MINIKIN at one door, in the dark.

Lord M. Now to release my prisoner.

[Comes forward.]

Enter LADY MINIKIN, at the other door.

Lady M. My poor colonel will be as miserable, as if we were besieged in garrison; I must release him.

Lord M. Hist! hist!

[Going towards the chimney.]

Miss T. *Lord M. and Col. T.* Here! here!

Lord M. This way.

Lady M. Softly.

[They all grope, till LORD MINIKIN has got LADY MINIKIN, and the COLONEL MISS TITTUP.]

Sir J. *[Speaks without.]* Lights this way, I say; I am sure there are thieves; get a blunderbuss.

Jes. Indeed you dream it, there is nobody but the family. *[All stand and stare.]*

Enter SIR JOHN in his night-cap, his hanger drawn, with JESSAMY.

Sir J. Give me the candle, I'll ferret 'em out, I warrant; bring a blunderbuss, I say: they have been skipping about that gallery in the dark this half hour; there must be mischief—I have watched them into this room—ho, ho, are you there?—If you stir, you are dead men—*[They retire.]*—and *[Seeing the ladies.]* women too!—egad—ha! what's this? the same party again! and two couple they are of as choice mortals as ever were hatched in this righteous town—you'll excuse me, cousins! *[They all look confounded.]*

Lord M. In the name of wonder, how comes all this about.

Sir J. Well, but harkye, my dear cousins, have you not got wrong partners?—here has been some mistake in the dark: I am mighty glad that I have brought you a candle to set all to rights again—you'll excuse me, gentlemen and ladies.

Enter GYMP, with a candle.

Gymp. What in the name of mercy is the matter?

Sir J. Why the old matter, and the old game,

Mrs. Gymp; and I'll match my cousins here at it against all the world, and I say done first.

Lord M. What is the meaning, Sir John, of all this tumult and consternation? may not Lady Minikin and I, and the colonel and your niece, be seen in my house together without your raising the family, and making this uproar and confusion?

Sir J. Come, come, good folks, I see you are all confounded, I'll settle this matter in a moment—as for you, colonel—though you have not deserved plain dealing from me, I will now be serious—you imagine this young lady has an independent fortune, besides expectations from me—'tis a mistake, she has no expectations from me, if she marry you; and if I don't consent to her marriage, she will have no fortune at all.

Col. T. Plain dealing is a jewel; and to show you, Sir John, that I can pay you in kind, I am most sincerely obliged to you for your intelligence; and I am, ladies your most obedient, humble servant—I shall see you, my lord, at the club to-morrow? [*Exit.*]

Lord M. *Sans doute, mon cher colonel*—I'll meet you there, without fail.

Sir J. My lord, you'll have something else to do.

Lord M. Indeed! what is that, good Sir John?

Sir J. You must meet your lawyers and creditors to-morrow, and be told what you have always turned a deaf ear to—that the dissipation of your fortune and morals must be followed by years of parsimony and repentance—as you are fond of going abroad, you may indulge that inclination without having it in your power to indulge any other.

Lord M. The bumpkin is no fool, and is damned satirical. [*Aside.*]

Sir J. This kind of quarantine for pestilential

minds will bring you to your senses, and make you renounce foreign vices and follies, and return with joy to your country and property again—read that, my lord, and know your fate.

[*Gives a paper.*]

Lord M. What an abomination is this! that a man of fashion, and a nobleman, shall be obliged to submit to the laws of his country.

Sir J. Thank Heaven, my lord, we are in that country!—You are silent, ladies—if repentance has subdued your tongues, I shall have hopes of you—a little country air might perhaps do well—as you are distressed, I am at your service—what say you, my lady?

Lady M. However appearances have condemned me, give me leave to disavow the substance of those appearances. My mind has been tainted, but not profligate—your kindness and example may restore me to my former natural English constitution.

Sir J. Will you resign your lady to me, my lord, for a time?

Lord M. For ever, dear Sir John, without a murmur.

Sir J. Well, Miss, and what say you?

Miss T. Guilty, uncle. [*Courtesying.*]

Sir J. Guilty! the devil you are? of what?

Miss T. Of consenting to marry one whom my heart does not approve; and coquetting with another, which friendship, duty, honour, morals, and every thing but fashion, ought to have forbidden.

Sir J. Thus then, with the wife of one under this arm, and the mistress of another under this, I sally forth a knight-errant, to rescue distressed damsels from those monsters, foreign vices, and *Bon Ton*, as they call it; and I trust that every English hand and heart here will assist me in so desperate an undertaking—*You'll excuse me, Sirs!*

THE ORPHAN:

OR,

THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE.

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY THOMAS OTWAY.

REMARKS.

To the great merit of Miss O'Neil, in Monimia, we are indebted for the revival of this tragedy, which was originally played at the Duke's Theatre, in 1680; and long kept possession of the stage. The language of this play is poetical and tender, and the incidents affecting; but, amidst many beauties, there is great inconsistency.*

Dr. Johnson observes,—“This is one of the few pieces that has pleased for almost a century, through all the vicissitudes of dramatic fashion. Of this play, nothing new can easily be said. It is a domestic tragedy, drawn from middle life;—its whole power is upon the affections; for it is not written with much comprehension of thought, or elegance of expression. But, if the heart is interested, many other beauties may be wanting, yet not be missed.”

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE, 1780.	COVENT GARDEN, 1815.
CASTALIO,	<i>Mr. Reddish.</i>	<i>Mr. C. Kemble.</i>
ACASTO,	<i>Mr. Packer.</i>	<i>Mr. Egerton.</i>
POLYDORE,	<i>Mr. Brereton.</i>	<i>Mr. Conway.</i>
CHAPLAIN,	<i>Mr. Usher</i>	<i>Mr. Chapman.</i>
ERNESTO,	<i>Mr. Wrighlen.</i>	<i>Mr. Jefferies.</i>
PAGE,	<i>Master Pulley.</i>	<i>Miss Prescott.</i>
CHAMONT,	<i>Mr. Smith.</i>	<i>Mr. Young.</i>
SERINA,	<i>Miss Platt.</i>	<i>Miss Boyce.</i>
FLORELLA,	<i>Mrs. Johnston.</i>	<i>Mrs. Seymour.</i>
MONIMIA,	<i>Miss Younge.</i>	<i>Miss O'Neil.</i>

SCENE—Bohemia.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

Enter CASTALIO, POLYDORE, and PAGE.

Cas. Polydore, our sport
Has been to-day much better for the danger:
When on the brink the foaming boar I met,

And in his side thought to have lodg'd my spear,
The desperate savage rush'd within my force,
And bore me headlong with him down the rock.
Pol. But then—
Cas. Ay, then, my brother, my friend, Polydore,
Like Perseus mounted on his wing'd steed,

* Many readers will, probably, exclaim with the critic, when he first saw it,—“Oh! what an infinite deal of mischief would a farthing rush-light have prevented”

Came on, and down the dangerous precipice
leap'd

To save Castalio.—'Twas a godlike act!

Pol. But when I came, I found you conqueror.
Oh! my heart danc'd, to see your danger past!
The heat and fury of the chase was cold,
And I had nothing in my mind but joy.

Cas. So, Polydore, methinks, we might in
war

Rush on together; thou shouldst be my guard,
And I be thine. What is't could hurt us then?
Now half the youth of Europe are in arms,
How fulsome must it be to stay behind,
And die of rank diseases here at home!

Pol. No, let me purchase in my youth renown,
To make me loved and valued when I'm old;
I would be busy in the world, and learn,
Not like a coarse and useless dunghill weed,
Fix'd to one spot, and rot just as I grow.

Cas. Our father
Has ta'en himself a surfeit of the world,
And cries, it is not safe that we should taste it.
I own, I have duty very powerful in me:
And though I'd hazard all to raise my name,
Yet he's so tender, and so good a father,
I could not do a thing to cross his will.

Pol. Castalio, I have doubts within my heart,
Which you, and only you, can satisfy.
Will you be free and candid to your friend?

Cas. Have I a thought my Polydore should not
know?

What can this mean?

Pol. Nay, I'll conjure you too,
By all the strictest bonds of faithful friendship,
To show your heart as naked in this point,
As you would purge you of your sins to Heaven.
And should I chance to touch it near, bear it
With all the sufferance of a tender friend.

Cas. As calmly as the wounded patient bears
The artist's hand, that ministers his cure.

Pol. That's kindly said.—You know our fa-
ther's ward,

The fair Monimia:—is your heart at peace?
Is it so guarded, that you could not love her?

Cas. Suppose I should?

Pol. Suppose you should not, brother?

Cas. You'd say, I must not.

Pol. That would sound too roughly
Twixt friends and brothers, as we two are.

Cas. Is love a fault?

Pol. In one of us it may be—

What, if I love her?

Cas. Then I must inform you
I lov'd her first, and cannot quit the claim;
But will preserve the birthright of my passion.

Pol. You will?

Cas. I will.

Pol. No more; I've done.

Cas. Why not?

Pol. I told you, I had done.

But you, Castalio, would dispute it.

Cas. No;

Not with my Polydore:—though I must own
My nature obstinate, and void of sufferance;
I could not bear a rival in my friendship,
I am so much in love, and fond of thee.

Pol. Yet you will break this friendship!

Cas. Not for crowns.

Pol. But for a toy you would, a woman's toy,
Unjust Castalio!

Cas. Pry'thee, where's my fault?

Pol. You love Monimia.

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Cas. Yes.

Pol. And you would kill me,
If I'm your rival?

Cas. No;—sure we're such friends,
So much one man, that our affections too
Must be united, and the same as we are.

Pol. I dote upon Monimia.

Cas. Love her still;

Win, and enjoy her.

Pol. Both of us cannot.

Cas. No matter

Whose chance it prove; but let's not quarrel for't.

Pol. You would not wed Monimia, would you?

Cas. Wed her!

No—were she all desire could wish, as fair
As would the vainest of her sex be thought,
With wealth beyond what woman's pride could
waste,

She should not cheat me of my freedom.—Marry!
When I am old and weary of the world,
I may grow desperate,
And take a wife to mortify withal.

Pol. It is an elder brother's duty, so
To propagate his family and name.
You would not have yours die, and buried with
you?

Cas. Mere vanity, and silly dotage, all:—
No, let me live at large, and when I die—

Pol. Who shall possess th' estate you leave?

Cas. My friend,

If he survive me; if not, my king,
Who may bestow't again on some brave man,
Whose honesty and services deserve one.

Pol. 'Tis kindly offer'd.

Cas. By yon heaven, I love

My Polydore beyond all worldly joys;
And would not shock his quiet, to be bless'd
With greater happiness than man e'er tasted.

Pol. And, by that heaven, eternally I swear
To keep the kind Castalio in my heart.

Whose shall Monimia be?

Cas. No matter whose.

Pol. Were you not with her privately last
night?

Cas. I was; and should have met her here
The opportunity shall now be thine? [again.
But have a care, by friendship I conjure thee,
That no false play be offer'd to thy brother.
Urge all thy powers to make thy passion prosper?
But wrong not mine.

Pol. By Heaven, I will not.

Cas. If't prove thy fortune, Polydore, to con-
quer

(For thou hast all the arts of soft persuasion;)

Trust me, and let me know thy love's success,
That I may ever after stifle mine.

Pol. Though she be dearer to my soul than
To weary pilgrims, or to miser's gold, [rest
To great men power, or wealthy cities' pride;
Rather than wrong Castalio, I'd forget her.

[*Exeunt CASTALIO AND POLYDORE.*

Enter MONIMIA.

Mon. Pass'd not Castalio and Polydore this
way?

Page. Madam, just now.

Mon. Sure, some ill fate's upon me
Distrust and heaviness sit round my heart,
And apprehension shocks my tim'rous soul.
Why was I not laid in my peaceful grave
With my poor parents, and at rest as they are.
Instead of that, I'm wandering into cares.—

Castalio! O Castalio! hast thou caught
My foolish heart; and, like a tender child,
That trusts his plaything to another hand,
I fear its harm, and fain would have it back.
Come near, Cordelio; I must chide you, Sir.

Page. Why, Madam, have I done you any wrong?

Mon. I never see you now; you have been kinder;

Perhaps I've been ungrateful. Here 's money for you.

Page. Madam, I'd serve you with all my soul.

Mon. Tell me, Cordelio (for thou oft hast heard

Their friendly converse, and their bosom secrets,) Sometimes, at least, have they not talk'd of me?

Page. O Madam! very wickedly they have talk'd:

But I am afraid to name it: for, they say, Boys must be whipp'd, that tell their masters' secrets.

Mon. Fear not, Cordelio; it shall ne'er be known;

For I'll preserve the secret as 'twere mine.

Polydore cannot be so kind as I.

I'll furnish thee with all thy harmless sports, With pretty toys, and thou shalt be my page.

Page. And truly, Madam, I had rather be so. Methinks you love me better than my lord;

For he was never half so kind as you are. What must I do?

Mon. Inform me how thou'st heard Castalio and his brother use my name.

Page. With all the tenderness of love, You were the subject of their last discourse.

At first I thought it would have fatal prov'd; But, as the one grew hot, the other cool'd,

And yielded to the frailty of his friend; At last, after much struggling, 'twas resolv'd—

Mon. What, good Cordelio?

Page. Not to quarrel for you.

Mon. I would not have 'em, by my dearest hopes;

I would not be the argument of strife.

But surely my Castalio wont forsake me,

And make a mockery of my easy love!

Went they together?

Page. Yes, to seek you, Madam.

Castalio promised Polydore to bring him,

Where he alone might meet you,

And fairly try the fortune of his wishes.

Mon. Am I then grown so cheap, just to be made

A common stake, a prize for love in jest?

Was not Castalio very loth to yield it?

Or was it Polydore's unruly passion,

That heighten'd the debate?

Page. The fault was Polydore's.

Castalio play'd with love, and smiling show'd

The pleasure, not the pangs of his desire.

He said, no woman's smiles should buy his freedom;

And marriage is a mortifying thing. *[Exit.]*

Mon. Then I am ruin'd! if Castalio's false,

Where is there faith and honour to be found?

Ye gods, that guard the innocent, and guide

The weak, protect and take me to your care.

O, but I love him! There 's the rock will wreck me!

Why was I made with all my sex's fondness,

Yet want the cunning to conceal its follies?

I'll see Castalio, tax him with his falsehoods,

Be a true woman, rail, protest my wrongs,
Resolve to hate him, and yet love him still.

Re-enter CASTALIO and POLYDORE.

He comes.

Cas. Madam, my brother begs he may have leave

To tell you something that concerns you nearly.

I leave you, as becomes me, and withdraw.

Mon. My lord Castalio!

Cas. Madam!

Mon. Have you purpos'd

To abuse me palpably? What means this usage?

Why am I left with Polydore alone?

Cas. He best can tell you. Business of importance

Calls me away: I must attend my father.

Mon. Will you then leave me thus?

Cas. But for a moment.

Mon. It has been otherwise: the time has been, When business might have stay'd, and I been heard.

Cas. I could for ever hear thee; but this time Matters of such odd circumstances press me,

That I must go. *[Exit.]*

Mon. Then go, and if't be possible, for ever.

Well, my lord Polydore, I guess your business, And read th' ill-natur'd purpose in your eyes.

Pol. If to desire you, more than misers wealth,

Or dying men an hour of added life;

If softest wishes, and a heart more true

Than ever suffer'd yet for love disdain'd,

Speak an ill-nature; you accuse me justly.

Mon. Talk not of love, my lord, I must not hear it.

Pol. Who can behold such beauty and be silent? *[ated,*

Desire first taught us words. Man, when crea-

At first alone long wander'd up and down

Forlorn, and silent as his vassal beasts:

But when a heaven-born maid, like you, appear'd,

Strange pleasures fill'd his eyes and fir'd his heart,

Unloos'd his tongue, and his first talk was love.

Mon. The first created pair indeed were bless'd;

They were the only objects of each other,

Therefore he courted her, and her alone;

But in this peopled world of beauty, where

There 's roving room, where you may court, and ruin

A thousand more, why need you talk to me?

Pol. Oh! I could talk to thee for ever. Thus

Eternally admiring, fix, and gaze,

On those dear eyes; for every glance they send

Darts through my soul.

Mon. How can you labour thus for my undoing?

I must confess, indeed, I owe you more

Than ever I can hope, or think, to pay.

There always was a friendship 'twixt our families

And therefore when my tender parents died,

Whose ruin'd fortunes too expir'd with them,

Your father's pity and his bounty took me,

A poor and helpless orphan, to his care.

Pol. 'Twas Heaven ordain'd it so, to make me happy.

Hence with this peevish virtue, 'tis a cheat;

And those who taught it first were hypocrites.

Come, these soft tender limbs were made for yielding.

Mon. Here, on my knees, by Heaven's bless'd power I swear, *[Kneels.]*

If you persist, I ne'er henceforth will see you,
But rather wander through the world a beggar,
And live on sordid scraps at proud men's doors;
For, though to fortune lost, I'll still inherit
My mother's virtues, and my father's honour.

Pol. Intolerable vanity! your sex
Was never in the right! y^e are always false,
Or silly; even your dresses are not more
Fantastic than your appetites: you think
Of nothing twice; opinion you have none.
To-day y^e are nice, to-morrow not so free;
Now smile, then frown; now sorrowful, then

glad; [why!
Now pleas'd, now not: and all, you know not

Mon. Indeed, my lord,
I own my sex's follies; I have 'em all;
And, to avoid its fault, must fly from you.
Therefore, believe me, could you raise me high
As most fantastic woman's wish could reach,
And lay all nature's riches at my feet;
I'd rather run a savage in the woods,
Amongst brute beasts, grow wrinkled and de-

form'd,
So I might still enjoy my honour safe,
From the destroying wiles of faithless men.

[*Exit.*
Pol. Who'd be that sordid thing call'd man?
I'll yet possess my love; it shall be so. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Saloon.

Enter ACASO, CASTALIO, POLYDORE, and Attendants.

Acas. To-day has been a day of glorious sport;
When you, Castalio, and your brother, left me,
Forth from the thickets rush'd another boar,
So large, he seem'd the tyrant of the woods,
With all his dreadful bristles rais'd up high.
They seem'd a grove of spears upon his back;
Foaming he came at me, where I was posted
Best to observe which way he'd lead the chase,
Whetting his huge, large tusks, and gaping wide,
As if he already had me for his prey!
Till, brandishing my well-poss'd javelin high,
With this bold executing arm I struck
The ugly brindled monster to the heart.

Cas. The actions of your life were always
wondrous.

Acas. No flattery, boy! an honest man can't
live by't;

It is a little, sneaking art, which knaves
Use to cajole and soften fools withal.
If thou hast flattery in thy nature, out with't,
Or send it to a court, for there 'twill thrive.

Cas. Your lordship's wrongs have been
So great, that you with justice may complain;
But suffer us, whose younger minds ne'er felt
Fortune's deceits, to court her, as she's fair:
Were she a common mistress, kind to all,
Her worth would cease, and half the world grow

idle.

Methinks, I would be busy.

Pol. So would I,
Not loiter out my life at home, and know
No further than one prospect gives me leave.

Acas. Busy your minds then, study arts and
men;

Learn how to value merit, though in rags,
And scorn a proud, ill-manner'd knave in office.

Enter SERINA.

Ser. My lord, my father!

Acas. Blessings on my child!

My little cherub, what hast thou to ask me?

Ser. I bring you, Sir, most glad and welcome
news;

The young Chamont, whom you've so often
wish'd for,

Is just arriv'd, and entering.

Acas. By my soul,
And all my honours, he's most dearly welcome;
Let me receive him like his father's friend.

Enter CHAMONT.

Welcome, thou relic of the best lov'd man!
Welcome, from all the turmoils and the hazards
Of certain danger and uncertain fortune!

Welcome, as happy tidings after fears.

Cham. Words would but wrong the gratitude
I owe you!

Should I begin to speak, my soul's so full,
That I should talk of nothing else all day.

Enter MONIMIA.

Mon. My brother!

Cham. O my sister, let me hold thee
Long, in my arms: I've not beheld thy face
These many days; by night I've often seen thee
In gentle dreams, and satisfied my soul
With fancied joys, till morning cares awak'd me.
Another sister! sure, it must be so;
Though I remember well I had but one:
But I feel something in my heart that prompts,
And tells me, she has claim and interest there.

Acas. Young soldier, you've not only studied
war;

Courtship, I see, has been your practice too,
And may not prove unwelcome to my daughter.

Cham. Is she your daughter? then my heart
told true,

And I'm at least her brother by adoption;
For you have made yourself to me a father,
And by that patent I have leave to love her.

Ser. Monimia, thou hast told me men are
false,

Will flatter, feign, and make an art of love:
Is Chamont so? no, sure, he's more than man;
Something that's near divine, and truth dwells in
him.

Acas. Thus happy, who would envy pompous
power,

The luxury of courts, or wealth of cities?

Let there be joy through all the house this day!

In every room let plenty flow at large!

It is the birth-day of my royal master!

You have not visited the court, Chamont,
Since your return?

Cham. I have no business there;
I have not slavish temperance enough
To attend a favourite's heels, and watch his
Bear an ill office done me to my face, [smiles,
And thank the lord that wrong'd me, for his fa-
vour.

Acas. This you could do. [To his Sons.

Cas. I'd serve my prince.

Acas. Who'd serve him?

Cas. I would, my lord.

Pol. And I; both would.

Acas. Away!

He needs not any servants such as you.
Serve him! he merits more than man can do!
He is so good, praise cannot speak his worth;
So merciful, sure he ne'er slept in wrath!
So just, that, were he but a private man,

He could not do a wrong! How would you serve him?

Cas. I'd serve him with my fortune here at home,

And serve him with my person in his wars:
Watch for him, fight for him, bleed for him.

Pol. Die for him,
As every true-born, loyal subject ought.

Acas. Let me embrace ye both! now, by the souls

Of my brave ancestors, I'm truly happy!
For this, be ever bless'd my marriage day!
Bless'd be your mother's memory, that bore you;
And doubly bless'd be that auspicious hour
That gave ye birth?

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. My lord, th' expected guests are just arriv'd.

Acas. Go you and give 'em welcome and reception.

[*Exeunt CASTALIO and POLYDORE.*]

Cham. My lord, I stand in need of your assistance,

In something that concerns my peace and honour.

Acas. Spoke like the son of that brave man I lov'd!

So freely, friendly, we convers'd together.
Whate'er it be, with confidence impart it;
Thou shalt command my fortune, and my sword.

Cham. I dare not doubt your friendship, nor your justice,

Your bounty shown to what I hold most dear,
My orphan sister, must not be forgotten!

Acas. Prythee no more of that, it grates my nature.

Cham. When our dear parents died, they died together;

One fate surpris'd 'em, and one grave receiv'd 'em;

My father, with his dying breath, bequeath'd
Her to my love; my mother, as she lay
Languishing by him, call'd me to her side,
Took me in her fainting arms, wept, and embrac'd me;

Then press'd me close, and, as she observ'd my tears,

Kiss'd them away: said she, "Chamont, my son,
By this, and all the love I ever show'd thee,
Be careful of Monimia: watch her youth;
Let not her wants betray her to dishonour;
Perhaps, kind Heaven may raise some friend."

Then sigh'd,

Kiss'd me again; so bless'd us, and expir'd.
Pardon my grief.

Acas. It speaks an honest nature.

Cham. The friend Heaven rais'd was you; you took her up,

An infant, to the desert world expos'd,
And prov'd another parent.

Acas. I've not wrong'd her.

Cham. Far be it from my fears.

Acas. Then why this argument?

Cham. My lord, my nature's jealous, and you'll bear it.

Acas. Go on.

Cham. Great spirits bear misfortunes hardly;
Good offices claim gratitude; and pride,
Where power is wanting, will usurp a little,
And make us (rather than be thought behind hand)

Pay over price.

Acas. I cannot guess your drift;
Distrust you me?

Cham. No, but I fear her weakness
May make her pay her debt at any rate;
And, to deal freely with your lordship's goodness,

I've heard a story lately much disturbs me.

Acas. Then first charge her; and if th' offence be found

Within my reach, though it should touch my nature,

In my own offspring, by the dear remembrance
Of thy brave father, whom my heart rejoic'd in,
I'd prosecute it with severest vengeance. [*Exit.*]

Cham. I thank you, from my soul.

Mon. Alas, my brother! what have I done?

My heart quakes in me; in your settled face,
And clouded brow, methinks I see my fate.

You will not kill me?

Cham. Prythee, why dost thou talk so?

Mon. Look kindly on me then; I cannot bear
Severity; it daunts, and does amaze me;
My heart's so tender, should you charge me rough,
I should but weep, and answer you with sobbing;
But use me gently, like a loving brother,
And search through all the secrets of my soul.

Cham. Fear nothing, I will show myself a brother.

A tender, honest, and a loving brother.

You've not forgot our father?

Mon. I never shall. [man]

Cham. Then you'll remember too he was a
That liv'd up to the standard of his honour,
And priz'd that jewel more than mines of wealth:
He'd not have done a shameful thing but once:
Though kept in darkness from the world, and hidden,

He could not have forgiven it to himself.

This was the only portion that he left us;

And I more glory in't than if possess'd

Of all that ever fortune threw on fools.

'Twas a large trust, and must be manag'd nicely;

Now, if by any chance, Monimia,

You have soil'd this gem, and taken from its
How will you account with me? [value,

Mon. I challenge envy,
Malice, and all the practices of hell,
To censure all the actions of my past
Unhappy life, and taint me if they can!

Cham. I'll tell thee, then; three nights ago, as I

Lay musing on my bed, all darkness round me,
A sudden damp struck to my heart, cold sweat

Dew'd all my face, and trembling seiz'd my limbs:
My bed shook under me, the curtains started,

And to my tortur'd fancy there appear'd

The form of thee, thus beauteous as thou art;

Thy garments flowing loose, and in each hand

A wanton lover, who by turns caress'd thee

With all the freedom of unbounded pleasure.

I snatch'd my sword, and in the very moment

Darted it at the phantom; straight it left me;

Then rose, and call'd for lights, when, O dire omen!

I found my weapon had the arras pierc'd,

Just where that famous tale was interwoven,

How the unhappy Theban slew his father.

Mon. And for this cause my virtue is suspected!

Because in dreams your fancy has been ridden,

I must be tortur'd waking!

Cham. Have a care;

Labour not to be justified too fast:

Hear all, and then let justice hold the scale.

What follow'd was the riddle that confounds me.
 'Through a 'lose lane, as I pursu'd my journey,
 And meditating on the last night's vision,
 I spy'd a wrinkled hag, with age grown double,
 Picking dry sticks, and mumbling to herself;
 Her eyes with scalding rheum were gall'd and
 red: [wither'd,

Cold palsy shook her head, her hand seem'd
 And on her crooked shoulders had she wrapp'd
 The tatter'd remnant of an old striped hanging,
 Which serv'd to keep her carcass from the cold:
 So there was nothing of a piece about her.
 Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patch'd
 With different colour'd rags, black, red, white,
 yellow,

And seem'd to speak variety of wretchedness.
 I ask'd her of my way, which she inform'd me;
 Then crav'd my charity, and bade me hasten
 To save a sister! at that word, I started!

Mon. The common cheat of beggars; every
 day

They flock about our doors, pretend to gifts
 Of prophecy, and telling fools their fortunes.

Cham. Oh! but she told me such a tale, Mo-
 nimia,

As in it bore great circumstance of truth:

Castalio and Polydore, my sister.

Mon. Ha!

Cham. What, alter'd? does your courage fail
 you?

Now, by my father's soul, the witch was honest.
 Answer me, if thou hast not lost them
 Thy honour at a sordid game?

Mon. I will,

I must, so hardly my misfortune loads me:—

That both have offer'd me their love's most true.

Cham. And 'tis as true too they have both un-
 done thee.

Mon. Though they both with earnest vows
 Have press'd my heart, if e'er in thought I yielded
 To any but Castalio—

Cham. But Castalio!

Mon. Still will you cross the line of my discourse.
 Yes, I confess that he hath won my soul
 By generous love and honourable vows,
 Which he this day appointed to complete,
 And make himself by holy marriage mine.

Cham. Art thou then spotless? hast thou still
 preserv'd

Thy virtue white, without a blot, untainted?

Mon. When I'm unchaste, may Heaven reject
 my prayers;

O more, to make me wretched, may you know it!

Cham. Oh, then, Monimia, art thou dearer to
 me

Than all the comforts ever yet bless'd man.

But let not marriage bait thee to thy ruin.

Trust not a man; we are by nature false,

Dissembling, subtle, cruel, and inconstant:

When a man talks of love, with caution trust
 him;

But if he swears, he'll certainly deceive thee.

I charge thee, let no more Castalio soothe thee;

Avoid it, as thou wouldst preserve the peace
 Of a poor brother, to whose soul thou'rt precious.

Mon. I will.

Cham. Appear as cold, when next you meet,
 as great ones,

When merit begs; then shalt thou see how soon
 His heart will cool, and all his pains grow easy.

[*Exit.*

Mon. Yes, I will try him, torture him severely;

For, O, Castalio, thou too much hast wrong'd
 me,

In leaving me to Polydore's ill usage.

He comes; and now, for once, O Love, stand
 neuter,

Whilst a hard part's performed; for I must tempt,
 Wound his soft nature, though my heart aches
 for't.

Re-enter CASTALIO.

Cas. Monimia, my angel! 'twas not kind
 To leave me here alone.

Re-enter POLYDORE, with PAGE, at the door.

Pol. Here place yourself, and watch my brother
 thoroughly;

Pass not one circumstance without remark.

[*Apart to PAGE, and exit.*

Cas. When thou art from me, every place is
 desert,

And I, methinks, am savage and forlorn:

Thy presence only 'tis can make me bless'd,

Heal my unquiet mind, and tune my soul.

Mon. O the bewitching tongues of faithless
 men!

'Tis thus the false hyena makes her moan,

To draw the pitying traveller to her den:

Your sex are so, such false dissemblers all;

With sighs and complaints y' entice poor women's
 hearts,

And all that pity you are made your prey.

Cas. What means my love? Oh, how have I
 deserv'd

This language from the sovereign of my joys?

Stop, stop these tears, Monimia, for they fall

Like baneful dew from a distemper'd sky:

I feel 'em chill me to my very heart.

Mon. Oh, you are false, Castalio, most for-
 sworn!

Attempt no further to delude my faith;

My heart is fix'd, and you shall shake't no more.

Cas. Who told you so; what hell-bred villain
 durst

Profane the sacred business of my love?

Mon. Your brother, knowing on what terms
 I'm here,

Th' unhappy object of your father's charity,

Licentiously discours'd to me of love,

And durst affront me with his brutal passion.

Cas. 'Tis I have been to blame, and only I;

False to my brother, and unjust to thee.

For, oh! he loves thee too, and this day own'd it,

Tax'd me with mine, and claim'd a right above
 me.

Mon. And was your love so very tame, to
 shrink?

Or, rather than lose him, abandon me?

Cas. I, knowing him precipitate and rash,

Seem'd to comply with his unruly will;

Lest he in rage might have our loves betray'd,

And I for ever had Monimia lost.

Mon. Could you then, did you, can you own it
 too?

'Twas poorly done, unworthy of yourself?

And I can never think you meant me fair.

Cas. Is this Monimia? Surely, no! till now

I ever thought her dove-like, soft, and kind.

Who trusts his heart with woman's surely lost:

You were made fair on purpose to undo us,

While greedily we snatch th' alluring bait,

And ne'er distrust the poison that it hides.

Mon. When love, ill-plac'd, would find a means
 to break—

Cas. It never wants pretences or excuse.

Mon. Man therefore was a lord-like creature made,

Rough as the winds, and as inconstant too:
A lofty aspect given him for command;
Easily soften'd when he would betray.
Like conquering tyrants, you our breasts invade;
But soon you find new conquests out, and leave
The ravag'd province ruinate and waste.
If so, Castalio, you have serv'd my heart,
I find that desolation 's settled there,
And I shall ne'er recover peace again.

Cas. Who can hear this and bear an equal mind?

Since you will drive me from you, I must go:
But, O Monimia! when thou hast banish'd me,
No creeping slave, though tractable and dull,
As artful woman for her ends would choose,
Shall ever dote as I have done.

Mon. Castalio, stay! we must not part. I find
My rage ebbs out, and love flows in apace.
These little quarrels love must needs forgive.
Oh! charm me with the music of thy tongue,
I'm ne'er so bless'd as when I hear thy vows,
And listen to the language of thy heart.

Cas. Where am I? Surely, Paradise is round me!

Sweets planted by the hand of Heaven grow here,

And every sense is full of thy perfection.
Sure, framing thee, Heaven took unusual care;
As its own beauty it design'd thee fair,
And form'd thee by the best lov'd angel there.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

Enter POLYDORE and PAGE.

Pol. Were they so kind? Express it to me all
In words; 'twill make me think I saw it too.

Page. At first I thought they had been mortal
foes:

Monimia rag'd, Castalio grew disturb'd:
Each thought the other wrong'd; yet both so
haughty,

They scorn'd submission, though love all the
while

The rebel play'd, and scarce could be contain'd.

Pol. But what succeeded?

Page. Oh, 'twas wondrous pretty!
For of a sudden all the storm was past:
A gentle calm of love succeeded it:
Monimia sigh'd and blush'd; Castalio swore;
As you, my lord, I well remember, did
To my young sister, in the orange grove,
When I was first prefer'd to be your page.

Pol. Boy, go to your chamber, and prepare
your lute. [*Exit PAGE.*]

Happy Castalio! now, by my great soul,
My ambitious soul, that languishes to glory,
I'll have her yet; by my best hopes, I will;
She shall be mine, in spite of all her arts.
But for Castalio, why was I refus'd?
Has he supplanted me by some foul play?
Traduc'd my honour? death! he durst not do't.
It must be so: we parted, and he met her,
Half to compliance brought by me; surpris'd
Her sinking virtue, till she yielded quite.
So poachers pick up tired game,
While the fair hunter 's cheated of his prey.
Boy!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Oh, the unhappiest tidings tongue e'er
told!

Pol. The matter?

Serv. Oh! your father, my good master,
As with his guests he sat in mirth rais'd high,
And chas'd the goblet round the joyful board,
A sudden trembling seiz'd on all his limbs;
His eyes distorted grew, his visage pale,
His speech forsook him, life itself seem'd fled,
And all his friends are waiting now about him.

Enter ACASIO and Attendants.

Acas. Support me, give me air, I'll yet recover.
'Twas but a slip decaying nature made;
For she grows weary near her journey's end.
Where are my sons? come near, my Polydore!
Your brother—where 's Castalio?

Serv. My lord,
I've search'd, as you commanded, all the house!
He and Monimia are not to be found.

Acas. Not to be found? then where are all my
friends?

'Tis well—

I hope they'll pardon an unhappy fault
My unmannerly infirmity has made!
Death could not come in a more welcome hour;
For I'm prepar'd to meet him; and, methinks,
Would live and die with all my friends about me.

Enter CASTALIO.

Cas. Angels preserve my dearest father's life!
Oh! may he live till time itself decay,
Till good men wish him dead, or I offend him!

Acas. Thank you, Castalio: give me both your
hands.

So now, methinks,
I appear as great as Hercules himself,
Supported by the pillars he has rais'd.

Enter SERINA.

Ser. My father!

Acas. My heart's darling.

Ser. Let my knees

Fix to the earth. Ne'er let my eyes have rest,
But wake and weep, till Heaven restore my father

Acas. Rise to my arms, and thy kind pray'rs
are answer'd.

For thou'rt a wondrous extract of all goodness;
Born for my joy, and no pain 's felt when near
Chamont! [thee.]

Enter CHAMONT.

Cham. My lord, may't prove not an unlucky
omen!

Many I see are waiting round about you,
And I am come to ask a blessing too.

Acas. May'st thou be happy!

Cham. Where?

Acas. In all thy wishes.

Cham. Confirm me so, and make this fair
one mine:

I am unpractis'd in the trade of courtship,
And know not how to deal love out with art:
Onsets in love seem best like those in war,
Fierce, resolute, and done with all the force;
So I would open my whole heart at once,
And pour out the abundance of my soul.

Acas. What says Serina? canst thou love a
soldier?

One born to honour, and to honour bred?

One that has learn'd to treat e'en foes with kind
ness, [self?]

To wrong no good man's fame, nor praise him—

Ser. Oh! name not love, for that 's allied to joy;

And joy must be a stranger to my heart,
When you're in danger. May Chamont's good fortune

Render him lovely to some happier maid!
Whilst I, at friendly distance, see him bless'd,
Praise the kind gods, and wonder at his virtues.

Acas. Chamont, pursue her, conquer, and possess her,

And, as my son, a third of all my fortune
Shall be thy lot.

Chamont, you told me of some doubts that press'd you:

Are you yet satisfied that I'm your friend?

Cham. My lord, I would not lose that satisfaction,

For any blessing I could wish for:

As to my fears, already I have lost them:

They ne'er shall vex me more, nor trouble you.

Acas. I thank you.

My friends, 'tis late:

Now my disorder seems all past and over,

And I, methinks, begin to feel new health. [quite.

Cas. Would you but rest, it might restore you

Acas. Yes, I'll to bed; old men must humour weakness.

Good night, my friends! Heaven guard you all!

Good night!

To-morrow early we'll salute the day,

Find out new pleasures, and renew lost time.

[*Exeunt all but CHAMONT and CHAPLAIN.*

Cham. If you're at leisure, Sir, we'll waste an hour:

'Tis yet too soon to sleep, and 'twill be charity

To lend your conversation to a stranger.

Chap. Sir, you're a soldier?

Cham. Yes.

Chap. I love a soldier;

And had been one myself, but that my parents
Would make me what you see me.

Cham. Have you had long dependence on this family?

Chap. I have not thought it so, because my time's

Spent pleasantly. My lord's not haughty nor imperious,

Nor I gravely whimsical: he has good nature.

His sons too are civil to me, because

I do not pretend to be wiser than they are;

I meddle with no man's business but my own,
So meet with respect, and am not the jest of the family.

Cham. I'm glad you are so happy.

A pleasant fellow this, and may be useful.

[*Aside.*
Knew you my father, the old Chamont?

Chap. I did: and was most sorry when we lost him.

Cham. Why, didst thou love him?

Chap. Every body loved him; besides, he was my patron's friend.

Cham. I could embrace thee for that very notion:
If thou didst love my father, I could think
Thou wouldst not be an enemy to me.

Chap. I can be no man's foe.

Cham. Then prythee, tell me;

Think'st thou the lord Castalio loves my sister?

Chap. Love your sister?

Cham. Ay, love her.

Chap. Either he loves her or he much has wrong'd her.

Cham. How wrong'd her? have a care; for this may lay

A scene of mischief to undo us all.

But tell me, wrong'd her, saidst thou?

Chap. Ay, Sir, wrong'd her.

Cham. This is a secret worth a monarch's fortune:

What shall I give thee for't? thou dear physician
Of sickly wounds, unfold this riddle to me,
And comfort mine——

Chap. I would hide nothing from you willingly.

Cham. By the reverenc'd soul

Of that great honest man that gave me being,
Tell me but what thou know'st concerns my honour,

And, if I e'er reveal it to thy wrong,
May this good sword ne'er do me right in battle!
May I ne'er know that blessed peace of mind,
That dwells in good and pious men like thee!

Chap. I see your temper's mov'd and I will trust you.

Cham. Will thou?

Chap. I will; but if it ever 'scape you——

Cham. It never shall.

Chap. Then, this good day, when all the house was busy,

When mirth and kind rejoicing fill'd each room,
As I was walking in the grove I met them.

Cham. What, met them in the grove together?

Chap. I, by their own appointment, met them there, [hands.

Receiv'd their marriage vows, and join'd their

Cham. How! married?

Chap. Yes, Sir.

Cham. Then my soul's at peace:

But why would you so long delay to give it?

Chap. Not knowing what reception it may find
With old Acasto; may be, I was too cautious
To trust the secret from me.

Cham. What's the cause

I cannot guess, though 'tis my sister's honour,
I do not like this marriage, [ture;

Huddled i' the dark, and done at too much ven-

The business looks with an unlucky face.

Keep still the secret: for it ne'er shall 'scape me,
Not e'en to them, the new-match'd pair. Farewell!

Believe the truth, and me for thy friend. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter CASTALIO, with MONIMIA.

Cas. Young Chamont and the chaplain! sure

'tis they!

No matter what 's contriv'd, or who consulted,
Since my Monimia's mine; though this sad look

Seems no good boding omen to our bliss;

Else, prythee, tell me why that look cast down,

Why that sad sigh, as if thy heart was breaking?

Mon. Castalio, I am thinking what we've done; [day;

The heavenly powers were sure displeas'd to-

For, at the ceremony as we stood,

And as your hand was kindly join'd with mine,

As the good priest pronounc'd the sacred words,

Passion grew big, and I could not forbear:

Tears down'd my eyes, and trembling seiz'd my soul.

What should that mean?

Cas. O, thou art tender all!

Gentle and kind as sympathising nature!

Re-enter POLYDOR, unobserved.

But wherefore do I dally with my bliss?

The night 's far spent, and day draws on apace.

To bed, my love, and wake till I come thither.

Mon. 'Twill be impossible :
You know your father's chamber's next to mine,
And the least noise will certainly alarm him.

Cas. No more, my blessing.
What shall be the sign ?
When shall I come ? for to my joys I'll steal,
As if I ne'er had paid my freedom for them.

Mon. Just three soft strokes upon the chamber door,

And at that signal you shall gain admittance :
But speak not the least word ; for, if you should,
'Tis surely heard, and all will be betray'd.

Cas. Oh ! doubt it not, Monimia ; our joys
Shall be as silent as the ecstatic bliss
Of souls, that by intelligence converse.
Away, my love ! first take this kiss. Now,
haste :

I long for that to come, yet grudge each minute
past.

My brother wand'ring too so late this way !

[*Exit MONIMIA.*]

Pol. Castalio !

Cas. My Polydore, how durst thou ?
How does our father ? is he well recover'd ?

Pol. I left him happily repos'd to rest :
He 's still as gay as if his life was young.
But how does fair Monimia ?

Cas. Doubtless, well :
A cruel beauty, with her conquest pleas'd,
Is always joyful, and her mind in health.

Pol. Is she the same Monimia still she was ?
May we not hope she 's made of mortal mould ?

Cas. She 's not woman else :
Though I'm grown weary of this tedious hoping ;
We've in a barren desert stray'd too long.

Pol. Yet may relief be unexpected found,
And love's sweet manna cover all the field.
Met ye to-day ?

Cas. No ; she has still avoided me ;
I wish I'd never meddled with the matter.
And would enjoin thee, Polydore——

Pol. To what ?

Cas. To leave this peevish beauty to herself.

Pol. What, quit my love ? as soon I'd quit my
post

In fight, and like a coward run away.
No, by my stars, I'll chase her till she yields
To me, or meets her rescue in another.

Cas. But I have wondrous reasons on my side,
That would persuade thee, were they known.

Pol. Then speak 'em :
What are they ? Came ye to her window here
To learn 'em now ? Castalio, have a care ;
Use honest dealing with a friend and brother.
Believe me, I'm not with my love so blinded,
But can discern your purpose to abuse me.
Quit your pretences to her.

You say you've reasons : why are they conceal'd ?

Cas. To-morrow I may tell you.

Pol. Why not now ?

Cas. It is a matter of such consequence,
As I must well consult ere I reveal.
But pry'thee cease to think I would abuse thee,
'Till more be known.

Pol. When you, Castalio, cease
To meet Monimia unknown to me,
And then deny it slavishly, I'll cease
To think Castalio faithless to his friend.
Did I not see you part this very moment ?

Cas. It seems you've watch'd me, then ?

Pol. I scorn the office.

Cas. Pry'thee avoid a thing thou may'st repent.

Pol. That is, henceforward making league
with you.

Cas. Nay, if ye're angry, Polydore, good
night. [*Exit.*]

Pol. Good night, Castalio, if ye're in such
haste.

He little thinks I've overheard th' appointment :

But to his chamber 's gone to wait awhile,
Then come and take possession of my love.

This is the utmost point of all my hopes ;

Or now she must, or never can be mine.

Oh, for a means now how to counterplot,

And disappoint this happy elder brother !

In every thing we do or undertake,

He soars above me, mount what height I can,

And keeps the start he got of me in birth.

Cordelio !

Re-enter PAGE.

Page. My lord !

Pol. Come hither, boy !

Thou hast a pretty, forward, lying face,
And may'st in time expect preferment. Canst
thou

Pretend to secrecy, cajole and flatter
Thy master's follies, and assist his pleasures ?

Page. My lord, I could do any thing for you,
And ever be a very faithful boy.

Command, whatever 's your pleasure I'll observe ;
Be it to run, or watch, or to convey

A letter to a beauteous lady's bosom :

At least, I am not dull, and soon should learn.

Pol. 'Tis pity then thou shouldst not be em-
ploy'd.

Go to my brother, he 's in his chamber now,

Undressing, and preparing for his rest ;

Find out some means to keep him up awhile :

Tell him a pretty story, that may please

His ear ; invent a tale, no matter what :

If he should ask of me, tell him I'm gone

To bed, and sent you there to know his pleasure,

Whether he'll hunt to-morrow.

But do not leave him till he 's in his bed ;

Or, if he chance to walk again this way,

Follow, and do not quit him, but seem fond

To do him little offices of service.

Perhaps at last it may offend him ; then

Retire, and wait till I come in. Away !

Succeed in this, and be employ'd again.

Page. Doubt not, my lord : he has been al-
ways kind

To me ; would often set me on his knee,

Then give me sweetmeats, call me pretty boy,

And ask me what the maids talk'd of at nights.

Pol. Run quickly then, and prosperous be thy
wishes. [*Exit PAGE.*]

Here I'm alone, and fit for mischief.

I heard the sign she order'd him to give.

"Just three soft strokes against the chamber door ;

But speak not the least word, for, if you should,

It 's surely heard, and we are both betray'd."

Bless'd Heaven, assist me but in this dear hour,

And, my kind stars, be but propitious now,

Dispose of me hereafter as you please.

Monimia ! Monimia ! [*Gives the sign*

Flo. [*At the window.*] Who 's there ?

Pol. 'Tis I.

Flo. My lord Castalio ?

Pol. The same.

How does my love, my dear Monimia ?

Flo. Oh !

She wonders much at your unkind delay ;

You've staid so long, that at each little noise
The wind but makes, she asks if you are coming.

Pol. Tell her I'm here, and let the door be
open'd. [*FLORELLA withdraws.*]

Now boast, Castalio, triumph now, and tell
Thyself strange stories of a promis'd bliss!

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter CASTALIO and PAGE.

Page. Indeed, my lord, 'twill be a lovely morn-
Pray, let us hunt. [ing:]

Cas. Go, you're an idle prattler:
I'll stay at home to-morrow; if your lord
Thinks fit, he may command my hounds. Go,
leave me;

I must to bed.

Page. I'll wait upon your lordship,
If you think fit, and sing you to repose.

Cas. No, my kind boy.
Good night: commend me to my brother.

Page. Oh!
You never heard the last new song I learn'd:
It is the finest, prettiest, song indeed,
Of my lord and my lady, you know who, that
were caught

Together, you know where. My lord, indeed it is.
Cas. You must be whipp'd, youngster, if you
get such songs as those are.

What means this boy's impertinence to-night?
[*Aside.*]

Page. Why, what must I sing, pray, my dear
lord?

Cas. Psalms, child, psalms.

Page. O dear me! boys that go to school learn
psalms;

But pages, that are better bred, sing lampoons.

Cas. Well, leave me; I'm weary.

Page. Indeed, my lord, I can't abide to leave
you.

Cas. Why, wert thou instructed to attend me?

Page. No, no, indeed, my lord, I was not.

But I know, what I know.

Cas. What dost thou know?—'Sdeath!
what can all this mean? [Aside.]

Page. Oh! I know who loves somebody.

Cas. What's that to me, boy?

Page. Nay, I know who loves you too.

Cas. That's a wonder! prythee, tell it me.

Page. 'Tis—'tis—I know who—but will

You give me the horse, then?

Cas. I will, my child.

Page. It is my lady Monimia, look you; but
don't you tell her I told you: she'll give me no
more play-things then. I heard her say so, as
she lay abed, man. [delio?]

Cas. Talk'd she of me when in her bed, Cor-

Page. Yes; and I sung her the song you made
too; and she did so sigh, and look with her eyes!

Cas. Hark! what's that noise?

Take this; be gone, and leave me.

You knave, you little flatterer, get you gone.

[*Exit PAGE.*]

Surely it was a noise, hist!—only fancy;

For all is hush'd, as nature were retir'd.

'Tis now, that, guided by my love, I go

To take possession of Monimia's arms.

Sure Polydore's by this time gone to bed. [*Knocks.*]

She hears me not? sure, she already sleeps!

Her wishes could not brook so long delay,

And her poor heart has beat itself to rest.

Once more—

Flo. [*At the window.*] Who's there,

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That comes thus rudely to disturb our rest?

Cas. 'Tis I.

Flo. Who are you? what's your name?

Cas. Suppose the Lord Castalio.

Flo. I know you not.

The Lord Castalio has no business here.

Cas. Ha! have a care! what can this mean?

Whoe'er thou art, I charge thee, to Monimia fly.

Tell her I'm here, and wait upon my doom.

Flo. Whoe'er you are, you may repent this
outrage:

My lady must not be disturb'd. Good night!

Cas. She must! tell her, she shall; go, I'm in
haste,

And bring her tidings from the state of love.

Flo. Sure the man's mad!

Cas. Or this will make me so,

Obey me, or, by all the wrongs I suffer,

I'll scale the window and come in by force,

Let the sad consequence be what it will!

This creature's trifling folly makes me mad!

Flo. My lady's answer is, you may depart.

She says she knows you: you are Polydore,

Sent by Castalio, as you were to-day,

T' affront and do her violence again.

Cas. I'll not believe't.

Flo. You may, Sir.

Cas. Curses blast thee!

Flo. Well, 'tis a fine cool ev'ning! and I hope

May cure the raging fever in your blood!

Good night.

Cas. And farewell all that's just in woman!

This is contriv'd, a study'd trick, to abuse

My easy nature, and torment my mind!

'Tis impudence to think my soul will bear it!

Let but to-morrow, but to-morrow come,

And try if all thy arts appease my wrong;

Till when, be this detested place my bed;

[*Lies down.*]

Where I will ruminate on woman's ills,

Laugh at myself, and curse th' inconstant sex.

Faithless Monimia! O Monimia!

Enter ERNESTO.

Ern. Either

My sense has been deluded, or this way

I heard the sound of sorrow; 'tis late night, [now.

And none, whose mind's at peace, would wander

Cas. Who's there?

Ern. Castalio!—My lord, why in this posture,

Stretch'd on the ground? your honest, true, old ser-

Your poor Ernesto, cannot see you thus. [vant,

Rise, I beseech you.

Cas. Oh, leave me to my folly.

Ern. I can't leave you,

And not the reason know of your disorders.

Remember how, when young, I in my arms

Have often borne you, pleas'd you in your plea-

tures,

And sought an early share in your affection.

Do not discard me now, but let me serve you.

Cas. Thou canst not serve me.

Ern. Why?

Cas. Because my thoughts [them,

Are full of woman; thou, poor wretch, art past

Ern. I hate the sex.

Cas. Then I'm thy friend, Ernesto! [*Rises.*]

I'd leave the world for him that hates a woman!

Woman, the fountain of all human frailty!

What mighty ills have not been done by woman?

Who was't betray'd the capitol?—a woman!

Who lost Mark Antony the world?—a woman!

Who was the cause of a long ten years' war,
And laid at last old Troy in ashes?—Woman!
Destructive, damnable, deceitful woman!
Woman, to man first as a blessing given;
When innocence and love were in their prime,
Happy awhile in Paradise they lay;
But quickly woman long'd to go astray:
Some foolish new adventure needs must prove,
And the first devil she saw, she chang'd her love;
To his temptations lewdly she inclin'd
Her soul, and for an apple damn'd mankind.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter CASTALIO.

Cas. Wish'd morning's come! And now upon
the plains,
And distant mountains, where they feed their
flocks,
The happy shepherds leave their homely huts,
And with their pipes proclaim the new-born day.
There's no condition sure so curs'd as mine—
Monimia! O Monimia!

Enter MONIMIA and FLORELLA.

Mon. I come!
I fly to my ador'd Castalio's arms,
My wishes' lord. May every morn begin
Like this; and, with our days, our loves renew!

Cas. Oh—

Mon. Art thou not well, Castalio? Come, lean
Upon my breast, and tell me where's thy pain.

Cas. 'Tis here—'tis in my head—'tis in my
heart—

'Tis every where: it rages like a madness,
And I most wonder how my reason holds.
No more, Monimia, of your sex's arts:
They're useless all—I'm not that pliant tool;
I know my charter better—I am man,
Obstinate man, and will not be enslav'd!

Mon. You shall not fear't; indeed, my na-
ture's easy:

I'll ever live your most obedient wife!
Nor ever any privilege pretend
Beyond your will; for that shall be my law;—
Indeed, I will not.

Cas. Nay, you shall not, Madam;
By yon bright heaven, you shall not: all the day
I'll play the tyrant, and at night forsake thee;
Nay, if I've any too, thou shalt be made
Subservient to my looser pleasures;
For thou hast wrong'd Castalio.

Mon. Oh, kill me here, or tell me my offence!
I'll never quit you else; but on these knees,
Thus follow you all day, till they're worn bare,
And hang upon you like a drowning creature.
Castalio!—

Cas. Away!—Last night! last night!—

Mon. It was our wedding night.

Cas. No more!—Forget it!

Mon. Why! do you then repent?

Cas. I do.

Mon. O Heaven! [Florella!
And will you leave me thus?—Help! help!
[CASTALIO drags her to the door, breaks from
her, and exit.

Help me to hold this yet lov'd, cruel man!
Castalio!—Oh! how often as he sworn,
Nature should change—the sun and stars grow
dark,

Ere he would falsify his vows to me!

Make haste, confusion, then! Sun, lose thy light
And, stars, drop dead with sorrow to the earth,
For my Castalio's false!
False as the wind, the waters, or the weather!
Cruel as tigers o'er their trembling prey!
I feel him in my breast; he tears my heart,
And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood!
Must I be long in pain?

Enter CHAMONT.

Cham. In tears, Monimia!

Mon. Whoe'er thou art,
Leave me alone to my belov'd despair!

Cham. Lift up thy eyes, and see who comes to
cheer thee!

Tell me the story of thy wrongs, and then
See if my soul has rest, till thou hast justice.

Mon. My brother!

Cham. Yes, Monimia, if thou think'st
That I deserve the name, I am thy brother.

Mon. O Castalio!

Cham. Ha!

Name me that name again! my soul's on fire
Till I know all!—There's meaning in that name:
I know he is thy husband; therefore, trust me
With the following truth.

Mon. Indeed, Chamont,

There's nothing in it but the fault of nature:
I'm often thus seiz'd suddenly with grief,
I know not why.

Cham. You use me ill, Monimia;
And I might think, with justice, most severely
Of this unfaithful dealing with your brother.

Mon. Truly I'm not to blame. Suppose I'm
fond, [other?

And grieve for what as much may please an-
Should I upbraid the dearest friend on earth
For the first fault? You would not do so, would
you?

Cham. Not if I'd cause to think it was a friend.

Mon. Why do you then call this unfaithful
dealing?

I ne'er conceal'd my soul from you before:
Bear with me now, and search my wounds no
further;

For every probing pains me to the heart.

Cham. 'Tis sign there's danger in't, and must
be prob'd.

Where's your new husband? Still that thought
disturbs you—

What! only answer me with tears?—Castalio!

Nay, now they stream:—

Cruel, unkind, Castalio!—Is't not so? [me,

Mon. I cannot speak;—grief flows so fast upon
It chokes, and will not let me tell the cause.

Oh!—

Cham. My Monimia! to my soul thou'rt dear
As honour to my name!

Why wilt thou not repose within my breast
The anguish that torments thee?

Mon. Oh! I dare not. [confide

Cham. I have no friend but thee. We must
In one another.—Two unhappy orphans,
Alas! we are! and when I see thee grieve,
Methinks it is a part of me that suffers.

Mon. Could you be secret?

Cham. Secret as the grave. [your fury

Mon. But when I've told you, will you keep
Within its bounds? Will you not do some rash
And horrid mischief? For, indeed, Chamont,
You would not think how hardly I've been us'd
From a dear friend—from one that has my soul

A slave, and therefore treats it like a tyrant.

Cham. I will be calm.—But has Castalio wrong'd thee?

Has he already wasted all his love? [bling

What has he done?—quickly! for I'm all trem- With expectation of a horrid tale!

Mon. Oh! could you think it?

Cham. What?

Mon. I fear, he'll kill me!

Cham. Ha!

Mon. Indeed, I do: he's strangely cruel to me; Which, if it last, I'm sure must break my heart.

Cham. What has he done?

Mon. Most barbarously us'd me.

Just as we met, and I, with open arms, Ran to embrace the lord of all my wishes, Oh then—

Cham. Go on!

Mon. He threw me from his breast, Like a detested sin.

Cham. How!

Mon. As I hung too

Upon his knees, and begg'd to know the cause, He dragg'd me, like a slave, upon the earth, And had no pity on my cries.

Cham. How! did he

Dash thee disdainfully away, with scorn?

Mon. He did.

Cham. What! throw thee from him?

Mon. Yes, indeed he did!

Cham. So may this arm

Throw him to th' earth, like a dead dog despis'd. Lameness and leprosy, blindness and lunacy, Poverty, shame, pride, and the name of villain, Light on me, if, Castalio, I forgive thee! [he is!

Mon. Nay, now, Chamont, art thou unkind as Didst thou not promise me thou wouldst be calm? Keep my disgrace conceal'd?

Alas, I love him still; and though I ne'er Clasp him again within these longing arms, Yet bless him, bless him, gods, where'er he goes?

Enter ACASIO.

Acas. Sure some ill fate is tow'rd's me; in my house

I only meet with oddness and disorder.

Just this very moment

I met Castalio too—

Cham. Then you met a villain.

Acas. Ha!

Cham. Yes, a villain!

Acas. Have a care, young soldier,

How thou'rt too busy with Acasio's fame.

I have a sword, my arm's good old acquaintance:— Villain, to thee.

Cham. Curse on thy scandalous age, Which hinders me to rush upon thy throat, And tear the root up of that cursed bramble!

Acas. Ungrateful ruffian! sure my good old friend

Was ne'er thy father! Nothing of him's in thee!

What have I done, in my unhappy age,

To be thus us'd? I scorn to upbraid thee, boy!

But I could put thee in remembrance—

Cham. Do.

Acas. I scorn it.

Cham. No, I'll calmly hear the story;

For I would fain know all, to see which scale Weighs most.—Ha! is not that good old Acasio?

What have I done?—Can you forgive this folly?

Acas. Why dost thou ask it?

Cham. 'Twas the rude o'erflowing Of too much passion—Pray, my lord, forgive me. [Kneels.

Acas. Mock me not, youth! I can revenge a wrong. [mine.

Cham. I know it well—but for this thought of Pity a madman's frenzy, and forget it. [kind.

Acas. I will; but henceforth pry'thee be more Whence came the cause? [Raises him.

Cham. Indeed, I've been to blame;

For you've been my father—

You've been her father too.

[Takes MONIMIA'S hand.

Acas. Forbear the prologue, And let me know the substance of thy tale.

Cham. You took her up, a little tender flower, Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost Had nipp'd; and with a careful, loving hand, Transplanted her into your own fair garden, Where the sun always shines: there long she flourish'd;

Grew sweet to sense, and lovely to the eye; Till at the last a cruel spoiler came, Cropp'd this fair rose, and rifled all its sweetness, Then cast it like a loathsome weed away.

Acas. You talk to me in parables, Chamont: You may have known that I'm no wordy man. Fine speeches are the instruments of knaves, Or fools, that use them when they want good But honesty [sense.

Needs no disguise or ornament. Be plain.

Cham. Your son—

Acas. I've two; and both, I hope, have honour.

Cham. I hope so too; but—

Acas. Speak.

Cham. I must inform you,

Once more, Castalio!—

Acas. Still Castalio!

Cham. Yes;

Your son Castalio has wrong'd Monimia!

Acas. Ha! wrong'd her?

Cham. Marry'd her.

Acas. I'm sorry for't.

Cham. Why sorry?

By yon bless'd heaven, there's not a lord But might be proud to take her to his heart.

Acas. I'll not deny't.

Cham. You dare not; by the gods,

You dare not. All your family combin'd

In one damn'd falsehood, to outdo Castalio, Dare not deny't.

Acas. How has Castalio wrong'd her?

Cham. Ask that of him. I say, my sister's Monimia, my sister, born as high [wrong'd:

And noble as Castalio.—Do her justice,

Or, by the gods, I'll lay a scene of blood

Shall make this dwelling horrible to nature.

I'll do't.—Hark you, my lord, your son Castalio,

Take him to your closet, and there teach him

Acas. You shall have justice. [manners.

Cham. Nay, I will have justice!

Who'll sleep in safety that has done me wrong?

My lord, I'll not disturb you to repeat

The cause of this; I beg you (to preserve

Your house's honour) ask it of Castalio. [Exit.

Acas. Farewell, proud boy.—

Monimia:

Mon. My lord.

Acas. You are my daughter. [me.

Mon. I am, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe to own

Acas. When you'll complain to me, I'll prove a father. [Exit

Mon. Now I'm undone for ever! Who on
Is there so wretched as Monimia? [earth
First by Castalio cruelly forsaken;
I've lost Acasto now: his parting frowns
May well instruct me, rage is in his heart.
I shall be next abandon'd to my fortune,
Thrust out a naked wand'rer to the world,
And branded for the mischievous Monimia!
What will become of me? My cruel brother
Is framing mischiefs, too, for aught I know,
That may produce bloodshed and horrid murder!
I would not be the cause of one man's death,
To reign the empress of the earth; nay, more,
I'd rather lose for ever my Castalio,
My dear, unkind Castalio. [Sits down.

Enter POLYDORE.

Pol. Monimia weeping!
I come, my love, to kiss all sorrow from thee;
What means these sighs, and why thus beats
thy heart?

Mon. Let me alone to sorrow; 'tis a cause
None e'er shall know; but it shall with me die.
Pol. Happy, Monimia, he to whom these sighs,
These tears, and all these languishings, are paid!
I know your heart was never meant for me;
That jewel's for an elder brother's price.

Mon. My lord!
Pol. Nay, wonder not; last night I heard
His oaths, your vows, and to my torment saw
Your wild embraces; heard the appointment made;
I did, Monimia, and I curs'd the sound.
Wilt thou be sworn, my love? wilt thou be ne'er
Unkind again?

Mon. Banish such fruitless hopes!
Have you sworn constancy to my undoing?
Will you be ne'er my friend again?

Pol. What means my love?
Mon. What meant my lord?

Last night?
Pol. Is that a question now to be demanded?
Mon. Was it well done

T' assault my lodging at the dead of night,
And threaten me if I denied admittance—
You said you were Castalio.

Pol. By those eyes,
It was the same: I spent my time much better.
Mon. Ha!—have a care!

Pol. Where is the danger near me? [quiet,
Mon. I fear you're on a rock will wreck your
And drown your soul in wretchedness for ever.
A thousand horrid thoughts crowd on my memory.
Will you be kind, and answer me one question?

Pol. I'd trust thee with my life; on that soft
bosom

Breathe out the choicest secrets of my heart,
Till I had nothing in it left but love. [angels,

Mon. Nay, I'll conjure you, by the gods and
By the honour of your name, that's most con-
cern'd,

To tell me, Polydore, and tell me truly,
Where did you rest last night?

Pol. Within thy arms.

Mon. 'Tis done. [Faints.
Pol. She faints!—no help!—who waits?—A
curse

Upon my vanity, that could not keep
The secret of my happiness in silence!
Confusion! we shall be surpris'd anon;
And consequently all must be betray'd.
Monimia!—she breathes!—Monimia!

Mon. Well—

Let mischiefs multiply! let every hour
Of my loath'd life yield me increase of horror!
O let the sun, to these unhappy eyes,
Ne'er shine again, but be eclips'd for ever!
May every thing I look on seem a prodigy,
To fill my soul with terrors, till I quite
Forget I ever had humanity,
And grow a curser of the works of nature!

Pol. What means all this?

Mon. O Polydore! if all

The friendship e'er you vow'd to good Castalio
Be not a falsehood; if you ever lov'd
Your brother, you've undone yourself and me.

Pol. Which way can ruin reach the man that's
rich

As I am, in possession of thy sweetness?

Mon. Oh! I'm his wife!

Pol. What says Monimia?

Mon. I am Castalio's wife!

Pol. His married, wedded, wife?

Mon. Yesterday's sun

Saw it perform'd!

Pol. My brother's wife?

Mon. As surely as we both

Must taste of misery, that guilt is thine.

Pol. Oh! thou may'st yet be happy!

Mon. Couldst thou be

Happy, with such a weight upon thy soul?

Pol. It may be yet a secret—I'll go try

To reconcile and bring Castalio to thee!

Whilst from the world I take myself away,

And waste my life in penance for my sin.

Mon. Then thou wouldst more undo me: heap
a load

Of added sin upon my wretched head!

Wouldst thou again have me betray thy brother,

And bring pollution to his arms?—Curs'd thought!

Oh! when shall I be mad indeed! [Exit.

Pol. Then thus I'll go;—

Full of my guilt, distracted where to roam:

I'll find some place where adders nest in winter,

Loathsome and venomous; where poisons hang

Like gums against the walls: there I'll inhabit,

And live up to the height of desperation.

Desire shall languish like a with'ring flower,

Horror shall fright me from those pleasing harms,

And I'll no more be caught with beauty's charms.

[Exit.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

*CASTALIO discovered lying on the ground;
soft music.*

Cas. See where the deer trot after one another:

No discontent they know: but in delightful

Wildness and freedom, pleasant springs, fresh

herbage,

Calm arbours, lusty health, and innocence,

Enjoy their portion:—if they see a man,

How will they turn together all, and gaze

Upon the monster!

Once in a season, too, they taste of love:

Only the beast of reason is its slave:

And in that folly drudges all the year.

Enter ACASTO.

Acas. Castalio! Castalio!

Cas. Who's there

So wretched but to name Castalio?

Acas. I hope my message may succeed.

Cas. My father!

'Tis joy to see you, though where sorrow's

Acas. Castalio, you must go along with me,
And see Monimia.

Cas. Sure my lord but mocks me :
So see Monimia ?

Acas. I say, no more dispute. [her.
Complaints are made to me that you have wrong'd

Cas. Who has complain'd ? [wrong'd,
Acas. Her brother to my face proclaim'd her
And in such terms they've warm'd me.

Cas. What terms ? Her brother ! Heaven !
Where learn'd he that ?

What, does she send her hero with defiance ?
He durst not sure affront you ?

Acas. No, not much :

But—

Cas. Speak, what said he ?

Acas. That thou wert a villain :

Methinks I would not have thee thought a villain.

Cas. Shame on the ill-manner'd brute !

Your age secur'd him ; he durst not else have said.

Acas. By my sword,

I would not see thee wrong'd, and bear it vilely :
Though I have pass'd my word she shall have
justice.

Cas. Justice ! to give her justice would undo
Think you this solitude I now have chosen,—

Wish'd to have grown one piece

With this cold clay, and all without a cause ?

Enter CHAMONT.

Cham. Where is the hero, famous and renown'd
For wronging innocence, and breaking vows :
Whose mighty spirit, and whose stubborn heart,
No woman can appease, nor man provoke ?

Acas. I guess, Chamont, you come to seek
Castalio ?

Cham. I come to seek the husband of Monimia.

Cas. The slave is here.

Cham. I thought ere now to have found you
Atoning for the ills you've done Chamont :
For you have wrong'd the dearest part of him.
Monimia, young lord, weeps in this heart ;
And all the tears thy injuries have drawn
From her poor eyes, are drops of blood from hence.

Cas. Then you are Chamont ?

Cham. Yes, and I hope no stranger
To great Castalio.

Cas. I've heard of such a man,
That has been very busy with my honour.
I own I'm much indebted to you, Sir,
And here return the villain back again
You sent me by my father.

Cham. Thus I'll thank you. [Draws.

Acas. By this good sword, who first presumes
to violence,

Makes me his foe. [Draws and interposes.

Cas. Sir, in my younger years with care you
taught me

That brave revenge was due to injur'd honour :
Oppose not then the justice of my sword,
Lest you should make me jealous of your love.

Cham. Into thy father's arms thou fly'st for
safety,

Because thou know'st that place is sanctified
With the remembrance of an ancient friendship.

Cas. I am a villain, if I will not seek thee,
Till I may be reveng'd for all the wrongs
Done me by that ungrateful fair thou plead'st for.

Cham. She wrong'd thee ? By the fury in my
heart,

Thy father's honour's not above Monimia's ;
Nor was thy mother's truth and virtue fairer.

Acas. Boy, don't disturb the ashes of the dead
With thy capricious follies ; the remembrance
Of the lov'd creature that once fill'd these arms—

Cham. Has not been wrong'd.

Cas. It shall not.

Cham. No, nor shall

Monimia, though a helpless orphan, destitute
Of friends and fortune, though the unhappy sister
Of poor Chamont, whose sword is all his por-
tion,

Be oppress'd by thee, thou proud, imperious
traitor !

Cas. Ha ! set me free.

Cham. Come, both.

Cas. Sir, if you'd have me think you did not

This opportunity to show your vanity,
Let's meet some other time, when by ourselves

We fairly may dispute our wrongs together.

Cham. Till then I am Castalio's friend. [Exit.

Acas. Would I'd been absent when this bois-
t'rous brave

Came to disturb thee thus. I'm griev'd I hinder'd
Thy just resentment—But, Monimia—

Cas. Damn her !

Acas. Don't curse her.

Cas. Did I ?

Acas. Yes.

Cas. I'm sorry for't.

Acas. Methinks, if, as I guess, the fault's but
It might be pardon'd.

Cas. No.

Acas. What has she done ? [forgive me.

Cas. That she's my wife, may Heaven and you

Acas. Be reconcil'd then.

Cas. No.

Acas. For my sake,
Castalio, and the quiet of my age. [starts at ?

Cas. Why will you urge a thing my nature

Acas. Pr'ythee, forgive her.

Cas. Lightnings first shall blast me !

I tell you, were she prostrate at my feet,
Full of her sex's best dissembled sorrows
And all that wondrous beauty of her own,
My heart might break, but it should never soften.

Acas. Did you but know the agonies she feels—
She flies with fury over all the house ;

Through every room of each department, crying,
" Where's my Castalio ? Give me my Castalio !"

Except she sees you, sure she'll grow distracted !

Cas. Ha ! will she ? Does she name Castalio ?
And with such tenderness ? Conduct me quickly
To the poor, lovely mourner.

Acas. Then wilt thou go ? Blessings attend
thy purpose !

Cas. I cannot hear Monimia's soul's in sadness,
And be a man : my heart will not forget her.

Acas. Delay not then ; but haste and cheer thy
love.

Cas. Oh ! I will, throw my impatient arms
about her ;

In her soft bosom sigh my soul to peace ;
Till through the panting breast she finds the way
To mould my heart, and make it what she will.

Monimia ! Oh ! [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter MONIMIA.

Mon. Stand off, and give me room ;
I will not rest till I have found Castalio.
My wish's lord, comely as the rising day.
I cannot die in peace, till I have seen him.

Enter CASTALIO.

Cas. Who talks of dying, with a voice so sweet
That life 's in love with it?

Mon. Hark! 'tis he that answers.

Where art thou?

Cas. Here, my love.

Mon. No nearer, lest I vanish. [while?]

Cas. Have I been in a dream then all this
And art thou but the shadow of Monimia:

Why dost thou fly me thus?

Mon. Oh! were it possible that we could drown
In dark oblivion but a few past hours,
We might be happy.

Cas. Is't then so hard, Monimia, to forgive
A fault, when humble love, like mine, implores
thee?

For I must love thee, though it proves my ruin.
I'll kneel to thee, and weep a flood before thee.
Yet pr'ythee, tyrant, break not quite my heart;
But when my task of penitence is done,
Heal it again, and comfort me with love.

Mon. If I am dumb, Castalio, and want words
To pay thee back this mighty tenderness,
It is because I look on thee with horror,
And cannot see the man I have so wrong'd.

Cas. Thou hast not wrong'd me.

Mon. Ah! alas, thou talk'st
Just as thy poor heart thinks. Have not I
wrong'd thee?

Cas. No.

Mon. Still thou wander'st in the dark, Castalio;
But wilt, ere long, stumble on horrid danger.

Cas. My better angel, then do thou inform me
What danger threatens me, and where it lies;
Why wert thou (pr'ythee, smile, and tell me why)
When I stood waiting underneath the window,
Deaf to my cries, and senseless of my pains?

Mon. Did I not beg thee to forbear inquiry?
Read'st thou not something in my face, that
speaks

Wonderful change, and horror from within me?

Cas. If, lab'ring in the pangs of death,
Thou wouldst do any thing to give me ease,
Unfold this riddle ere my thoughts grow wild,
And let in fears of ugly form upon me.

Mon. My heart wont let me speak it; but re-
member,

Monimia, poor Monimia, tells you this:

We ne'er must meet again——

Cas. Ne'er meet again?

Mon. No, never.

Cas. Where 's the power
On earth, that dares not look like thee, and say so?
Thou art my heart's inheritance: I serv'd
A long and faithful slavery for thee;
And who shall rob me of the dear-bought bless-
ing?

Mon. Time will clear all; but now let this con-
tent you:

Heaven has decreed, and therefore I've resolv'd
(With torment I must tell it thee, Castalio)
Ever to be a stranger to thy love,
In some far distant country waste my life,
And from this day to see thy face no more.

Cas. Why turn'st thou from me? I'm alone
already.

Methinks I stand upon a naked beach,
Sighing to winds, and to the seas complaining,
Whilst afar off the vessel sails away,
Where all the treasure of my soul 's embark'd;

Wilt thou not turn?—Oh! could those eyes but
speak,

I should know all, for love is pregnant in 'em;
They swell, they press their beams upon me still:

Wilt thou not speak? If we must part for ever,
Give me but one kind word to think upon,
And please myself withal, whilst my heart 's
breaking.

Mon. Ah! poor Castalio! [Exit.

Cas. What means all this? Why all this stir
to plague

A single wretch? If but your word can shake
This world to atoms, why so much ado
With me? think me but dead, and lay me so.

Enter POLYDORE.

Pol. To live, and live a torment to myself,
What dog would bear't, that knew but his con-
dition?

We've little knowledge, and that makes us cow-
Because it cannot tell us what 's to come.

Cas. Who 's there?

Pol. Why, what art thou?

Cas. My brother Polydore?

Pol. My name is Polydore.

Cas. Canst thou inform me——

Pol. Of what?

Cas. Of my Monimia?

Pol. No. Good day!

Cas. In haste!

Methinks my Polydore appears in sadness

Pol. Indeed! and so to me does my Castalio.

Cas. Do I?

Pol. Thou dost.

Cas. Alas, I've wondrous reason!

I'm strangely alter'd, brother, since I saw thee.

Pol. Why?

Cas. I'll tell thee, Polydore; I would repose
Within thy friendly bosom all my follies;
For thou wilt pardon 'em, because they're mine.

Pol. Be not too credulous; consider first,
Friends may be false. Is there no friendship
false?

Cas. Why dost thou ask me that? Does this
appear

Like a false friendship, when, with open arms

And streaming eyes, I run upon thy breast?

Oh! 'tis in thee alone I must have comfort!

Pol. I fear, Castalio, I have none to give thee.

Cas. Dost thou not love me then?

Pol. Oh, more than life;

I never had a thought of my Castalio,

Might wrong the friendship we had vow'd to-
Hast thou dealt so by me? [gether.

Cas. I hope I have.

Pol. Then tell me why, this morning, this dis-
order?

Cas. O Polydore, I know not how to tell thee;
Shame rises in my face, and interrupts
The story of my tongue.

Pol. I grieve, my friend

Knows any thing which he 's asham'd to tell me.

Cas. Oh, much too oft. Our destiny contriv'd

To plague us both with one unhappy love!

Thou, like a friend, a constant, gen'rous friend,
In its first pangs didst trust me with thy passion,
Whilst I still smooth'd my pain with smiles before
thee,

And made a contract I ne'er meant to keep.

Pol. How!

Cas. Still new ways I studied to abuse thee,
And kept thee as a stranger to my passion,

Till yesterday I wedded with Monimia.

Pol. Ah! Castalio, was that well done?

Cas. No; to conceal't from thee was much a fault.

Pol. A fault! when thou hast heard
The tale I'll tell, what wilt thou call it then?

Cas. How my heart throbs!

Pol. First from thy friendship, traitor,
I cancel't thus: after this day I'll ne'er
Hold trust or converse with the false Castalio!
This, witness, Heaven.

Cas. What will my fate do with me?
I've lost all happiness, and know not why!
What means this, brother?

Pol. Perjur'd, treach'rous wretch,
Farewell!

Cas. I'll be thy slave, and thou shalt use me
Just as thou wilt, do but forgive me.

Pol. Never.

[doing:

Cas. Oh! think a little what thy heart is
How, from our infancy, we hand in hand
Have trod the path of life in love together.
One bed has held us, and the same desires,
The same aversions, still employ'd our thoughts.
Whene'er had I a friend that was not Polydore's,
Or Polydore a foe that was not mine?
E'en in the womb we embrac'd; and wilt thou
now,

For the first fault, abandon and forsake me?

Leave me, amidst afflictions, to myself,
Plung'd in the gulf of grief, and none to help me?

Pol. Go to Monimia; in her arms thou'lt find
Repose; she has the art of healing sorrows.

Cas. What arts?

Pol. Blind wretch! thou husband? there's a
question!

Is she not a—

Cas. What?

Pol. Where? I think that word needs no ex-
plaining.

Cas. Alas! I can forgive e'en this to thee;
But let me tell thee, Polydore, I'm griev'd,
To find thee guilty of such low revenge,
To wrong that virtue which thou couldst not
ruin.

Pol. It seems I lie, then!

Cas. Should the bravest man

That e'er wore conq'ring sword, but dare to
whisper

What thou proclaim'st, he were the worst of liars.
My friend may be mistaken.

Pol. Damn the evasion!

Thou mean'st the worst! and he's a base-born
That said, I lied! [villain

Cas. A base-born villain!

Pol. Yes! thou never cam'st

From old Acasto's loins: the midwife put
A cheat upon my mother; and, instead
Of a true brother, in the cradle by me
Plac'd some coarse peasant's cub, and thou art
he!

Cas. Thou art my brother still.

Pol. Thou liest!

Cas. Nay, then—

[Draws.

Yet, I am calm.

Pol. A coward's always so.

Cas. Ah!—ah!—that stings home! Coward!

Pol. Ay, base-born coward! villain!

Cas. This to thy heart, then, though my mother
bore thee!

[*They fight*; POLYDORE runs on CAS-
TALIO'S sword.

Pol. Now my Castalio is again my friend.

Cas. What have I done? my sword is in thy
breast.

Pol. So would I have it be, thou best of men,
Thou kindest brother, and thou truest friend!

Cas. Ye gods! we're taught that all your works
are justice:

Ye're painted merciful, and friends to innocence.
If so, then why these plagues upon my head?

Pol. Blame not the heavens, 'tis Polydore has
wrong'd thee;

I've stain'd thy bed; thy spotless marriage joys
Have been polluted by thy brother's lust.

Cas. By thee?

Pol. By me, last night, the horrid deed
Was done, when all things slept but rage and in-
cest.

Cas. Now, where's Monimia? Oh!

Enter MONIMIA.

Mon. I'm here! who calls me?

Methought I heard a voice

Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains,
When all his little flock's at feed before him.

But what means this? here's blood!

Cas. Ay, brother's blood!

Art thou prepar'd for everlasting pains?

Pol. Oh! let me charge thee, by th' eternal
justice,

Hurt not her tender life?

Cas. Not kill her?

Mon. That task myself have finish'd: I shall
die

Before we part: I've drunk a healing draught
For all my cares, and never more shall wrong
thee.

Pol. Oh, she's innocent.

Cas. Tell me that story,

And thou wilt make a wretch of me, indeed.

Pol. Hadst thou, Castalio, us'd me like a
friend,

This ne'er had happen'd; hadst thou let me
know

Thy marriage, we had all now met in joy:

But, ignorant of that,

Hearing th' appointment made, enrag'd to think

Thou hadst undone me in successful love,

I, in the dark, went and supplied thy place;

Whilst all the night, midst our triumphant joys,

The trembling, tender, kind, deceiv'd Monimia,

Embrac'd, caress'd, and call'd me her Castalio.

[Dies

Mon. Now, my Castalio, the most dear of men,
Wilt thou receive pollution to thy bosom,

And close the eyes of one that has betray'd you?

Cas. O, I'm the unhappy wretch, whose
curs'd fate

Has weigh'd you down into destruction with
him:

Why then thus kind to me!

Mon. When I'm laid down i' th' grave, and
quite forgotten,

May'st thou be happy in a fairer bride!

But none can ever love thee like Monimia.

When I am dead, as presently I shall be,

(For the grim tyrant grasps my hand already,)

Speak well of me: and if thou find ill tongues

Too busy with my fame, don't hear me wrong'd;

'Twill be a noble justice to the memory

Of a poor wretch, once honour'd with thy love.

[Dies

Enter CHAMONT and ACASIO.

Cham. Gape, earth, and swallow me to quick destruction,
If I forgive your house!
Ye've overpower'd me now!
But, hear me, Heaven!—Ah! here 's a scene of death!

My sister, my Monimia, breathless!—Now,
Ye powers above, if ye have justice, strike!
Strike bolts through me, and through the curs'd Castalio!

Cas. Stand off; thou hot-brain'd, boisterous, noisy, ruffian!

And leave me to my sorrows.

Cham. By the love
I bore her living, I will ne'er forsake her;
But here remain till my heart burst with sobbing.

Cas. Vanish, I charge thee! or—
[*Draws a dagger.*]

Cham. Thou canst not kill me!
That would be a kindness, and against thy nature!

Acas. What means Castalio! Sure thou wilt not pull

More sorrows on thy aged father's head!
Tell me, I beg you, tell me the sad cause
Of all this ruin.

Cas. Thou, unkind Chamont,
Unjustly hast pursu'd me with thy hate,
And sought the life of him that never wrong'd thee:

Now, if thou wilt embrace a noble vengeance,
Come join with me, and curse—

Cham. What?

Acas. Have patience.

Cas. Patience! preach it to the winds,
To roaring seas, or raging fires! for, curs'd
As I am now, 'tis this must give me patience:
Thus I find rest, and shall complain no more.

[*Stabs himself.*]

Chamont, to thee my birthright I bequeath:—
Comfort my mourning father—heal his griefs;

[*ACASIO faints into the arms of a Servant.*]
For I perceive they fall with weight upon him—

And, for Monimia's sake, whom thou wilt find

I never wrong'd, be kind to poor Serina—

Now all I beg is, lay me in one grave

Thus with my love: farewell! I now am nothing. [*Dies.*]

Cham. Take care of good Acasio, whilst I go
To search the means by which the fates have plagu'd us.

'Tis thus that heaven its empire does maintain:
It may afflict; but man must not complain.

[*Exeunt.*]

PROLOGUE.

To you, great judges, in this writing age,
The sons of wit, and patrons of the stage,

With all those humble thoughts, which still have sway'd

His pride much doubting, trembling and afraid
Of what is to his want of merit due,
And aw'd by every excellence in you,
The author sends to beg you will be kind,
And spare those many faults you needs must find.

You, to whom wit a common foe is grown,
The thing ye scorn and publicly disown.
Though now, perhaps, ye're here for other ends,
He swears to me ye ought to be his friends:
For he ne'er call'd ye yet insipid tools,
Nor wrote one line to tell ye you were fools:
But says of wit ye have so large a store,
So very much you never will have more.
He ne'er with libel treated yet the town,
The names of honest men bedaub'd and shown.
Nay, never once lampoon'd the harmless life
Of suburb virgin, or of city wife.

Satire 's the effect of poetry's disease,
Which, sick of a lewd age, she vents for ease,
But now her only strife should be to please;
Since of ill fate the baneful cloud 's withdrawn,
And happiness again begins to dawn,
Since back with joy and triumph he is come,
That always drew fears hence, ne'er brought 'em home.

Off has he plough'd the boist'rous ocean o'er,
Yet ne'er more welcome to the longing shore,
Not when he brought home victories before;
For then fresh laurels flourish'd on his brow;
And he comes crown'd with olive-branches now
Receive him—oh, receive him as his friends,
Embrace the blessing which he recommends:
Such quiet as your foes shall ne'er destroy;
Then shake off fears, and clap your hands for joy.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY SERINA.

You've seen one orphan ruin'd here; and I
May be the next, if old Acasio die:
Should it prove so, I'd fain amongst you find
Who 'tis would to the fatherless be kind.
To whose protection might I safely go?
Is there among you no good nature? No.
What shall I do? Should I the godly seek,
And go a conventicling twice a week?
Quit the lewd stage, and its profane pollution,
Affect each form and saint-like institution;
So draw the brethren all to contribution?
Or shall I (as I guess the poet may
Within these three days) fairly run away?
No; to some city lodgings I'll retire;
Seem very grave, and privacy desire;
Till I am thought some heiress, rich in lands,
Fled to escape a cruel guardian's hands;
Which may produce a story worth the telling,
Of the next sparks that go a fortune stealing.

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY PHILIP MASSINGER.

REMARKS.

It has been said, that Massinger surpassed all the writers of the "olden time" in purity of style and delicacy of manners; many have considered him as second only to Shakspeare. The immoral conduct of the drama in that age renders such an admission of slight value now, but it may fairly be conceded, that the writer of this comedy, of the City Madam, (on which Sir J. Burgess has framed "Riches,") of the Fatal Dowry, and many others, possessed a mind of no ordinary or limited capability. Mr. Gifford, the able editor of Massinger, is of opinion that a real person was aimed at in Sir Giles Overreach: fortunately for mankind, such monstrous deviations from "nature and from nature's laws" do not often appear, but there can be little doubt of their reality. The variety of character and incident in this play, the strong and lively picture of domestic manners, the serious moral so distinctly deducible from it, are qualities sufficient to veil greater faults than can fairly be attached to this production.

The animated performance of the principal character by Mr. Cooke, and since by Mr. Kean with increased effect, have placed this comedy on the stock-list of our Royal Theatres.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD LOVELL,.....	Mr. Holland.	AMBLE,.....	Mr. Maddocks.
SIR GILES OVERREACH,.....	Mr. Kean.	WATCHALL,.....	Mr. Ebsworth.
WELLBORN,.....	Mr. Harley.	CREDITORS,.....	{ Messrs. Cook,
ALLWORTH,.....	Mr. S. Penley.		{ Appleby, &c.
JUSTICE GREEDY,.....	Mr. Ozberry.	SIR GILES' SERVANTS,.....	{ Mess. Goodman,
MARRALL,.....	Mr. Munden.		{ Veals, &c.
WELDO,.....	Mr. Carr.	LADY ALLWORTH,.....	Mrs. Glover.
VINTNER,.....	Mr. Wewitzer.	MARGARET,.....	Mrs. Horn.
TAILOR,.....	Mr. Conveney.	ABIGAIL,.....	Mrs. Chatterley
TAPWELL,.....	Mr. Hughes.	TABITHA,.....	Mrs. Scott.
ORDER,.....	Mr. Minton.	FROTH,.....	Miss Tidswell
FURNACE,.....	Mr. Penley.		

SCENE.—Nottinghamshire.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The outside of a Village Alehouse.

Enter WELLBORN, TAPWELL, and FROTH.

Well. No liquor! nor no credit?

Tap. None, Sir;

Not the remainder of a single can,
Left by a drunken porter.

Froth. Not the dropping of the tap for your
morning's draught, Sir.

'Tis verity, I assure you.

Well. Verity, you brach!

The devil turn'd precisian? Rogue, what am I?

Tap. Troth! durst I trust you with a looking-
glass,

To let you see your trim shape, you would quit
me,

And take the name yourself.

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Well. How! dog? [Raising his stick.

Tap. Even so, Sir. Advance your Plymouth
cloak; [worship,

There dwells, and within call, if it please your
A potent monarch, call'd the constable,
That does command a citadel, call'd the stocks;
Such as with dexterity will haul
Your poor tatter'd—

Well. Rascal! slave!

Froth. No rage, Sir.

Tap. At his own peril! Do not put yourself
In too much heat, there being no water near
To quench your thirst; and sure for other liquor,
As mighty ale, or beer, they are things, I take it,
You must no more remember; not in a dream, Sir

Well. Why, thou unthankful villain, dar'st
thou talk thus?

Is not thy house, and all thou hast, my gift?

Tap. I find it not in chalk, Sir; and Timothy Tapwell
Does keep no other register.

Well. Am I not he
Whose riots fed and cloth'd thee? Wert thou not
Born on my father's land, and proud to be
A drudge in his house?

Tap. What I was, Sir, it skills not;
What you are is apparent. Now for a farewell;
Since you talk of father, in my hope it will torment you,

I'll briefly tell your story. Your dead father,
Old Sir John Wellborn,
My quondam master, was a man of worship;
Bore the whole sway of the shire; kept a good house;

Reliev'd the poor, and so forth; but he dying,
And the twelve hundred a year coming to you,
Late master Francis, but now forlorn Wellborn—

Well. Slave, stop! or I shall lose myself.

Froth. Very hardly.
You cannot be out of your way. [gallant,

Tap. You were then a lord of acres, the prime
And I your under butler:—note the change now:
You had a merry time of't. Hawks and hounds,
With choice of running horses; mistresses,
And other such extravagances;
Which your uncle, Sir Giles Overreach, observing,
Resolving not to lose so fair an opportunity,
On foolish mortgages, statutes, and bonds,
For awhile supplied your lavishness, and then left you.

Well. Some curate has penn'd this invective,
And you have studied it.

Tap. I have not done yet.
Your lands gone, and your credit not worth a token,
You grew the common borrower; no man 'scap'd
Your paper pellets, from the gentleman to the groom;

While I, honest Tim Tapwell, with a little stock,
Some forty pounds or so, bought a small cottage,
And humbled myself to marriage with my Froth here.

Well. Hear me, ungrateful hell-hound! did not I
Make purses for you? then you lick'd my boots,
And thought your holiday cloak too coarse to clean 'em.

'Twas I, that when I heard thee swear, if ever
Thou couldst arrive at forty pounds, thou wouldst
Live like an emperor; 'twas I that gave it,
In ready gold. Deny this, wretch!

Tap. I must, Sir.
For from the tavern to the tap-house, all,
On forfeiture of their licence, stand bound
Never to remember who their best guests were,
If they grow poor like you.

Well. They are well rewarded
That beggar themselves to make such rascals rich.
Thou viper, thankless viper!

But since you are grown forgetful, I will help
Your memory, and beat thee into remembrance;
Nor leave one bone unbroken. [Beats him.

Tap. Oh, oh, oh!

Froth. Help! help!

Enter ALLWORTH.

Allw. Hold, for my sake, hold!
Deny me, Frank? they are not worth your anger.

Well. For once thou hast redeem'd them from this sceptre:

But let 'em vanish; [Shaking his cudgel.
For if they grumble, I revoke my pardon.

Froth. This comes of your prating husband;
you presum'd on your ambling wit, and must use
your glib tongue, though you are beaten lame for't.

Tap. Patience, Froth,
There's law to cure our bruises.

[Exit TAPWELL and FROTH into the house.

Well. Sent for to your mother?

Allw. My lady, Frank, my patroness! my all!
She's such a mourner for my father's death,
And, in her love to him, so favours me,
That I cannot pay too much observance to her.
There are few such step-dames.

Well. 'Tis a noble widow,
And keeps her reputation pure, and clear
From the least taint of infamy; but
Pr'ythee tell me, has she no suitors.

Allw. Even the best of the shire, Frank,
My lord excepted: such as sue and send,
And send and sue again; but to no purpose,
Yet she's so far from sullenness and pride,
That I dare undertake you shall meet from her
A liberal entertainment.

Well. I doubt it not.

Now, Allworth, mark my counsel. I am bound
to give it.

Thy father was my friend; and that affection
I bore to him, in right descends to thee:
I will not see the least affront stick on thee,
If I, with any danger can prevent it.

Allw. I thank your noble care; but, pray you,
in what

Do I run the hazard?

Well. Art thou not in love?

Put it not off with wonder.

Allw. In love, at my years? [transparent.

Well. You think you walk in clouds, but are
I have heard all, and the choice that you have made;
And, with my finger, can point out the north star
By which the loadstone of your folly's guided.
And to confirm this true, what think you of
Fair Margaret, the only child and heir
Of cormorant Overreach? Dost blush and start,
To hear her only nam'd? Blush at your want
Of wit and reason.

Allw. How'er you have discover'd my intents,
You know my aims are lawful; and if ever
The queen of flowers, the glory of the spring,
Sprung from an envious briar, I may infer,
There's such disparity in their conditions
Between the goddess of my soul, the daughter,
And the base churl, her father.

Well. Grant this true,
As I believe it; canst thou ever hope
To enjoy a quiet bed with her, whose father
Ruin'd thy 'state.

Allw. And your's too.

Well. I confess it, Allworth;
I must tell you as a friend, and freely,
That, where impossibilities are apparent,
'Tis indiscretion to nourish hopes.
Or canst thou think (if self-love blind thee not)
That Sir Giles Overreach (that to make her great
In swelling titles, without touch of conscience,
Will cut his neighbour's throat; and I hope his
own too)

Will e'er consent to make her thine? Give c'er,
And think of some course suitable to thy rank,
And prosper in it.

Allw. You have well advis'd me.
But, in the meanwhile, you, that are so studious
Of my affairs, wholly neglect your own.
Remember yourself, and in what plight you are.

Well. No matter, no matter.

Allw. Yes, 'tis much material:
You know my fortune and my means: yet something
I can spare from myself, to help your wants.

[*Offers money.*]

Well. How 's this?

Allw. Nay, be not angry.

Well. Money from thee?

From a boy? one that lives
At the devotion of a step-mother,
And the uncertain favour of a lord?
I'll eat my arms first. Howsoe'er blind Fortune
Hath spent the utmost of her malice on me;
Though I am thrust out of an alehouse,
And thus accoutred; know not where to eat,
Or drink, or sleep, but underneath this canopy;
Although I thank thee, I disdain thy offer.
And as I, in my madness, broke my state
Without th' assistance of another's brain,
In my right wits I'll piece it; at the worst,
Lie thus, and be forgotten.

Allw. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in LADY ALLWORTH'S House.

Enter ORDER, AMBLE, and FURNACE.

Order. Set all things right, or, as my name is
Order,

Whoever misses in his function, [fast,
For one whole week makes forfeiture of his break-
and privilege in the wine cellar.

Amble. You are merry,
Good master steward.

Fur. Let him; I'll be angry.

Amble. Why, fellow Furnace, 'tis not twelve
o'clock yet,

Nor dinner taking up; then 'tis allow'd,
Cooks; by their places, may be choleric.

Fur. You think you have spoken wisely, good-
man Amble,
My lady's go-before.

Order. Nay, nay, no wrangling.

Fur. Twit me with the authority of the kitchen?
At all hours, and at all places, I'll be angry;
And, thus provok'd, when I am at my prayers
I will be angry.

Amble. There was no hurt meant.

Fur. I am friends with thee, and yet I will be
angry.

Order. With whom?

Fur. No matter whom; yet, now I think on't,
I'm angry with my lady.

Amble. Heaven forbid, man.

Order. What cause has she given thee?

Fur. Cause enough, master steward;
I was entertain'd by her to please her palate,
And, till she forswore eating, I perform'd it.
Now since our master, noble Allworth, died,
Though I crack my brain to find out tempting
When I am three parts roasted, [sauces,
And the fourth part parboiled, to prepare her
viands,

She keeps her chamber, dines with a panada
Or water gruel; my sweat ne'er thought on.

Order. But your art is seen in the dining-room.

Fur. By whom?

By such as pretend to love her, but come
To feed upon her. Yet, of all the harpies
That do devour her, I am out of charity

With none so much as the thin-gutted 'squire,
That's stolen into communion.

Order. Justice Greedy?

Fur. The same, the same. Meat's cast away
upon him;

It never thrives. He holds this paradox,
"Who eats not well, can ne'er do justice well."
His stomach's as insatiate as the grave.

[*A knocking.*]

Amble. One knocks.

Enter ALLWORTH.

Order. Our late young master.

Amble. Welcome, Sir.

Fur. Your hand.

If you have a stomach, a cold bake-meat's ready.

Order. His father's picture in little.

Fur. We are all your servants.

Allw. At once, my thanks to all;
This is some comfort. Is my lady stirring?

Enter LADY ALLWORTH.

Order. Her presence answers for us.

Lady A. I'll take the air alone.

And, as I gave directions, if this morning
I am visited by any, entertain 'em
As heretofore; but say, in my excuse,
I am indispos'd.

Order. I shall, Madam.

Lady A. Do, and leave me.

[*Exit ORDER, AMBLE, &c.*]

Nay, stay you, Allworth.

How is it with your noble master?

Allw. Ever like himself;

No scruple lessen'd in the full weight of honour.
He did command me, (pardon my presumption,)
As his unworthy deputy, to kiss
Your ladyship's fair hands.

Lady A. I am honour'd in

His favour to me. Does he hold his purpose
For the Low Countries?

Allw. Constantly, good Madam;

But he will in person first present his service.

Lady A. What say you to his purpose? You are
Like virgin parchment, capable of any
Inscription, vicious or honourable.

I will not force your will, but leave you free
To your own election.

Allw. Any form you please

I will put on; but, might I make my choice,
With humble emulation I would follow
The path my lord marks to me.

Lady A. 'Tis well answer'd.

And I commend your spirit. You had a father
(Bless'd be his memory!) that, some few hours
Before the will of Heaven took him from me,
Did commend you, by the dearest ties
Of perfect love between us, to my care;
And therefore what I speak you are bound to hear,
With such respect as if he liv'd in me.

Allw. I have found you,

Most honour'd Madam, the best mother to me;
And with my utmost strength of care and service
Will labour, that you never may repent
Your bounties shower'd upon me.

Lady A. I much hope it.

These were your father's words: "If e'er my son
Follow the war, tell him it is a school
In which all the principles tending to honour
Are taught, if truly follow'd; but for such
As repair thither as a place in which
They do presume they may with license practise

Their lawless riots, they shall never merit.
The noble name of soldiers.—
To obey their leaders, and shun mutinies;
To dare boldly
In a fair cause, and for the country's safety
To run upon the cannon's mouth undaunted;
To bear with patience the winter's cold
And summer's scorching heat;
Are the essentials to make up a soldier,
Not swearing, dice, or drinking."

Allw. There's no syllable
You speak, but is to me an oracle,
Which but to doubt were impious.

Lady A. To conclude:—
Beware ill company; for often men
Are like to those with whom they do converse:
And from one man I warn you, and that's Well-
born:—

Not 'cause he's poor—that rather claims your pity;
But that he's in his manners so deprav'd,
And hath in vicious courses lost himself.
'Tis true your father lov'd him, while he was
Worthy the loving; but if he had liv'd
To have seen him as he is, he had cast him off,
Which you must do.

Allw. I shall obey in all things.

Lady A. Follow me to my chamber; you shall
have gold

To furnish you like my son, and still supplied
As I hear from you.

Allw. I am still bound to you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—A Hall in LADY ALLWORTH'S
House.

Enter SIR GILES OVERREACH, JUSTICE GREEDY,
ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, and MARRALL.

Just. Gr. Not to be seen?

Sir G. Still cloister'd up? Her reason,
I hope, assures her, though she make herself
Close prisoner ever for her husband's loss,
'Twill not recover him.

Order. Sir, it is her will,
Which we, that are her servants, ought to serve,
And not dispute. Howe'er, you are nobly wel-
come;—

And if you please to stay, that you may think so,
There came, not six days hence, from Hull, a pipe
Of rich Canary, which shall spend itself
For my lady's honour.

Just. Gr. Is it of the right sort?

Order. Yes, Mr. Greedy.

Amble. How his mouth runs o'er! [Apart.]

Fur. I'll make it run and run. [Apart.] Save
your good worship!

Just. Gr. Honest Mr. Cook, thy hand—again!
How I love thee!

Are the good dishes still in being? speak, boy.

Fur. If you have a mind to feed, there is a chine
Of beef well season'd.

Just. Gr. Good.

Fur. A pheasant larded.

Just. Gr. That I might now give thanks for!

Fur. Besides, there came last night, from the
forest of Sherwood,

The fattest stag I ever cook'd.

Just. Gr. A stag, man?

Fur. A stag, Sir; part of it is prepar'd for dinner,
And bak'd in puff-paste.

Just. Gr. Puff-paste too, Sir Giles!

A pound'rous chine of beef! a pheasant larded!
And red deer too, Sir Giles, and bak'd in puff-
paste!

All business set aside, let us give thanks here.

Sir G. You know we cannot.

Mar. Your worshipps are to sit on commission,
And if you fail to come you lose the cause.

Just. Gr. Cause me no causes: I'll prove't, for
such a dinner,

We may put off a commission; you shall find it
Henrici decimo quarto.

Sir G. Fie, Mr. Greedy,

Will you lose me a thousand pounds for a dinner?
No more, for shame! We must forget the belly,
When we think of profit.

Just. Gr. Well, you shall overrule me.

I could even now cry. Do you hear, master Cook?

Send but a corner of that immortal pasty,

And I in thankfulness will, by your boy,

Send you a brace of threepences.

Fur. Will you be so prodigal?

Sir G. Remember me to your lady.

Enter WELLBORN.

Who have we here?

Well. You know me.

Sir G. I did once, but now I will not;
Thou art no blood of mine. Avaunt, thou beggar!
If ever thou presume to cross me more,
I'll have thee cag'd and whipp'd.

Just. Gr. I'll grant the warrant.

Think of pie-corner, Furnace.

[Exeunt SIR GILES OVERREACH, JUSTICE
GREEDY, and MARRALL.]

Amble. Will you out, Sir?

I wonder how you durst creep in.

[To WELLBORN]

Order. This is rudeness,
And saucy impudence.

Amble. Cannot you stay?

To be serv'd among your fellows from the basket
But you must press into the hall?

Fur. Pr'ythee, vanish

Into some out-house, though it be the pig-stye
My scullion shall come to thee.

Enter ALLWORTH.

Well. This is rare,

Oh, here is Tom Allworth!—Tom!

Allw. We must be strangers;

Nor would I have you seen here for a million.

[Exit.]

Well. Better and better. He contemns me too.

Fur. Will you know your way.

Amble. Or shall we teach it you,
By the head and shoulders?

Well. No, I will not stir:

Do you mark, I will not. Let me see the wretch
That dares attempt to force me. Why, you slaves,
Created only to make legs and cringe,
To carry in a dish and shift a trencher,
That have not souls only to hope a blessing
Beyond your master's leavings—who advances?

who

Shows me the way?

[Beats the m.]

All the Servants. Help, help!

Order. Here comes my lady.

LADY ALLWORTH enters.

Lady A. What noise is this?

Well. Madam, my designs bear me to you.

Lady A. To me?

Well. And though I have met with

But ragged entertainment from your grooms here,
I hope from you to receive that noble usage,

As may become the true friend of your husband ;
And then I shall forget these.

Lady A. I am amaz'd
To see and hear this rudeness. Dar'st thou think,
Though sworn, that it can ever find belief,
That I, who to the first men of this country
Denied my presence since my husband's death,
Can fall so low as to change words with thee ?

Well. Scorn me not, good lady ;
But, as in form you are angelical,
Imitate the heavenly natures, and vouchsafe
At least awhile to hear me. You will grant
The blood that runs in this arm is as noble
As that which fills your veins. Your swelling titles,
Equipage, and fortune, your men's observance,
And women's flattery, are in you no virtues ;
Nor these rags, with my poverty, in me vices.
You have a fair name, and I know deserve it ;
Yet, lady, I must say in nothing more
Than in the pious sorrow you have shown
For your late noble husband.

Order. There he touch'd her. [*Aside.*

Well. That husband, Madam, was once in his
fortune

Almost as low as I. Want, debts, and crosses,
Lay heavy on him : let it not be thought
A boast in me, though I say I reliev'd him.
'Twas I did give him fashion ; mine the sword
That did on all occasions second his ;
I brought him on and off with honour, lady :
And when in all men's judgments he was sunk,
And in his own hopes not to be buoy'd up,
I stepp'd unto him, took him by the hand,
And brought him to the shore.

Fur. Are we not base rogues
That could forget this ? [*Aside.*

Well. I confess you made him
Master of your estate ; nor could your friends,
Though he brought no wealth with him, blame
you for't :

For he had a shape, and to that shape a mind
Made up of all parts, either great or noble ;
So winning a behaviour, not to be
Resisted, Madam.

Lady A. 'Tis most true, he had.

Well. For his sake then, in that I was his friend,
Do not condemn me.

Lady A. For what's past, excuse me ;
I will redeem it. [*Offers him her pocket-book.*

Well. Madam, on no terms ;
I will not beg nor borrow sixpence of you ;
But be supplied elsewhere, or want thus ever.
Only one suit I make : pray give me leave.

[*LADY ALLWORTH signs to the Servants to retire.*

I will not tire your patience with relation
Of the bad arts my uncle Overreach
Still forg'd, to strip me of my fair possessions ;
Nor how he shuts the door upon my want.
Would you but vouchsafe
To your dead husband's friend, such seeming grace
As might beget opinion in Sir Giles
Of a true passion toward me, you would see,
In the mere thought to prey on me again,
He'd turn my friend,
Quit all my owings, set me trimly forth,
And furnish'd well with gold ; which I should use,
I trust, to your no shame, lady, but live
Ever a grateful debtor to your gentleness.

Lady A. What, nothing else ?

Well. Nothing, unless you please to charge
your servants

To throw away a little respect upon me.

Lady A. What you demand is yours.
Respect this gentleman as 'twere myself.

[*To the Servants.*

Adieu, dear master Wellborn ;
Pray let me see you with your off'nest means.

Well. Your honour's servant.

[*Kisses her hand ; exit LADY ALLWORTH.*
Now, what can be wrought out of such a suit
Is yet in supposition. [*Servants bow to WELL.*]

Nay, all's forgotten ;
And, for a lucky omen to my project,
Shake hands, and end all quarrels in the cellar.

Order. Agreed, agreed.

Fur. Still merry, Mr. Wellborn.

[*Exeunt Servants.*

Well. Faith, a right worthy and a liberal lady,
Who can at once so kindly meet my purposes,
And brave the flouts of censure, to redeem
Her husband's friend ! When by this honest plot
The world believes she means to heal my wants
With her extensive wealth, each noisy creditor
Will be struck mute, and I be left at large
To practise on my uncle Overreach.
Here I may work the measure, to redeem
My mortgag'd fortune, which he stripp'd me of
When youth and dissipation quell'd my reason.
The fancy pleases,—if the plot succeed,
'Tis a new way to pay old debts, indeed. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Landscape near LADY ALL- WORTH'S Park.

Enter SIR GILES OVERREACH and MARRALL.

Sir G. He's gone, I warrant thee ; this com-
mission crush'd him.

Mar. Your worship has the way on't, and ne'er
miss

To squeeze these unthrifths into air ; and yet
The chop-fall'n justice did his part, returning
For your advantage the certificate,
Against his conscience and his knowledge too,
(With your good favour,) to the utter ruin
Of the poor farmer.

Sir G. 'Twas for these good ends
I made him a justice. He that bribes his belly
Is certain to command his soul.

Mar. I wonder

Why, your worship having
The power to put this thin gut in commission,
You are not in't yourself.

Sir G. Thou art a fool ;
In being out of office, I am out of danger ;
Where, if I were a justice, besides the trouble,
I might, or out of wilfulness or error,
Run myself finely into a premunire ;
And so become a prey to the informer.
No, I'll have none of't : 'tis enough I keep
Greedy at my devotion : so he serve
My purposes, let him hang, or damn, I care not ;
Friendship is but a word.

Mar. You are all wisdom.

Sir G. I would be worldly wise ; for the other
wisdom,
That does prescribe us a well-govern'd life,
And to do right to others as ourselves,
I value not an atom.

Mar. What course take you

(With your good pleasure) to hedge in the manor
Of your good neighbour, Mr. Frugal ? As 'tis said

He will not sell, nor borrow, nor exchange;
And his land, lying in the midst of your many
Is a foul blemish.

Sir G. I have thought on't, Marrall,
And it shall take. I must have all men sellers,
And I the only purchaser.

Mar. 'Tis most fit, Sir.

Sir G. I'll therefore buy some cottage near his
manor;

Which done, I'll make my men break ope' his
fences,

Ride o'er his standing corn, and in the night
Set fire to his barns, or break his cattle's legs.
These trespasses draw on suits, and suits expenses;
Which I can spare, but will soon beggar him.
When I have hurried him thus two or three years,
Though he sued *formâ pauperis*, in spite
Of all his thrift and care, he'll grow behind-hand.

Mar. The best I ever heard. I could adore you.

Sir G. Then, with the favour of my man of law,
I will pretend some title; want will force him
To put it to arbitrement; then, if he sell
For half the value, he shall have ready money,
And I possess the land.

Mar. Wellborn was apt to sell, and needed not
These fine arts to hook him in.

Sir G. Well thought on. [me
This varlet, Wellborn, lives too long, to upbraid
With my close cheat put upon him. Will not cold
Nor hunger kill him?

Mar. I know not what to think on't.
I have us'd all means; and yesterday I caus'd
His host, the tapster, to turn him out of doors;
And have been since with all your friends and
tenants,

And, on the forfeit of your favour, charg'd them,
Though a crust of mouldy bread would keep him
from starving,

Yet they should not relieve him. This is done, Sir.

Sir G. That was something, Marrall; but thou
must go farther,
And suddenly, Marrall.

Mar. Where and when you please, Sir.

Sir G. I would have thee seek him out; and, if
thou canst,

Persuade him that 'tis better steal than beg.
Then, if I prove he has but robb'd a hen-roost,
Not all the world shall save him from the gallows.
Do any thing to work him to despair,
And 'tis thy masterpiece.

Mar. I will do my best, Sir.

Sir G. I am now on my main work with the
Lord Lovell,

The gallant-minded, popular, Lord Lovell;
The minion of the people's love. I hear
He's come into the country; and my aims are
To insinuate myself into his knowledge,
And then invite him to my house.

Mar. I have you.

This points at my young mistress.

Sir G. She must part with

That humble title, and be honourable;

Right honourable, Marrall; my right honourable
daughter;

If all I have, or e'er shall get, will do it.

I will have her well attended: there are ladies
Of errant knights decay'd, and brought so low,
That for cast clothes and meat will gladly serve her;
And 'tis my glory, though I come from the city,
To have their issue, whom I have undone,
To kneel to mine as bond slaves.

Mar. 'Tis fit state, Sir.

Sir G. And, therefore, I'll not have a chamber
maid

That ties her shoes, or any meaner office,
But such whose fathers were right worshipful.
'Tis a rich man's pride! there having ever been
More than a feud, a strange antipathy,
Between us and true gentry.

Enter WELLBORN.

Mar. See! who 's here, Sir.

Sir G. Hence, monster, prodigy!

Well. Call me what you will, I am your ne-
phew, Sir.

Your sister's son.

Sir G. Avoid my sight; thy breath 's infectious,
rogue!

I shun thee as a leprosy, or the plague.

Come hither, Marrall, this is the time to work
him. [Apart to MARRALL, and exit.

Mar. I warrant you, Sir.

Well. By this light, I think he 's mad. [self,

Mar. Mad! had you took compassion on your-
You long since had been mad.

Well. You have ta'en a course,
Between you and my venerable uncle,
To make me so.

Mar. The more pale spirited you,
That would not be instructed. I swear deeply—

Well. By what?

Mar. By my religion.

Well. Thy religion!

The devil's creed. But what would you have done?

Mar. Before, like you, I had outliv'd my fortunes,
A withe had serv'd my turn to hang myself.

I am zealous in your cause: pray you hang your-
self;

And presently, as you love your credit.

Well. I thank you.

Mar. Will you stay till you die in a ditch?

Or, if you dare not do the feat yourself,
But that you'll put the state to charge and trouble,
Is there no purse to be cut? house to be broken?
Or market woman with eggs, that you may murder,
And so despatch the business?

Well. Here's variety,

I must confess; but I'll accept of none

Of all your gentle offers, I assure you.

Mar. If you like not hanging, drown yourself;
take some course

For your reputation.

Well. 'Twill not do, dear tempter,

With all the rhetoric the fiend hath taught you;

I am as far as thou art from despair.

Nay, I have confidence, which is more than hope,
To live, and suddenly, better than ever.

Mar. Ha, ha! these castles you build in the air.
Will not persuade me to give or lend

A token to you.

Well. I'll be more kind to thee;

Come, thou shalt dine with me.

Mar. With you?

Well. Nay, more, dine gratis.

Mar. Under what hedge, I pray you, or at
whose cost?

Are they padders, or gipsies, that are your consorts?

Well. Thou art incredulous; but thou shalt dine,

Not alone at her house, but with a gallant lady;

With me, and with a lady.

Mar. Lady! what lady?

With the lady of the lake, or queen of fairies?

For I know it must be an enchanted dinner.

Well. With the Lady Allworth, knave.

Mar. Now there's hope
Thy brain is crack'd.

Well. Mark thee with what respect
I am entertain'd.

Mar. With choice, no doubt, of dog-whips.
Why, dost thou ever hope to pass her porter?

Well. 'Tis not far off, go with me; trust thine
own eyes.

Mar. Troth, in my hope, or my assurance, rather,
To see thee curvet and mount, like a dog, in a
If ever thou presume to pass her threshold,
I will endure thy company.

Well. Come along, then. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Hall in LADY ALLWORTH'S
House.

Enter ALLWORTH, ORDER, AMBLE, and
FURNACE.

Allw. Your courtesies overwhelm me; I much
grieve [comfort;
To part from such true friends, and yet I find
My attendance on my honourable lord
Will speedily bring me back. [Knocking.]

Mar. [Within.] Dar'st thou venture farther?
Well. [Within.] Yes, yes, and knock again. [Knocks.]

Order. 'Tis he; disperse.

Amble. Perform it bravely. [Exit.]

Fur. I know my cue; ne'er doubt me. [Exit.]

Enter MARRALL and WELLBORN.

Order. Most welcome;
You were long since expected.

Well. Say so much
To my friend, I pray you. [Exit.]

Order. For your sake, I will, Sir. [Exit.]

Mar. For his sake! [Aside.]

Well. Mum; this is nothing. [Aside.]

Mar. More than ever
I would have believ'd, though I had found it in
my primer. [Aside.]

Allw. When I have given you reasons for my
late harshness,
You'll pardon and excuse me; for, believe me,
Though now I part abruptly, in my service
I will deserve it.

Mar. Service! with a vengeance! [Aside.]

Well. I am satisfied; farewell, Tom. [Exit.]

Allo. All joy stay with you. [Exit.]

Re-enter AMBLE.

Amble. You are happily encounter'd; I never
Presented one so welcome, as I know [yet
You will be to my lady.

Mar. This is some vision;
Or sure these men are mad to worship a dunghill;
It cannot be a truth. [Aside.]

Well. Be still a pagan,
An unbelieving infidel; be so, miscreant!
And meditate on blankets and on dog-whips. [To MARRALL.]

Re-enter FURNACE.

Fur. I am glad you are come; until I know
your pleasure,
I knew not how to serve up my lady's dinner.

Mar. His pleasure! is it possible? [Aside.]

Well. What 's thy will?

Fur. Marry, Sir, I have some grouse and tur-
key-chicken, [ask you
Some rails and quails; and my lady will'd me to

What kind of sauces best affect your palate,
That I may use my utmost skill to please it.

Mar. The devil's enter'd this cook; sauce for
his palate, [month,

That, on my knowledge, for almost this twelve-
Durst wish but cheese-parings and brown bread
on Sundays! [Aside.]

Well. That way I like them best.

Fur. It shall be done, Sir. [Exit.]

Well. What think you of the hedge we shall
dine under?

Shall we feed gratis? [To MARRALL.]

Mar. I know not what to think:

Pray you, make me not mad.

Re-enter ORDER.

Order. This place becomes you not;

Pray you walk, Sir, to the dining room.

Well. I am well here,

Till her ladyship quits her chamber.

Mar. Well here, say you?

'Tis a rare change! but yesterday you thought
Yourself well in a barn, wrapp'd up in pease-
straw. [Aside.]

Enter TABITHA and ABIGAIL.

Tab. O! you're much wish'd for, Sir.

Abi. Last night my lady [ing
Dream'd of you; and her first command this morn-
Was to have notice, Sir, of your arrival.

Order. Sir, my lady. [Exit.]

Enter LADY ALLWORTH.

Lady A. I come to meet you, and languish'd
till I saw you.

This first kiss for form: I allow a second
As a token of my friendship. [please

Well. I am wholly yours; yet, Madam, if you
To grace this gentleman with a salute. [Handing MARRALL.]

Mar. Salute me at his bidding! [Aside.]

Well. I shall receive it
As a most high favour.

Lady A. Sir, your friends are welcome to me.

Well. Run backward from a lady! and such a
lady?

Mar. To kiss her foot is to poor me a favour.
I am unworthy of— [Offers to kiss her foot.]

Lady A. Nay, pray you, rise;
And since you are so humble, I'll exalt you;

You shall dine with me to-day, at mine own table.

Mar. Your ladyship's table? I am not good

To sit at your steward's board. [enough

Lady A. You are too modest;

I will not be denied.

Re-enter ORDER.

Order. Dinner is ready for your ladyship.

Lady A. Your arm, Mr. Wellborn;

Nay, keep us company.

Mar. I never was so grac'd. [Exeunt.]

Re-enter FURNACE.

Order. So, we have play'd our parts, and are
come off well;

But if I know the mystery, why my lady

Consented to it, may I perish.

Fur. Would I had

The roasting of his heart that cheated him,

And forces the poor gentleman to these shifts.

By fire! (for cooks are Persians, and swear by it,)

Of all the griping and extorting tyrants

I ever heard or read of, I never met
A match to Sir Giles Overreach.

Order. What will you take
To tell him so, fellow Furnace?

Fur. Just as much
As my throat is worth, for that would be the
price on't.

To have a usurer that starves himself
To grow rich, is too common :
But this Sir Giles feeds high, keeps many servants,
Rich in his habit ; vast in his expenses ;
Yet he, to admiration, still increases
In wealth and lordships.

Order. He frights men out of their estates ;
And breaks through all law-nets, made to curb ill
men, [him.
As they were cobwebs. No man dare reprove
Such a spirit to dare, and power to do, were never
Ledged so unluckily.

Re-enter AMBLE.

Amble. Ha, ha ! I shall burst.

Order. Contain thyself, man.

Fur. Or make us partakers
Of your sudden mirth.

Amble. Ha, ha ! my lady has got
Such a guest at her table : this term-driver Mar-
Tis snip of an attorney. [rall,

Fur. What of him, man ?

Amble. The knave feeds so slovenly.

Fur. Is this all ?

Amble. My lady
Drank to him for fashion's sake, or to please Mr.
Wellborn.

As I live, he rises, and takes up a dish,
In which there were some remnants of a boil'd
And pledges her in white broth. [capon,

Fur. Nay, 'tis like
The rest of his tribe.

Amble. And when I brought him wine,
He leaves his chair, and, after a leg or two,
Most humbly thanks my worship ; my worship !

All. Ha, ha, ha !

Order. Risen already !

Fur. My lady frowns.

Amble. I shall be chid.

*Re-enter LADY ALLWORTH, WELLBORN, and
MARRALL.*

Lady A. You attended us well !

Let me have no more of this ; I observed your
jeering.

Sirrah, I'll have you know, whom I think worthy
To sit at my table, is not your companion.

[*To Amble.*

Order. Nay, she'll preserve what's due to her.

[*Aside.*

Lady A. You are master
Of your own will. I know so much of manners,
As not to inquire your purposes ; in a word,
To me you are ever welcome, as to a house
That is your own. [*To WELLBORN.*

Well. Mark that.

Mar. With reverence, Sir,
An it like your worship.

Well. Trouble yourself no further,
Dear Madam ; my heart's full of zeal and service,
However in my language I am sparing.
Come, Mr. Marrall.

Mar. I attend your worship.

[*Exeunt WELLBORN and MARRALL.*

Lady A. I see in your looks you are sorry, and
you know me

An easy mistress : be merry ! I have forgot all.
Order and Furnace, come with me ; I must give
Further directions. [you

Order. What you please.

Fur. We are ready.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—The Country.

Enter WELLBORN and MARRALL.

Well. I think I am in a good way.

Mar. Good, Sir ! the best way ;
The certain best way.

Well. These are casualties
That men are subject to.

Is't for your ease you keep your hat off ?

Mar. Ease, an it like your worship ?

I hope Jack Marrall shall not live so long,
To prove himself such an unmannerly beast,
Though it hail hazel-nuts, as to be cover'd
When your worship's present.

Well. Is not this a true rogue,
That, out of mere hope of a future coz'nage,
Can turn thus suddenly ? 'Tis rank already.

[*Aside.*

Mar. I know your worship's wise, and needs
no counsel ;

Yet if, in my desire to do you service,
I humbly offer my advice, (but still
Under correction,) I hope I shall not
Incur your high displeasure.

Well. No ; speak freely.

Mar. Then, in my judgment, Sir, my simple
judgment, [you

(Still with your worship's favour,) I could wish
A better habit, for this cannot be
But much distasteful to the noble lady
That loves you. I have twenty pounds here,
Which, out of my true love, I presently
Lay at your worship's feet ; 'twill serve to buy you
A riding suit.

Well. But where's the horse ?

Mar. My gelding
Is at your service ; nay, you shall ride me,
Before your worship shall be put to the trouble
To walk a-foot. Alas ! when you are lord
Of this lady's manor, (as I know you will be,)
You may, with the lease of glebe land, call'd
Knave's acre,

A place I would manure, requite your vassal.

Well. I thank thy love ; but must make no use
of it.

What's twenty pounds ?

Mar. 'Tis all that I can make, Sir.

Well. Dost thou think, though I want clothes,
I could not have 'em,

For one word to my lady ?

Mar. As I know not that—

Well. Come, I'll tell thee a secret, and so leave
thee.

I'll not give her the advantage, though she be
A gallant-minded lady, after we are married,
To hit me in the teeth, and say she was forc'd
To buy my wedding-clothes ;
No, I'll be furnish'd something like myself.
And so, farewell : for thy suit, touching Knave's
acre,

When it is mine, 'tis thine.

[*Exit.*

Mar. I thank your worship.

How was I cozen'd in the calculation
Of this man's fortune ! my master cozen'd too,
Whose pupil I am in the art of undoing men ;

For that is our profession. Well, well, Mr. Wellborn, [cheated;
You are of a sweet nature, and fit again to be
Which, if the fates please, when you are possess'd
Of the land and lady, you sans question shall be.
I'll presently think of the means.

[Walks about, musing.]

Enter SIR GILES OVERREACH.

Sir G. Sirrah, order my carriage round;
I'll walk to get me an appetite. 'Tis but a mile,
And exercise will keep me from being pursy.
Ha! Marrall! is he conjuring? Perhaps
The knave has wrought the prodigal to do
Some outrage on himself, and now he feels
Compunction in his conscience for't; no matter,
So it be done. Marrall! Marrall!

Mar. Sir.

Sir G. How succeed we
In our plot on Wellborn?

Mar. Never better, Sir.

Sir G. Has he hang'd or drown'd himself?

Mar. No, Sir, he lives;

Lives, once more to be made a prey to you,
And greater prey than ever.

Sir G. Art thou in thy wits?

If thou art, reveal this miracle, and briefly.

Mar. A lady, Sir, is fallen in love with him.

Sir G. With him? what lady?

Mar. The rich Lady Allworth.

Sir G. Thou dolt! how dar'st thou speak this?

Mar. I speak truth;

And I do so but once a year, unless

It be to you, Sir. I din'd with her ladyship,
I thank his worship.

Sir G. His worship!

Mar. As I live, Sir,

I din'd with him at the great lady's table, [him;
Simple as I stand here, and saw when she kiss'd
And would at his request, have kiss'd me too.

Sir G. Why, thou rascal,
To tell me of these impossibilities;
Dine at her table! and kiss him, or thee!
Impudent varlet! Have not I myself,
To whom great countesses' doors have oft flown

open,

Ten times attempted, since her husband's death,
In vain to see her, though I came—a suitor?
And yet your good solicitorship, and rogue Well-

born,

Were brought into her presence, feasted with her—
But that I know thee a dog that cannot blush,
This most incredible lie would call up one
On thy buttermilk cheeks.

Mar. Shall I not trust my eyes, Sir,
Or taste? I feel her good cheer in my belly.

Sir G. You shall feel me, if you give not over,
sirrah.

Recover your brains again, and be no more gull'd
With a beggar's plot, assisted by the aids
Of serving men and chambermaids, (for, beyond
these,

Thou never saw'st a woman,) or I'll quit you
From my employments.

Mar. Will you credit this yet?

On my confidence of their marriage, I offer'd
Wellborn

(I would give a crown now, I durst say his wor-
ship,) [Aside.

My nag, and twenty pounds.

Sir G. Did you so, idiot? [Strikes him down.
Was this the way to work him to despair,

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Or rather to cross me? [Strikes him again.

Mar. Will your worship kill me?

Sir G. No, no; but drive the lying spirit out
of you.

Mar. He's gone.

Sir G. I have done then. Now, forgetting
Your late imaginary feast and lady,
Know, my Lord Lovell dines with me to-morrow;
Be careful nought be wanting to receive him;
And bid my daughter's women trim her up;
Though they paint her, so she catch the lord, I'll
thank 'em.

There's a piece for my late blows.

Mar. I must yet suffer;

But there may be a time—

[Aside.

Sir G. Do you grumble?

Mar. No, Sir.

[Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Country.

Enter LORD LOVELL and ALLWORTH.

Lord L. Drive the carriage down the hill,
something in private
I must impart to Allworth.

Allw. O, my Lord!

What danger, though in ne'er so horrid shapes,
Nay, death itself, though I should run to meet it,
Can I, and with a thankful willingness, suffer;
But still the retribution will fall short
Of your bounties shower'd upon me.

Lord L. Nay, good youth,
Till what I purpose be put into act,
Do not o'erprize it; since you have trusted me
With your soul's nearest, nay her dearest, secret,
Rest confident, 'tis in a cabinet lock'd
Treachery shall never open. I have found you
More zealous in your love and service to me,
Than I have been in my rewards.

Allw. Still great ones,
Above my merit. You have been
More like a father to me than a master.
Pray you, pardon the comparison.

Lord L. I allow it,
And give you assurance I'm pleas'd in't.
My carriage and demeanour to your mistress,
Fair Margaret, shall truly witness for me,
I can command my passion.

Allw. 'Tis a conquest [Oh!
Few lords can boast of when they are tempted.—

Lord L. Why do you sigh? can you be doubt-
ful of me?

By that fair name I in the wars have purchas'd,
And all my actions hitherto untainted,
I will not be more true to mine own honour,
Than to thee, Allworth.

Allw. Were you to encounter with a single foe,
The victory were certain: but to stand
The charge of two such potent enemies,
At once assaulting you, as wealth and beauty,
And those two seconded with power, is odds
Too great for Hercules.

Lord L. Speak your doubts and fears,
Since you will nourish 'em, in plainer language,
That I may understand 'em.

Allw. What's your will,
Though I lend arms against myself, (provided
They may advantage you,) must be obey'd.

My much-lov'd lord, were Margaret only fair,
You might command your passion;
But, when you feel her touch, or hear her talk,

Hypolitus himself would leave Diana,
'To follow such a Venus.

Lord L. Love hath made you
Poetical, Allworth.

Allw. Grant all these beat off,
(Which, if it be in man to do, you'll do it.)
Mammon, in Sir Giles Overreach, steps in,
With heaps of ill-got gold, and so much land, as
would tire

A falcon's wings, in one day, to fly over.
I here release your trust;
'Tis happiness enough for me to serve you,
And sometimes, with chaste eyes, to look on her.

Lord L. Why, shall I swear?

Allw. Oh, by no means, my lord

Lord L. Suspend
Your judgment till the trial. How far is it
To Overreach's house?

Allw. At the most, some half-hour's riding;
You'll soon be there.

Lord L. And you the sooner freed
From your jealous fears.

Allw. Oh that I durst but hope it! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Hall in SIR GILES OVER-
REACH'S House.

Enter SIR GILES OVERREACH, JUSTICE GREEDY,
and MARRALL.

Sir G. Spare for no cost, let my dressers crack
with the weight
Of curious viands.

Just. Gr. Store indeed 's no sore, Sir.

Sir G. That proverb fits your stomach, Mr.
Greedy.

Just. Gr. It does indeed, Sir Giles;
I do not like to see a table ill spread,
Poor, meagre, just sprinkled o'er with salads,
Slic'd beef, giblets, and pig's petticoes.
But the substantials—Oh! Sir Giles, the sub-
The state of a fat turkey now, [stantials!
The decorum, the grandeur he marches in with.
O, I declare, I do much honour a chine of beef!
O, lord! I do reverence a loin of veal!

Sir G. And let no plate be seen but what's
pure gold;

Or such whose workmanship exceeds the matter
That it is made of; lay my choicest linen;
Perfume the room; and, when we wash, the water
With precious powders mix, to please my lord,
That he may, with envy, wish to bathe so ever.

Mar. 'Twill be very chargeable.

Sir G. Avaunt! you drudge.

Now all my labour'd ends are at the stake,
Is't a time to think of thrift? Call in my daugh-
ter. [*Exit MARRALL.*]

And, master justice, since you love choice dishes,
And plenty of 'em—

Just. Gr. As I do, indeed, Sir,
Almost as much as to give thanks for 'em—

Sir G. I do confer that province, with my power
Of absolute command to have abundance,
To your best care.

Just. Gr. I'll punctually discharge it,
And give the best directions.

[SIR GILES OVERREACH retires.]

Now am I,
In my own conceit, a monarch; at the least
Arch-president of the boil'd, the roast, the bak'd;
would not change my empire for the great Mo-
gul's.

will eat often, and give thanks,

When my belly's brac'd up like a drum, and
that's pure justice. [*Exit.*]

Sir G. It must be so. Should the foolish gir
prove modest,

She may spoil all: she had it not from me,
But from her mother: I was ever forward,
As she must be, and therefore I'll prepare her.

Re-enter MARRALL, with MARGARET.

Alone, Margaret, and let your women wait without.

Marg. Your pleasure, Sir? [*Exit MARRALL.*]

Sir G. Ha, this is a neat dressing!

These orient pearls and diamonds well plac'd too!
The gown affects me not; it should have been
Embroider'd o'er and o'er with flowers of gold;
But these rich jewels, and quaint fashion, help it.
How like you your new woman, the Lady Down-
fall'n?

Marg. Well, for a companion;
Not as a servant.

Sir G. Is she humble, Meg?

And careful too, her ladyship forgotten?

Marg. I pity her fortune.

Sir G. Pity her! trample on her.

I took her up in an old tatter'd gown
(E'en starv'd for want of food) to serve thee;
And if I understand she but repines

To do thee any duty, though ne'er so servile,
I'll pack her to her knight, where I have lodg'd
him, [ther.

Into the counter, and there let them howl toge-

Marg. You know your own ways; but, for me,
I blush

When I command her, that was once attended
With persons not inferior to myself
In birth.

Sir G. In birth! Why art thou not my daughter,
The bless'd child of my industry and wealth?
Part with these humble thoughts, and apt thyself
To the noble state I labour'd to advance thee;
Or, by my hopes to see thee honourable,
I will adopt a stranger to my heir,
And throw thee from my care; do not provoke me.

Marg. I will not, Sir; mould me which way
you please.

Re-enter JUSTICE GREEDY.

Just. Gr. Sir Giles, Sir Giles,—

Sir G. How, interrupted?

Just. Gr. 'Tis matter of importance.

The cook, Sir, is self-will'd, and will not learn
From my experience. There's a fawn brought
in, Sir,

And, for my life, I cannot make him roast it
With a Norfolk dumpling in the belly of it;

And, Sir, we wise men know, without the dump-
'Tis not worth threepence. [ling

Sir G. Would it were whole in thy belly,
To stuff it out; cook it any way; prythee, leave
me.

Just. Gr. Without order for the dumpling?

Sir G. Let it be dumpled
Which way thou wilt; or, tell him I will scald
In his own caldron. [him

Just. Gr. I had lost my stomach

Had I lost my dumpling. [*Exit.*]

Sir G. But to our business, Meg; you have
heard who dines here?

Marg. I have, Sir.

Sir G. 'Tis an honourable man;
A lord, Meg, and commands a regiment
Of soldiers; and, what's rare, is one himself;

A bold and understanding one : and to be
A lord and a good leader in one volume
Is granted unto few, but such as rise up
The kingdom's glory.

Re-enter JUSTICE GREEDY.

Just. Gr. I'll resign my office

If I be not better obey'd.

Sir G. Slight, art thou frantic ?

Just. Gr. Frantic ! 'twould make me frantic,
and stark mad.

Were I not a justice of peace and quorum too,
Which the rebellious cook cares not a straw for.
There are a dozen of woodcocks—

Sir G. Make thyself thirteen, the baker's dozen.

Just. Gr. For which he has found out
A new device for sauce, and will not dish 'em
With toast and butter.

Sir G. Cook, rogue ! obey him. [self
I have given the word, pray you now remove your-
To a collar of brawn, and trouble me no farther.

Just. Gr. I will, and meditate what to eat for
dinner. [Exit.

Sir G. And, as I said, Meg, when this gull
disturb'd us,

This honourable lord, this colonel,
I would have thy husband.

Marg. There's too much disparity
Between his quality and mine, to hope it.

Sir G. I more than hope, and doubt not to ef-
fect it.

Be thou no enemy to thyself : my wealth
Shall weigh his titles down, and make you equals.
Now for the means to assure him thine, observe me :
Remember he's a courtier and a soldier,
And not to be trifled with ; and therefore, when
He comes to woo you, see you do not coy it.
This mincing modesty, hath spoil'd many a match,
By a first refusal, in vain after hop'd for.

Marg. You'll have me, Sir, preserve the dis-
tance that
Confines a virgin ?

Sir G. Virgin me no virgins !
I will have you lose that name, or you lose me.
I will have you private ; start not, I say private :
If you are my true daughter, not a bastard,
Thou wilt venture alone with one man, though
he come

Like Jupiter to Semele, and come oft too ;
And therefore, when he kisses you, kiss close.

Marg. I have heard this is the wanton's fashion,
Which I must never learn. [Sir,

Sir G. Learn any thing,
And from any creature, to make thee great ;
E'en from the devil himself ;—stand not on form ;
Words are no substances.

Marg. Though you can dispense
With your honour, I must guard my own.
This is not the way to make me his wife.
My maiden honour, yielded up so soon,
Nay prostituted, cannot but assure him,
I, that am light to him, would not hold weight
When tempted by others ; so, in judgment,
When to his will I have given up my honour,
He must and will forsake me.

Sir G. How, forsake thee ?
Do I wear this sword for fashion ? or is this arm
Shrunk up, or wither'd ? Does there live a man
Of that large list I have encounter'd with,
Can truly say I e'er gave inch of ground,
Not purchas'd with his blood that did oppose me ?
Forsake thee ! he dares not.

Though all his captains, echoes to his will,
Stood armed by his side to justify the wrong,
And he himself in the head of his bold troop,
Spite of his lordship, I will make him render
A bloody and a strict account, and force him,
By marrying thee, to cure thy wounded honour.
I have said it.

Re-enter MARRALL.

Mar. Sir, the man of honour's come,
Newly alighted.

Sir G. In, without reply ;
And do as I command, or thou art lost.

[Exit MARGARET.
Is the loud music I gave order for,
Ready to receive him ?

Mar. 'Tis, Sir.

Sir G. Let 'em sound
A princely welcome. [Exit MARRALL.] Rough-
ness, awhile leave me ;
For fawning now, a stranger to my nature,
Must make way for me. [Loud music.

*Enter LORD LOVELL, ALLWORTH, and
MARRALL.*

Lord L. Sir, you meet your trouble.

Sir G. What you are pleased to style so, is an
honour

Above my worth and fortunes.

Allw. Strange ! so humble.

[Aside.

Re-enter JUSTICE GREEDY.

Sir G. A justice of the peace, my lord.

[Presents JUSTICE GREEDY to him.

Lord L. Your hand, good Sir.

Just. Gr. This is a lord ; and some think this
a favour ;
But I had rather have my hand in my dumping.
[Aside.

Sir G. Room for my lord.

Lord L. I miss, Sir, your fair daughter,
To crown my welcome.

Sir G. May it please my lord
To taste a glass of Greek wine first ; and suddenly
She shall attend, my lord.

Lord L. You'll be obey'd, Sir.

[Exeunt all but SIR GILES.

Sir G. 'Tis to my wish ; as soon as come, ask
for her !
Why, Meg ! Meg Overreach !

Re-enter MARGARET.

How ! tears in your eyes ?
Ha ! dry 'em quickly, or I'll dig 'em out.
Is this a time to whimper ? meet that greatness
That flies into thy bosom ; think what 'tis
For me to say my honourable daughter.
No more ; but be instructed, or expect—
He comes.

*Re-enter LORD LOVELL, JUSTICE GREEDY,
MARRALL, and ALLWORTH.*

A black-brow'd girl, my lord.

Lord L. As I live, a rare one ! [Kisses her
Allw. He's took already ! I am lost.

Sir G. That kiss
Came twanging off ; I like it ; quit the room.

[Exeunt ALLWORTH, MARRALL, and JUSTICE
GREEDY.

A little bashful, my good lord ; but you,
I hope, will teach her boldness.

Lord L. I am happy
In such a scholar ; but—

Sir G. I am past learning,
And therefore leave you to yourselves; remem-
ber— [*Apart to MARGARET, and exit.*]

Lord L. You see, fair lady, your father is so-
licitous

To have you change the barren name of virgin,
Into a hopeful wife.

Marg. His haste, my lord
Holds no power o'er my will.

Lord L. But o'er your duty—

Marg. Which, forc'd too much, may break.

Lord L. Bend rather, sweetest;

Think of your years.

Marg. Too few to match with yours.

Lord L. I can advance you.

Marg. To a hill of sorrow;

Where every hour I may expect to fall,
But never hope firm footing. You are noble;
I of low descent, however rich.

O! my good lord, I could say more, but that
I dare not trust these walls.

Lord L. Pray you, trust my ear, then.

[*Whispering.*]

Re-enter SIR GILES OVERREACH, listening.

Sir G. Close at it! whispering! this is excel-
lent!

And, by their postures, a consent on both parts.

Re-enter JUSTICE GREEDY.

Just. Gr. Sir Giles! Sir Giles!

Sir G. The great fiend stop that clapper!

[*Apart to JUSTICE GREEDY.*]

Just. Gr. It must ring out, Sir, when my belly
rings noon. [powder.]

The bak'd meats are run out, the roast turn'd

Sir G. Stop your insatiate jaws, or

I shall powder you.

[*Apart.*]

Just. Gr. Beat me to dust, I care not;

In such a cause as this, I'll die a martyr. [*Apart.*]

Sir G. Disturb my lord when he is in dis-
course? [*Apart.*]

Just. Gr. Is't a time to talk,

When we should be munching? [*Apart.*]

Sir G. Peace, villain, peace! shall we break a
Almost made up? Vanish, I say. [bargain]

[*Apart, thrusts him off.*]

Lord L. Lady, I understand you;

Rest most happy in your choice. Believe it,

I'll be a careful pilot, to direct

Your yet uncertain bark to a port of safety.

Marg. So shall your honour save two lives,
and bind us

Your slaves for ever.

Lord L. I am in the act rewarded,

Since it is good; howe'er, you must put on

An amorous carriage towards me, to delude your
subtle father,

'Till our purpose be brought to the wish'd end.

Marg. I am bound to that.

Lord L. Now break we off our conference.—
Where is Sir Giles? [Sir Giles!]

*Re-enter SIR GILES OVERREACH, JUSTICE
GREEDY, ALLWORTH, and MARRALL.*

Sir G. My noble lord; and how

Does your lordship find her?

Lord L. Apt, Sir Giles, and coming;

And I like her the better.

Sir G. So do I too.

[assault,

Lord L. Yet, should we take forts at the first
'Twere poor in the defendant. I must confirm her

With a love-letter or two, which I must have
Deliver'd by my page, and you give way to't.

Sir G. With all my soul.—A tow'r'dly gentle-
man!

Your hand, good Mr. Allworth; know, my house
Is ever open to you.

Allw. 'Twas shut till now.

[*Aside.*]

Sir G. Well done, well done, my honourable
daughter,

Thou'rt so already; know this gentle youth,
And cherish him, my honourable daughter.

Marg. I shall, with my best care.

[*Noise without*]

Sir G. What noise?

Just. Gr. More stops

Before we go to dinner! O my guts!

Enter LADY ALLWORTH and WELLBORN.

Lady A. If I find welcome,
You share in it; if not, I'll back again;
For I come arm'd for all
Can be objected.

Lord L. How! the Lady Allworth!

Sir G. And thus attended!

Mar. No, I am a dolt;

The spirit of lies hath enter'd me.

[*LORD LOVELL presents MARGARET to LADY
ALLWORTH.*]

Sir G. Peace, patch!

'Tis more than wonder, an astonishment
That does possess me wholly.

Lord L. Noble lady,

This is a favour, to prevent my visit,
The service of my life can never equal.

Lady A. My lord, I laid wait for you, and
much hop'd

You would have made my poor house your first inn
And, therefore, doubting that you might forget me,

Or too long dwell here having such ample cause,
In this unequal'd beauty, for your stay;

And fearing to trust any but myself

With the relation of my service to you;

I borrow'd so much from my long restraint,

And took the air in person to invite you.

Lord L. Your bounties are so great, they rob
me, Madam,

Of words to give you thanks.

Lady A. Good Sir Giles Overreach.

[*Bows to him.*]

How dost thou, Marrall?—Lik'd you my meat so
You'd dine no more with me? [ill,

[*To JUSTICE GREEDY.*]

Just. Gr. I will when you please,

An it like your ladyship.

Lady A. When you please, Mr. Greedy;

If meat can do it you shall be satisfied.

And now, my lord, pray take into your knowledge
This gentleman: howe'er his outside's coarse,

[*Presents WELLBORN.*]

His inward linings are as fine and fair

As any man's. Wonder not I speak at large;

And howsoe'er his humour carries him

To be thus account'd, or what taint soe'er

For his wild life have stuck upon his fame,

He may ere long with boldness rank himself

With some that have condemn'd him. *Sir Giles*

If I am welcome, bid him so. [Overreach,

Sir G. My nephew!

He hath been too long a stranger; 'faith, you have.

Pray let it be mended.

[*LORD L. confers with WELLBORN.*]

Mar. Why, Sir, what do you mean?

This is rogue Wellborn, monster, prodigy,
That should hang or drown himself; no man of
worship,

Much less your nephew. [Apart to SIR G.

Sir G. Well, sirrah, we shall reckon
For this hereafter. [Apart.

Mar. I'll not lose my jeer
Though I be beaten dead for it. [Aside.

Well. Let my silence plead
In my excuse, my lord, till better leisure
Offer itself to hear a full relation
Of my poor fortunes.

Lord L. I would hear and help 'em. [Bell rings.

Sir G. Your dinner waits you.

Lord L. Pray you lead; we follow.

Lady A. Nay, you are my guest.—Come, dear
Mr. Wellborn.

[Exeunt all but JUSTICE GREEDY.

Just. Gr. Dear Mr. Wellborn! so she said;
heaven! heaven! [nate

If my belly would give me leave, I could rumi-
All day on this: I have granted twenty warrants
To have him committed, from all prisons in the
shire, [born,

To Nottingham jail! and now, dear Mr. Well-
And my good nephew!—But I play the fool
To stand here prating, and forget my dinner.

Re-enter MARRALL.

Are they set, Marrall?

Mar. Long since. Pray you a word, Sir.

Just. Gr. No wording now.

Mar. In troth, I must; my master, [with you,
Knowing you are his good friend, makes bold
And does entreat you, more guests being come in
Than he expected, especially his nephew,
The table being too full, you would excuse him,
And sup with him on the cold meat.

Just. Gr. How! no dinner
After all my care?

Mar. 'Tis but a penance for
A meal; besides, you have broke your fast.

Just. Gr. That was [sion
But a bit to stay my stomach. A man in commis-
Give place to a tatterdemalion!

Mar. No big words, Sir;
Should his worship hear you—

Just. Gr. Lose my dumpling too,
And butter'd toasts and woodcocks?

Mar. Come, have patience;
If you will dispense a little with your justiceship,
And sit with the servants below, you'll have
Woodcock, and butter'd toast, too. [dumpling,

Just. Gr. This revives me:

I will gorge there sufficiently.

Mar. This is the way, Sir. [Exeunt.

Re-enter SIR GILES OVERREACH, as from dinner.

Sir G. She's caught! O woman! she neglects
my lord,

And all her compliments apply to Wellborn.
The garments of her widowhood laid by,
She now appears as glorious as the spring.
Her eyes fix'd on him; in the wine she drinks,
He being her pledge, she sends him burning kisses,
And sits on thorns till she be private with him.
She leaves my meat to feed upon his looks;
And, if in our discourse he be but nam'd,
From her a deep sigh follows.—But why
grieve I

At this? It makes for me; if she prove his,
All that is hers is mine, as I will work him.

Re-enter MARRALL.

Mar. Sir, the whole board is troubled at your
rising. [rall,

Sir G. No matter; I'll excuse it. Pr'ythee, Mar-
Watch an occasion to invite my nephew
To speak with me in private.

Mar. Who, the rogue
The lady scorn'd to look on?

Sir G. Sirrah! sirrah!

Re-enter LORD LOVELL, MARGARET, and ALL-
WORTH.

My good lord, excuse my manners.

Lord L. There needs none, Sir Giles;
I may ere long say father, when it pleases
My dearest mistress to give warrant to it.

Sir G. She shall seal to it, my lord, and make
me happy.

LADY ALLWORTH, &c. within.

Lady A. Nay, Mr. Wellborn. [out him.

Mar. See, see, she comes, and cannot be with-
Sir G. Grosser and grosser.

Re-enter WELLBORN and LADY ALLWORTH.

Lady A. Provide my coach;
I'll instantly away. My thanks, Sir Giles,
For my entertainment.

Sir G. 'Tis your nobleness
To think it such.

Lady A. I must do you a further wrong,
In taking away your honourable guest.

Lord L. I wait on you, Madam. Farewell,
good Sir Giles.

Lady A. Come, Mr. Wellborn,
I must not leave you behind, in sooth, I must not.

Sir G. Rob me not, Madam, of all joys at once.
Let my nephew stay behind: he shall have my
coach,

And, after some small conference between us,
Soon overtake your ladyship.

Lady A. Stay not so long, Sir.

Lord L. This parting kiss. You shall every
day hear from me,

By my faithful page. [To MARGARET.

Allw. 'Tis a service I am proud of. [Exeunt.

Sir G. Daughter, to your chamber.

[Exit MARGARET.

You may wonder, nephew,
After so long an enmity between us,
I should desire your friendship.

Well. So I do, Sir;

'Tis strange to me.

Sir G. But I'll make it no wonder;
And, what is more, unfold my nature to you.
We worldly men, when we see friends and kins-
men,

Past hope, sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
To lift 'em up, but rather set our feet

Upon their heads, to press 'em to the bottom;
As I must yield, with you I practis'd it:

But now I see you in a way to rise,
I can and will assist you. This rich lady
(And I am glad of't) is enamour'd of you.

Well. No such thing:

Compassion rather, Sir.

Sir G. Well, in a word,
Because your stay is short, I'll have you seen
No more in this base shape; nor shall she say
She married you like a beggar, or in debt.

Well. He'll run into the noose, and save my labour. [*Aside.*]

Sir G. You have a trunk of rich clothes, not far hence,

In pawn: I will redeem 'em; and, that no clamour May taint your credit for your debts, You shall have a thousand pounds to cut 'em off And go a freeman to the wealthy lady. [*Else—*

Well. This done, Sir, out of love, and no ends

Str G. As it is, nephew.

Well. Binds me still your servant.

Sir G. No compliments; you are staid for: ere you've supp'd, You shall hear from me. My coach, knaves, for my nephew:

To-morrow I will visit you.

Well. Here 's an uncle

In a man's extremes! how much they do belie you That say you are hard-hearted!

Sir G. My deeds, nephew, Shall speak my love; what men report, I weigh not. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in LADY ALLWORTH'S House.

LORD LOVELL and ALLWORTH discovered.

Lord L. 'Tis well, I now discharge you From further service. Mind your own affairs. I hope they will prove successful.

Allw. What is bless'd

With your good wish, my lord, cannot but prosper. Let after-times report, and to your honour, How much I stand engag'd; for I want language To speak my debt: yet, if a tear or two Of joy, for your much goodness, can supply My tongue's defects, I could —

Lord L. Nay do not melt;

This ceremonial of thanks to me's superfluous.

Sir G. [*Within.*] Is my lord stirring?

Lord L. 'Tis he! Oh, here's your letter! Let him in.

Enter SIR GILES OVERREACH, JUSTICE GREEDY, and MARALL.

Sir G. A good day to my lord.

Lord L. You are an early riser, Sir Giles!

Sir G. And reason, to attend your lordship!

Lord L. And you too, Mr. Greedy, up so soon?

Just. Gr. In troth, my lord, after the sun is up I cannot sleep; for I have a foolish stomach That croaks for breakfast. With your lordship's I have a serious question to demand [*favour,* Of my worthy friend, Sir Giles.

Lord L. Pray you, use your pleasure.

Just. Gr. How far, Sir Giles, and pray you answer me

Upon your credit, hold you it to be [*worth's?* From your manor-house to this of my Lady All—
Sir G. Why, some four miles.

Just. Gr. How! four miles, good Sir Giles?

Upon your reputation, think better;

For four miles riding

Could not have rais'd so huge an appetite

As I feel gnawing on me.

Mar. Whether you ride

Or go a-foot, you are that way still provided,

An it please your worship.

Sir G. How now, sirrah! prating

Before my lord? No deference? Go to my nephew See all his debts discharg'd, and help his worship To fit on his rich suit.

Mar. I may fit you too. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Lord L. I have writ this morning

A few lines to my mistress, your fair daughter.

Sir G. 'Twill fire her, for she's wholly your's already.

[*you* Sweet Mr. Allworth, take my ring; 'twill carry To her presence, I dare warrant you; and there plead

For my good lord, if you shall find occasion.

That done, pray ride to Nottingham; get a license,

Still by this token. I'll have it despatch'd,

And suddenly, my lord: that I may say

My honourable, nay, right honourable daughter.

Just. Gr. Take my advice, young gentleman; get your breakfast,

'Tis unwholesome to ride fasting. I'll eat with you; And that abundantly.

Sir G. Some fury's in that gut:

Hungry again? Did you not devour, this morning, A shield of brawn, and a barrel of Colchester oysters?

Just. Gr. Why that was, Sir, only to scour my A kind of preparative. [*stomach,*

Lord L. Haste your return.

Allw. I will not fail, my lord.

Just. Gr. Nor I, to line My Christmas coffer.

[*Exeunt* JUSTICE GREEDY and ALLWORTH.

Sir G. To my wish, we're private.

I come not to make offer with my daughter

A certain portion; that were poor and trivial:

In one word, I pronounce all that is mine,

In lands or leases, ready coin or goods, [*have*

With her, my lord, comes to you; nor shall you One motive to induce you to believe

I live too long; since every year I'll add Something unto the heap, which shall be yours too.

Lord L. You are a right kind father.

Sir G. You shall have reason

To think me such. How do you like this seat Of Lady Allworth?

It is well wooded, and well water'd; the acres Fertile and rich; would it not serve for change To entertain your friends in a summer's progress? What thinks my noble lord?

Lord L. 'Tis a wholesome air, And a well-built pile; and she that's mistress of it Worthy the large revenue.

Sir G. She the mistress?

It may be so, for a time: but let my lord Say only that he but like it, and would have it, I say, ere long, 'tis his.

Lord L. Impossible. [*me,*

Sir G. You do conclude too fast, not knowing Nor the engines that I work by. 'Tis not alone The Lady Allworth's lands (for, those-once Well-born's,

As, by her dotation on him, I know they will be)

Shall soon be mine; but point out any man's

In all the shire, and say they lie convenient

And useful for your lordship, and once more I say aloud, they are yours.

Lord L. I dare not own

What's by her unjust and cruel means extorted:

My fame and credit are more dear to me,

Than to expose 'em to be censur'd by

The public voice.

Sir G. You run, my lord, no hazard;

Your reputation shall still stand as fair

In all good men's opinions as now;
 For though I do condemn report myself,
 As a mere sound, I still will be so tender
 Of what concerns you in all points of honour,
 That the white integrity of your fame
 Shall ne'er be sullied with one taint or spot.
 All my ambition is to have my daughter
 Right honourable; which my lord can make her;
 And might I live to dance upon my knee
 A young Lord Lovell, born by her unto you,
 I write *nil ultra* to my proudest hopes.
 As for possessions and annual rents,
 Equivalent to maintain you in the port
 Your noble birth and present state require,
 I do remove that burden from your shoulders,
 And take it on mine own; for, though I ruin
 The country to supply your riotous waste, [you.
 The scourge of prodigals, want, shall never find

Lord L. Are you not mov'd with the imprecations

And curses of whole families, made wretched
 By these practices?

Sir G. Yes, as rocks are,
 When foamy billows split themselves against
 Their flinty ribs; or, as the moon is mov'd,
 When wolves, with hunger pin'd, howl at her
 brightness.

Nay, when my ears are pierc'd with widows' cries,
 And undone orphans wash with tears my
 threshold,

I only think what 'tis to have my daughter
 Right honourable; and 'tis a powerful charm,
 Makes me insensible of remorse or pity
 Or the least sting of conscience.

Lord L. I admire
 The toughness of your nature.

Sir G. 'Tis for you,
 My lord, and for my daughter, I am marble:
 My haste commands me hence: in one word,
 Is it a match, my lord? [therefore,

Lord L. I hope that is past doubt, now.

Sir G. Lord rest secure; not the hate of all
 mankind here,

Nor fear of what can fall on me hereafter,
 Shall make me study aught but your advancement
 One story higher. An earl! if gold can do it.
 Dispute not my religion, nor my faith,
 Though I am borne thus headlong by my will;
 You may make choice of what belief you please,
 To me they are equal; so, my lord, goodmorrow.

[*Exit.*

Lord L. He's gone; I wonder how the earth
 can bear

Such a monster! I, that have liv'd a soldier,
 And stood the enemy's violent charge undaunted,
 To hear this horrid beast, I'm bath'd all over
 In a cold sweat; yet, like a mountain, he
 Is no more shaken, than Olympus is,
 When angry Boreas loads his lofty head
 With sudden drifts of snow.

Enter LADY ALLWORTH.

Lady A. Save you, my lord
 Disturb I not your privacy?

Lord L. No, good Madam

For your own sake I am glad you came no sooner,
 Since this bold, bad man, Sir Giles Overreach,
 Made such a plain discovery of himself,
 And read this morning such devilish matins,
 That I should think it sin, next to his,
 But to repeat it.

Lady A. I never press'd, my lord,

On others' privacies; yet, against my will,
 Walking, for health's sake, in the gallery, I was
 made

(So loud and vehement he was) partaker
 Of his tempting offers. But,
 My good lord, if I may use my freedom,
 As to an honour'd friend—

Lord L. You lessen else
 Your favour to me.

Lady A. I dare then say thus:

However common men
 Make sordid wealth the object and sole end
 Of their industrious aims, 'twill not agree
 With those of noble blood, of fame and honour.

Lord L. Madam, 'tis confessed;

But what infer you from it?

Lady A. This, my lord: I allow

The heir of Sir Giles Overreach, Margaret,
 A maid well qualified, and the richest match
 Our northern part can boast of; yet she cannot,
 With all that she brings with her, stop their
 mouths,

That never will forget who was her father;—
 You may conceive the rest.

Lord L. I do, sweet Madam;

And long since have consider'd it.

And 'tis my resolution ne'er to wed

With the rich Margaret, Overreach's daughter.

Lady A. I am glad to hear this— [Aside.

Why then, my lord, pretend you marriage to her?

Dissimulation but ties false knots

On that straight line, by which you hitherto

Have measur'd all your actions.

Lord L. I make answer,

And aptly, with a question. Wherefore have you,
 That since your husband's death have liv'd a strict
 And chaste nun's life, on the sudden given your-
 self [dam,

To visits and entertainments? Think you, Ma-
 'Tis not grown public conference? or the favours

Which you too prodigally have thrown on Well-
 Incur not censure? [born,

Lady A. I am innocent here, and, on my life, I
 My ends are good. [swear

Lord L. On my soul, so are mine

To Margaret; but leave both to the event:

And since this friendly privacy doth serve

But as an offer'd means unto ourselves

To search each other further, you have shown

Your care of me, I my respect to you;

Deny me not, I dare not yet say more,

An afternoon's discourse.

[suit,

Lady A. Affected modesty might deny you

But such your honour, I accept it, lord.

My tongue unworthy can't belie my heart.

I shall attend your lordship.

Lord L. My heart thanks you. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—A Landscape before TAPWELL'S
 House.

Enter TAPWELL and FROTH.

Tap. Undone, undone! this was your counsel,
 Froth. [rall

Froth. Mine! I defy thee: did not Master Mar-
 (He has marr'd all, I am sure) strictly command us,
 On pain of Sir Giles Overreach's displeasure,
 To turn the gentleman out of doors?

Tap. 'Tis true;

But now he's his uncle's darling, and nas got

Master Justice Greedy (since he fill'd his belly,)

At his commandment, to do any thing,

Wo, wo, to us!

Froth. He may prove merciful.

Tap. Troth, we do not deserve it at his hands.

Froth. Then he knew all the passages of our house,

As the receiving of stolen goods.

When he was rogue Wellborn, no man would believe him;

And then his information could not hurt us:

But now he is right worshipful again,

Who dares but doubt his testimony?

Tap. Undone! undone! methinks

I see thee, Froth, already in a cart,

And my hand hissing, (if I 'scape the halter,)

With the letter R printed upon it.

Froth. Would that were the worst!

That were but nine days' wonder: as for credit,

We have none to lose; but we shall lose the money

He owes us, and his custom; there's the plague on't.

Tap. He has summon'd all his creditors by the

And they swarm about him like so many soldiers

On the pay-day; and has found out such a new

To pay his old debts, as, 'tis very likely, [way

He shall be chronicled for it.

Froth. But you are sure his worship

Comes this way to my lady's?

[*Cry of brave WELLBORN!*

Tap. Hark! I hear him.

Froth. Be ready with your petition and pre-
To his good grace. [sent it

[*Drums within, cry of brave WELLBORN.*

Enter WELLBORN, in a rich habit, GREEDY, MARRALL, CREDITORS, &c. TAPWELL, kneeling, delivers in his bill.

Well. How 's this! petition'd too?

But note what miracles the payment of
A little trash, and a rich suit of clothes,
Can work upon these rascals. I shall be,
I think, prince Wellborn.

Mar. When your worship's married,
You may be. [*Aside.*] I know what I hope to
see you.

Well. Then look thou for advancement.

Mar. To be known
Your worship's bailiff, is the mark I shoot at.

Well. And thou shalt hit it.

Mar. Pray you, Sir, despatch
These needy followers, and for my admittance

[*TAPWELL and FROTH flatter and bribe
JUSTICE GREEDY.*

(Provided you'll defend me from Sir Giles,
Whose service I am weary of,) I'll say something
You shall give thanks for.

Well. Fear him not.

Just. Gr. Who, Tapwell? I do remember thy
wife brought me,

Last new year's tide, a couple of fat turkeys.

Tap. And shall do every Christmas, let your
But stand my friend now. [worship

Just. Gr. How! with Mr. Wellborn?

I can do any thing with him, on such terms—
See you this honest couple? they are good souls
As ever drew out spigot; have they not
A pair of honest faces?

Well. I o'erheard you,

And the bribe he promis'd; you are cozen'd in
'em;

For, of all the scum that grew rich by my riots,

This for a most unthankful knave, and this

For a base woman, have the worst deserv'd;

And therefore speak not for them. By your place,

You are rather to do me justice; lend me your ear,
Forget his turkeys, and call in his license.

And every season I will send you venison

To feast a mayor and corporation.

Just. Gr. I am changed on the sudden

In my opinion—Mum!

I fry like a burn'd marrowbone. [*Aside.*] Come
nearer, rascal;

And now I view him better, did you e'er see

One look so like an arch knave? his very counte-
nance, [him,

Should an understanding judge but look upon
Would hang him though he were innocent.

Tap. Froth. Worshipful Sir!

Just. Gr. No; though the great Turk came
instead of turkeys,

To beg my favour, I am inexorable.

Thou hast an ill name; I here do damn thy license,

Forbidding thee ever to tap or draw;

For instantly will I in mine own person,

Command the constable to pull down thy sign.

Froth. No mercy!

Just. Gr. Vanish!

If I show any, may my promis'd venison choke me.

Tap. Unthankful knaves are ever so rewarded.

[*Exeunt TAPWELL and FROTH.*

Well. Speak; what are you?

1st Cred. A decayed vintner, Sir,

That might have thriv'd, but that your worship
broke me

With trusting you with muscadine and eggs,

And five-pound suppers, with your after-drinkings,

When you lodg'd upon the Bankside.

Well. I remember.

1st Cred. I have not been hasty, nor e'er laid
And therefore, Sir— [to arrest you;

Well. Thou art an honest fellow;

I'll set thee up again; see his bill paid.

[*To MARRALL*

What are you?

2d Cred. A tailor once, but now mere botcher.

I gave you credit for a new suit of clothes,

Which was all my stock; but, you failing in pay-
ment,

I was remov'd from the shop-board, and confin'd
Under a stall.

Well. See him paid; and botch no more.

2d Cred. I ask no interest, Sir.

Well. Such tailors need not.

If their bills are paid in one and twenty years,

They are seldom losers—See these men discharg'd;

And, since old debts are clear'd by a new way,

A little bounty will not misbecome me;

There's something for you all,

[*Throws them a purse.*

And I am able to spare it.

All the Cred. Brave Mr. Wellborn!

[*Exeunt CREDITORS*

Well. Pray you, on before;

I'll attend you at dinner.

Just. Gr. For heaven's sake, don't stay long;

It is almost ready.

[*Exeunt all but WELLBORN and MARRALL.*

Well. Now, Mr. Marrall, what's the weighty

You promis'd to impart? [secret

Mar. Sir, time nor place

Allow me to relate each circumstance:

This only in a word; I know Sir Giles

Will come upon you for security

For his thousand pounds; which you must not

consent to.

As he grows in heat, (as I am sure he will,)

Be you but rough, and say he's in your debt
Ten times the sum, upon sale of your land :
I had a hand in't (I speak it to my shame)
When you were cozen'd of it.

Well. That's forgiven.

Marg. I shall deserve it then ; urge him to pro-
The deed in which you pass'd it over to him,
Which I know he'll have ready to deliver
To the Lord Lovell. I'll instruct you further,
As I wait on your worship ; if I play not my part
To your full content, and your uncle's much vex-
Hang up Jack Marrall.

Well. I rely upon thee.

[duce

[ation,
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Room in SIR GILES OVER-
REACH'S House.

ALLWORTH and MARGARET (*with a Letter in
her hand*) enter.

Allw. Whether to yield the first praise to my
lord's [ness,
Unequal'd temperance, or your constant sweet-
I yet rest doubtful.

Marg. Give it to Lord Lovell ;
For what in him was bounty, in me is duty.
I make but payment of a debt, to which
My vows, in that high office register'd,
Are faithful witnesses.

Allw. 'Tis true, my dearest ;
Yet when I call to mind how many fair ones
Make wilful shipwreck of their faiths and oaths
To God and man, to fill the arms of greatness ;
And you, with matchless virtue, thus to hold out
Against the stern authority of a father,
And spurn at honour when it comes to court you ;
I am so tender of your good, that I can hardly
Wish myself that right you are pleas'd to do me.

Marg. To me what's title, when content is
Or wealth, when the heart pines, [wanting ?
In being disposposs'd of what it longs for ?
Or the smooth brow
Of a pleas'd sire, that slaves me to his will ?
And, so his vain ambition may be feasted
By my obedience, and he see me great,
Leaves to my soul nor faculties nor power
To make her own election.

Allw. But the dangers
That follow the repulse.

Marg. To me they are nothing :
Let Allworth love, I cannot be unhappy.
Suppose the worst, that in his rage he kill me,
A tear or two by you dropp'd on my hearse,
In sorrow for my fate, will call back life
So far as but to say, that I die yours ;
I then shall rest in peace.

Allw. Heaven avert
Such trials of your true affection to me !
Nor will it unto you, that are all mercy,
Show so much rigour. But since we must run
Such desperate hazards, let us do our best
To steer between 'em.

Marg. Lord Lovell is your friend ;
And, though but a young actor, second me
In doing to the life what he has plotted.

Enter SIR GILES OVERREACH.

The end may yet prove happy. Now, my All-
worth. [Apart to ALLWORTH.

Allw. To your letter, and put on a seeming
anger. [Apart.

Marg. I'll pay my lord all debts due to his title ;
And when with terms not taking from his honour

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He does solicit me, I shall gladly hear him ;
But in this peremptory, nay, commanding way,
To fix a time and place without my knowledge ;
A priest, to tie the knot can ne'er be undone
'Till death unloose it ; is a confidence
In his lordship that will deceive him.

Allw. I hope better, good lady.

Marg. Hope, Sir, what you please ; for me,
I must take a safe and secure course. I have
A father, and without his full consent,
Though all the lords i' the land kneel'd for my
I can grant nothing.

[favour,

Sir G. I like this obedience.
But whatsoever my lord writes must and shall be
Accepted and embrac'd. [*Aside.*—Sweet Mr.

Allworth,
You show yourself a true and faithful servant
To your good lord ; he has a jewel of you.
How ! frowning, Meg ? are these looks to receive
A messenger from my lord ? What's this ? give
me it. [scriptions.

Marg. A piece of arrogant paper, like th' in-

SIR GILES reads the letter.

*Fair Mistress, from your servant learn, all joys
That we can hope for, if deferr'd, prove toys ;
Therefore this instant, and in private, meet
A husband, that will gladly at your feet
Lay down his honours, tend'ring them to you
With all content, the church being paid her due.*

Is this the arrogant piece of paper ? fool !
Will you still be one ? In the name of madness,
what

Could his good honour write more to content you ?
Is there aught else to be wish'd after these two
That are already offer'd ? Marriage first,
And lawful pleasure after : what would you more ?

Marg. Why, Sir, I would be married like your
daughter,

Not hurried away i' the night, I know not whither,
Without all ceremony : no friends invited,
To honour the solemnity.

Allw. An't please your honour,
(For so before to-morrow I must style you,)
My lord desires this privacy in respect
His honourable kinsmen are far off,
And his desires to have it done brook not
So long delay as to expect their coming ;
And yet he stands resolv'd, with all due pomp,
To have his marriage at court celebrated,
When he has brought your honour up to London.

Sir G. He tells you true, 'tis the fashion, on my
knowledge ;

Yet the good lord, to please your peevishness,
Must put it off, forsooth.

Marg. I could be contented
Were you but by me to do a father's part,
And give me in the church.

Sir G. So my lord have you,
What do I care who gives you ? since my lord
Does purpose to be private, I'll not cross him.
I know not, Mr. Allworth, how my lord
May be provided, and therefore there's a purse
Of gold ; 'twill serve this night's expense ; to-mor-

row
I'll furnish him with any sums. In the meantime,
Use my ring to my chaplain ; [*Offers it.*] he is
benefic'd [do ;

At my manor of Gotham, and call'd parson Well.
'Tis no matter for a license, I'll bear him out in't.

Marg. With your favour, Sir, what warrant is
your ring ?

He may suppose I got that twenty ways,
Without your knowledge? and then to be refus'd,
Were such a stain upon me: if you please, Sir,
Your presence would do better.

Sir G. Still perverse?

I say again, I will not cross my lord;
Yet I'll prevent you too—Paper and ink there.

Allw. Sir, it's ready here.

Sir G. I thank you; I can write then to my
chaplain. [*Writes.*]

Allw. Sir Giles, you may, if you please, leave
out the name of my lord,
In respect he would be private, and only write,
Marry her to this gentleman.

Sir G. Well advis'd;

'Tis done; away—[*Gives ALLWORTH the paper.*]
my blessing, girl? thou hast it.

[*MARGARET kneels.*]

Nay, no reply—Begone, good Mr. Allworth,
This shall be the best night's work you ever made.

Allw. I hope so, Sir.

[*Exit ALLWORTH and MARGARET.*]

Sir G. Now all's cock-sure.

Methinks, I hear already knights and ladies
Say, Sir Giles Overreach, how is it with
Your honourable daughter?

My ends, my ends, are compass'd!—Then for
Wellborn [*dow—*]

And the lands? were he once married to the wi-
I have him here—I can scarce contain myself,
I am so full of joy; nay, joy all over. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room in LADY ALLWORTH'S House.

Enter LORD LOVELL and LADY ALLWORTH.

Lady A. By this, you know how strong the
motives were

That did, my lord, induce me to dispense
A little with my gravity, to advance
The plots and projects of the down-trod Wellborn.

Lord L. What you intended, Madam,
For the poor gentleman, hath found good success;
For, as I understand, his debts are paid,
And he once more furnish'd for fair employment.
But all the arts that I have us'd to raise
The fortunes of your joy and mine, young All-
worth,

Stand yet in supposition, though I hope well.
For the young lovers are in wit more pregnant
Than their years can promise; and for their desires,
On my knowledge, they are equal.

Lady A. Though my wishes
Are with yours, my lord, yet give me leave to fear
The building, though well-grounded. To deceive
Sir Giles (that's both a lion and a fox
In his proceedings) were a work beyond
The strongest undertakers; not the trial
Of two weak innocents.

Lord L. Despair not, Madam;
Hard things are compass'd oft by easy means.
The cunning statesman, that believes he fathoms
The counsels of all kingdoms on the earth,
Is by simplicity oft overreach'd.

Lady A. May he be so.

The young ones have my warmest wishes.

Lord L. O, gentle lady, prove as kind to me;
Now grant my honest suit.

And if you may be won to make me happy,
But join your hand to mine, and that shall be
A solemn contract.

Lady A. I were blind to my own good
Should I refuse it; yet, my lord, receive me
As such a one, the study of whose whole life
Shall know no other object but to please you.

Lord L. If I return not, with all tenderness,
Equal respect to you, may I die wretched!

Lady A. There needs no protestation, my lord,
To her that cannot doubt.

Enter WELLBORN.

You're welcome, Sir:

Now you look like yourself.

Well. And will continue

Such in my free acknowledgment, that I am
Your creature, Madam, and will never hold
My life mine own, when you please to demand it.

Lord L. It is a thankfulness that well becomes
you.

Lady A. For me, I am happy
That my endeavours prosper'd. Saw you of late
Sir Giles, your uncle?

Well. I heard of him, Madam,
By his minister, Marrall: he's grown into strange
passions

About his daughter. This last night he look'd for
Your lordship at his house: but, missing you,
And Margaret not appearing, his wise head
Is much perplex'd and troubled.

Lord L. I hope my project took.

Lady A. I strongly hope it.

Sir G. [*Without.*] Ha! find her, booby! thou
huge lump of nothing!

I'll bore thine eyes out else.

Well. May it please your lordship,
For some ends of mine own, but to withdraw
A little out of sight, though not of hearing,
You may perhaps have sport.

Lord L. You shall direct me. [*Steps aside.*]

SIR GILES OVERREACH, with distracted looks,
enters, driving in MARRALL.

Sir G. Idiot! booby!

Mar. Sir, for what cause

Do you use me thus?

Sir G. Cause, slave? why I am angry,
And thou a subject only fit for beating;
And so to cool my choler. Look to the writing;
Let but the seal be broke upon the box
That has slept in my cabinet these three years,
I'll rack thy soul for't.

Mar. I may yet cry quittance,
Though now I suffer, and dare not resist.

[*Aside.*]
Sir G. Lady, by your leave, did you see my
daughter, Lady? [*house?*]

And the lord, her husband? Are they in your
If they are, discover, that I may bid 'em joy;
And, as an entrance to her place of honour,
See your ladyship on her left hand, and make
court'sies

When she nods on you; which you must receive
As a special favour.

Lady A. When I know, Sir Giles,
Her state requires such ceremony, I shall pay it;
But in the mean time

I give you to understand, I neither know
Nor care where her honour is.

Sir G. When you once see her
Supported, and led by the lord her husband,
You'll be taught better.—Nephew!

Well. Well?

Sir G. No more?

Well. 'Tis all I owe you.

Sir G. Have your redeem'd rags
Made you thus insolent?

Well. Insolent to you? [In scorn.

Why, what are you, Sir, unless in years more
than myself?

Sir G. His fortune swells him;

'Tis rank; he's married. [Aside.

Lady A. This is excellent. [Aside.

Sir G. Sir, in calm language (though I seldom
use it)

I am familiar with the cause that makes you
Bear up thus bravely; there's a certain buzz,
Of a stol'n marriage; do you hear? of a stol'n
marriage; [zen'd.
In which, 'tis said, there's somebody hath been co-
I name no parties.

[LADY ALLWORTH turns away.

Well. Well, Sir, and what follows?

Sir G. Marry, this: since you are peremptory,
remember,

Upon mere hope of your great match, I lent you
A thousand pounds; put me in good security,
And suddenly, by mortgage or by statute,
Of some of your new possessions, or I'll have you
Dragg'd in your lavender robes to the gaol: you
know me,

And therefore do not trifle.

Well. Can you be

So cruel to your nephew, "now he's in
The way to rise?" Was this the courtesy
You did me "in pure love and no ends else?"

Sir G. End me no ends; engage the whole
estate,

And force your spouse to sign it; you shall have
Three or four thousand more to roar and swagger,
And revel in taverns.

Well. And beg after.

Mean you not so?

Sir G. My thoughts are mine, and free.

Shall I have security?

Well. No indeed, you shall not;
Nor bond, nor bill, nor bare acknowledgment.
Your great looks fright not me.

Sir G. But my deeds shall—

[They both draw.

Lady A. Help! murder! murder!

AMBLE, ORDER, and FURNACE, enter, with
drawn swords.

Sir G. Out-braved!

Well. Let him come on,

With all his wrongs and injuries about him,
Arm'd with his cut-throat practices to guard him;
The right that I bring with me will defend me,
And punish his extortion.

Sir G. That I had thee
But single in the field!

Lady A. You may; but make not
My house your quarrelling scene.

Sir G. Wer't in a church,
By heaven and hell I'll do't!

Mar. Now put him to
The showing of the deed. [To WELLBORN.

Well. This rage is vain, Sir;

For fighting, fear not, you shall have your hands
Upon the least incitement; and whereas [full
You charge me with a debt of a thousand pounds,
If there be law, (howe'er you have no conscience)
Either restore my land, or I'll recover
A debt that's truly due to me from you,
In value ten times more than what you challenge.

Sir G. I in thy debt? oh, impudence! did I net
purchase

The land left by thy father? that rich land
That had continued in Wellborn's name
Twenty descents; which, like a riotous fool,
Thou didst make sale of?

Two SERVANTS enter with a box.

O, you're come at last. Is not here enclos'd
The deed that does confirm it mine?

Mar. Now, now!

[Aside.

Well. I do acknowledge none; I ne'er pass'd
Such land: I grant, for a year or two, [o'er
You had it in trust; which, if you do discharge,
Surrendering the possession, you shall ease
Yourself and me of chargeable suits in law;
Which, if you prove not honest (as I doubt it)
Must of necessity follow.

Lady A. In my judgment,
He does advise you well.

Sir G. Good, good! conspire
With your new husband, lady; second him
In his dishonest practices; but, when
This manor is extended to my use,
You'll speak in humbler key, and sue for favour.

Lady A. Never; do not hope it.

Well. Let despair first seize me.

Sir G. Yet, to shut up thy mouth, and make
thee give

Thyself the lie, the loud lie, I draw out
The precious evidence; if thou canst, forswear
Thy hand and seal, and make a forfeit of

[Opens the box, and takes out the deed.
Thy ears to the pillory.—See, here's that will
My interest clear—Ha!

[make

Lady A. A fair skin of parchment!

Well. Indented, I confess, and labels too;
But neither wax nor words. How! thunderstruck.
Is this your precious evidence; is this that "makes
Your interest clear?"

Sir G. I am o'erwhelm'd with wonder!
What prodigy is this? what subtle devil
Hath raz'd out the inscription? the wax
Turn'd into dust—the rest of my deeds whole
As when they were deliver'd; and this only
Made nothing!—Do you deal with witches, rascal?
There is a statute for you, which will bring
Your neck in a hempen circle; yes, there is.—
And now 'tis better thought; for, cheater, know
This juggling shall not save you.

Well. To save thee

Would beggar the stock of mercy.

Sir G. Marrall!

Mar. Sir.

Sir G. Though the witnesses are dead,
[Flatters him.

Your testimony—

Help with an oath or two; and for thy master,
Thy liberal master, my good honest servant,
I know you will swear any thing to dash
This cunning slight: the deed being drawn too
By thee, my careful Marrall, and deliver'd
When you were present, will make good my title.
Wilt thou not swear this?

Mar. I! no, I assure you.—

I have a conscience, not sear'd up like yours:
I know no deeds.

Sir G. Wilt thou betray me?

Mar. Keep him
From using his hands, I'll use my tongue
To his no little torment.

Sir G. Mine own varlet
Rebel against me?

Mar. Yes, and uncase you too.
The idiot; the patch; the slave; the booby;
The property, fit only to be beaten
For your morning exercise; your foot-ball, or
Th' unprofitable lump of flesh; your drudge;—
Can now anatomize you, and lay open
All your black plots, level with the earth
Your hill of pride, and shake,
Nay pulverize, the walls you think defend you.

Lady A. How he foams at the mouth with rage!

Sir G. O that I had thee in my gripe, I would
Joint after joint! [tear thee]

Mar. I know you are a tearer.
But I'll have first your fangs par'd off, and then
Come nearer to you; when I have discover'd,
And made it good before the judge, what ways
And devilish practices you us'd to cozen with.

Sir G. But that I will live, rogue, to torture
thee,

And make thee wish, and kneel in vain, to die;
These swords that keep thee from me should fix
here,

Although they made my body but one wound,
But I would reach thee.—

I play the fool, and make my anger but ridiculous.
There will be a time and place, there will be,
When you shall feel what I dare do. [cowards!]

Well. I think so:
You dare do any ill, yet want true valour
To be honest and repent.

Sir G. They are words I know not,
Nor e'er will learn. Patience, the beggar's virtue,
Shall find no harbour here.

Lady A. Whom have we here?

Sir G. My chaplain comes.—

PARSON WELLD0 enters, with a letter in his
hand, and LOVELL behind.

Welcome, most welcome:
There's comfort in thy looks; is the deed done?
Is my daughter married? say but so, my chaplain,
And I am tame.

Welldo. Married? yes, I assure you.

Sir G. Then vanish all sad thoughts!
My doubts and fears are in the titles drown'd
Of my honourable, my right honourable daughter.

Mar. What think you, Sir; was it not wisely
To turn his wicked arts upon himself? [done]

[To WELLBORN.

Sir G. Instantly be here!

[Whispering to WELLD0.
To my wish, to my wish. Now you that plot
against me, [me;
And hop'd to trip my heels up; that contemn'd
Think on't, and tremble. [Loud music.] They
come, I hear the music.

A lane there for my lord.

Well. This sudden heat

May yet be cool'd, Sir.

[Music.

Sir G. Make way there for my lady and my lord.

Enter ALLWORTH and MARGARET.

Marg. Sir, first your pardon, then your bless-
ing, with

Your full allowance of the choice I have made.
Not to dwell too long on words, [Kneels.
This is my husband.

Sir G. How?

Allw. So, I assure you; all the rites of marriage,
With every circumstance, are past.

Sir G. Devil! are they married?

Welldo. Do a father's part, and say, heaven
give 'em joy.

Sir G. Confusion and ruin! speak, and speak
quickly,
Or thou art dead. [Seizes WELLD0.

Welldo. They are married.

Sir G. Thou hadst better
Have made a contract with the king of fiends
Than these.—My brain turns!

Welldo. Why this rage to me?
Is not this your letter, Sir? and these the words—
"Marry her to this gentleman?"

Sir G. It cannot;
Nor will I e'er believe it: 'sdeath! I will not.
That I, that in all passages I touch'd
At worldly profit have not left print
Where I have trod, for the most curious search
To trace my footsteps, should be gull'd by children!
Baffled and fool'd, and all my hopes and labours
Defeated and made void.

Well. As it appears,
You are so, my grave uncle.

Sir G. Village nurses
Revenge their wrongs with curses: I'll not waste
A syllable; but thus I take the life
Which, wretch! I gave to thee.

[Offers to kill MARGARET.

Lord L. Hold, for your own sake!
Though charity to your daughter hath quite left
you.

Will you do an act, though in your hopes lost here,
Can leave no hope for peace or rest hereafter?

Sir G. Lord! thus I spit at thee,
And at thy counsel; and again desire thee,
As thou art a soldier, if thy valour
Dare show itself where multitude and example
Lead not the way, let's quit the house, and change
Six words in private.

Lord L. I am ready.

Well. You'll grow like him,
Should you answer his vain challenge.

Sir G. Are you pale?
Borrow his help, though Hercules call it odds,
I'll stand against both, as I am hemm'd in thus.
Say, they were a squadron [mounted
Of pikes, lin'd through with shot, when I am
Upon my injuries, shall I fear to charge 'em?
No, I'll through the battalia, and that routed,
I'll fall to execution.

[Attempts to draw his sword.

Ha! I am feeble:
Some undone widow sits upon my arm,
And takes away the use of't! and my sword,
Glu'd to my scabbard with wrong'd orphans' tears,
Will not be drawn.

[Falls into his Servants' arms.

Ha! what are these? Sure, hangmen,
That come to bind my hands, and then drag me
Before the judgment seat!—Now they are new
shapes,

And do appear like furies, with steel whips,
To scourge my ulcerous soul! Shall I then fall
Ingloriously, and yield? No, spite of fate,
I will be forc'd to hell like to myself.
Though you were legions of accursed spirits,
Thus would I fly among you!

[Servants carry him off.

Mar. Was it not a rare trick,
An't please your worship, to make the deed no-
Certain minerals I us'd, [thing?
Incorporated with the ink and wax.

Besides, he gave me nothing, but still fed me
With hopes and blows; and that was the induce-
To this conundrum. [ment

Well. You are a rascal. He, that dares be false
To a master, though unjust, will ne'er be true
To any other. Look not for reward
Or favour from me; I will shun thy sight
As I would do a basilisk's. Thank my pity,
If thou keep thy ears; howe'er, I will take order
Your practice shall be silenc'd.

Just. Gr. I'll commit him,
If you will have me, Sir.

Well. That were to little purpose;
His conscience be his punishment.—Not a word,
But instantly be gone. [Exit MARRALL.

Marg. Oh, my poor father!

Allw. Nay, weep not, dearest, though it shows
your pity.

What is decreed by Heaven we cannot alter:
And Heaven here gives a precedent, to teach us
That, when we leave religion and turn atheists,
Their own abilities leave them.

Lord L. Pray you, take comfort;
I will endeavour you shall be his guardian
In his distraction: and for your land, Mr. Well-
I'll be an umpire [born,
Between you and this the undoubted heir
Of Sir Giles Overreach. For me, here's the an-
chor

That I must fix on.

[Takes LADY ALLWORTH'S hand
Allw. What you shall determine,
My lord, I will allow of.

Well. 'Tis the language
That I speak too; but there is something else,
Beside the possession of my land
And payment of my debts, that I must practise.
I had a reputation, but 'twas lost

In my loose course; and, till I redeem it
Some noble way, I am but half made up.
It is a time of action; if your lordship
Will please to confer a company upon me
In your command, I doubt not, in my service
To my king and country, but I shall do some-
That may make me right again. [thing

Lord L. Your suit is granted,
And you lov'd for the motion.

Well. Nothing wants then,
[Addressing himself to the audien. c.

But your allowance—and in that our all
Is comprehended; it being known, nor we,
Nor he that wrote the comedy, can be free
Without your manumission; which, if you
Grant willingly, as a fair favour due
To the poet's and our labours (as you may,
For we despair not, gentlemen, of the play)—
We jointly shall profess, your grace hath might
To teach us action, and him how to write.

[Exeunt.

THE
DOCTOR AND THE APOTHECARY:
A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY JAMES COBB, Esq.

REMARKS.

This pleasant antidote to dullness was well received during its *run*, and still maintains a place among the stock of the national theatres. The author we will have occasion to mention hereafter, in the Remarks on his "*First Floor*;" and this piece will not diminish his credit as a dramatic writer.

Mrs. Inchbald's farce of "*Animal Magnetism*," (intended to ridicule the absurd reveries of that doctrine,) appears to have been laid under contribution by our Author; but the characters are combined in a pleasing manner. This piece first introduced Mr. Storace to the public as a composer; and his excellent music contributed to its success.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.		DRURY LANE.
THOMASO,.....	<i>Mr. Parsons.</i>	PEREZ,	<i>Mr. Burton.</i>
STURMWALD,	<i>Mr. Dodd.</i>		
CARLOS,	<i>Mr. Kelly.</i>	ANNA,	<i>Mrs. Crouch.</i>
JUAN,	<i>Mr. Bannister, Jun.</i>	ISABELLA,	<i>Miss Romanzini.</i>
GUZMAN,	<i>Mr. Sedgwick.</i>	THERESA,.....	<i>Mrs. Booth.</i>
DR. BULIOSO,	<i>Mr. Suett.</i>		

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The outside of THOMASO's House.
A view of distant hills, with the sun setting
behind them.*

*Enter STURMWALD, GUZMAN, ANNA, ISABELLA,
and THERESA.*

TRIO.—ANNA, ISABELLA, and GUZMAN.

Now the sun so faintly glancing
O'er the western hills his ray;
Evening shadows, quick advancing,
Triumph o'er the fading day.

DUET.—ANNA and ISABELLA.

Timorous love, at day affrighted,
Blushing, courts the silver moon;

Star. Bacchus' sons are now delighted,
Night's the jolly fellow's noon.

TRIO.

Evening thus our joys uniting,
To her power due homage pay;
Mirth, to dance and song inviting,
Bids us hail the close of day.

Enter THOMASO.

Tho. What, moping yet, my friend Guzman?
—For shame, you a sailor, and carry sorrow
aboard! Zounds! if I had lost a mistress,—nay,
had it been my wife,—

The. Well, Sir?

Tho. I think I could have comforted myself.
Ah, captain, how far preferable are the charms
of peace and a country life, to all the bustle and
danger of a campaign!

Star. It may be so to you, Signor Thomaso,
who slumber in the inglorious lap of peace: but
war is my element; glory is my mistress; and I
have courted her amid the cannon's thunder.

Tho. Many men of many minds, captain; for
my part, I always preferred a more quiet kind of
courtship; but if faith, you are a man of true gal-
lantry, to remain so partial to your mistress, after
having lost the use of a leg and an eye, in her
service.

Star. A leg and an eye! Psha,—trifles! while
my honour, a soldier's vital spark, has escaped
unhurt.—You may be a very good apothecary,

Signor Thomaso, and may understand lotions and potions; but as to a soldier's honour——

Tho. Ah, very true, captain. He is a most provoking man, though he is my husband. For shame, after our good friend, Captain Sturmwald, has come all the way from Germany to marry our daughter Anna.

Tho. Nay, I'm sure, the captain knows I mean no harm.—Anna, come hither, child. [*Aside to ANNA.*] Why don't you smile upon your husband, that is to be?

Anna. Do not, my dear father, persist in this cruel solicitation.

Tho. [*Aside to her.*] Psha! how can you be so obstinate!—though the captain is not very handsome, he is very rich. 'Tis true, he is rather old; but then you know you have the better chance of being a widow soon; and as to his having but one eye, it ought to be his recommendation, for you'll have no trouble in discovering his blind side.

The. Lookye, Anna, you know my way of arguing, and so does your father. It is my pleasure that you marry Captain Sturmwald; and nave him you shall.

Guz. Have a little patience with her, my dear Madam.

Anna. Then you are resolved to render me miserable!

On Love's bless'd altar burns the flame,
Whence Hymen's torch should kindle bright
To bliss, which boasts fair virtue's name;
It casts its pure and radiant light.

But, ah! should avarice interpose,
With sordid and unhallow'd fires,
The prospect which their light bestows,
Repentance and despair inspires.

[*Exeunt ANNA, ISABELLA, and GUZMAN, into the house.*]

The. Anna's reluctance is certainly owing to that impertinent slut, her cousin. I'm sure she does not inherit her obstinacy from me. When my mother proposed a husband to me, I gave my consent without a moment's hesitation. Didn't I, my dear?

Tho. True, my love; but then I had not lost any of my limbs in pursuit of glory, like the captain. [*Aside to her.*]

Stur. I was thinking whether I had not better talk to the young lady myself.

The. To be sure; how the deuce else are you to gain her consent?

Stur. I'faith, I will. She'll find me very entertaining. I'll breakfast with her to-morrow, and give her the history of my last campaign. I'll come early in the morning, that I may finish the story before dinner.

The. Ha! ha, ha! [*Exit THERESA.*]

Tho. Well, captain, now my wife is gone, I want to have a little talk with you about my new-invented miraculous drops, as I call them, that cure all disorders.

Stur. Do they cure gun-shot wounds?

Tho. Every thing.

Stur. I wish then I had had a bottle in that engagement where I was wounded by a French dragoon in the shoulder. I'll tell you how it happened.

Tho. Unfortunate man that I am! He'll talk like my wife. [*Aside.*]

Stur. We were fording a river, and I was about the middle of the stream——

Tho. [*Aside.*] He wont be out of water this half hour.

Stur. A scoundrel French dragoon, upon a black horse——

Tho. A gray horse.

Stur. Black——black as jet.

Tho. I beg your pardon, captain, it was a gray horse. I have heard you tell the story twenty times, and you always said the horse was gray. So much for that. Now you must know, my drops——

Stur. You have heard me tell the story then?

Tho. Often——So my drops——

Stur. And what d'y'e think of it?

Tho. One of the best stories I ever heard in my life. So——

Stur. I'm very glad you like it. I'll tell you another.

Tho. Curse his stories. [*Aside.*] To-morrow, captain, I shall be happy to hear it.

Stur. Well; if you are tired of my company, I'll go and get a bottle of good wine, to make me sleep soundly; and so adieu, my dear father-in-law.

Tho. Adieu, my dear son-in-law. [*Aside.*] What a cursed bore he is for talking. [*Exit.*]

Stur. A good kind of a man enough; but can't bear to hear any body talk, except himself. [*Exit.*]

The sun sets, and THOMASO'S shop is lighted up.

Enter CARLOS.

Car. When wilt thou cease, thou pleasing pain,
With cruel sway to rend my heart?
Yet, though of torment I complain,
Alas! I fear to cure the smart.

Enter JUAN, with a guitar.

Juan. Sighing never gains a maid!

I'll tell you what is better far;

Call good humour to your aid,

And play the lass a tune upon the sweet guitar.

If a heart has nature dealt her,
Music's charms will surely melt her;
But should the gipsy answer, No,
Sing tol de rol, and let her go.

Car. [*Aside.*] Zounds! I see some one at the door. A rival, perhaps!

[*They approach, each with his hand on his sword, till CARLOS perceives it to be JUAN.*]

Juan!

Juan. Carlos! my dear boy, how d'y'e do?

Car. I'm heartily glad to see you—no, i'faith, now I think again, I am not glad to see you, till I know what brought you hither.

Juan. I was going to tell you, I have an appointment with a very pretty girl in this house——

Car. Ah! my fears. [*Aside.*]

Juan. So I am sure you will be complaisant enough to wish me a good night.

Car. Faith, I am sorry to deny you. But I happen to have an assignation here myself. You perceive a light in that window?

Juan. That light is my signal.

Car. Egad, 'tis my signal too! So I'm sure you will be complaisant enough to wish me a good night.

Juan. Sir, this insult——

Car. Insult, Sir!

[*Laying their hands on their swords.*]

Juan. Though, now I recollect myself, perhaps

we are going to cut throats without any cause. There are *two* fair damsels in that house. What is the name of your mistress?

Car. Anna, the daughter of old Thomaso, the apothecary; and your mistress is—

Juan. Isabella! her laughing little cousin.

Car. Then I am glad to see you, after all; and yet I am an unlucky dog, Juan. They are going to marry my dear Anna to old Sturmwald, the German captain. I dare not acquaint my father of my passion for her; you know he and Thomaso are the bitterest enemies. The only resource left is, to carry her off; and I have, for this week past, in vain sought an opportunity of seeing her.

Juan. Oh, the devil! Old Thomaso's man, to shut the shop up. Stand aside—

[THOMASO's man shuts up the shop, while they talk aside.

Give me your hand, Carlos—you shall see Anna, speak to her, and carry her off this night.

Car. My dear Juan, how is this to be accomplished?

Juan. The first thing is to get the old fellow out of the house.

Car. And how is that to be managed?

Juan. Very easily—as thus: I'll act an old woman, and bring him down, I'll warrant you. [Knocks.] Say nothing, and stand aside.

[Knocks louder.

[THOMASO opens the window and looks out.

Tho. What the devil is all that noise for?

Juan. [In a feigned voice.] Pray, is this Signor Thomaso's?

Tho. Why, what do you want with Signor Thomaso; good woman?

Juan. The sick gentleman, Signor, at the next inn, is much worse.

Tho. I'm sorry for it; I wish the gentleman had been much worse an hour ago; because then I could have attended him; but at present I'm going to bed.

Juan. Dear Signor, you won't leave the poor man to the mercy of an ignorant physician?

Tho. Why, who attends him?

Juan. Dr. Bilioso.

Tho. Then I give him over. Good night to you, good woman. [Shuts the window.

Car. Our plot is ruined.

Juan. Not yet, Carlos.

[Knocks again, still louder.

Tho. [Again opens the window.] Zounds! what's the matter with the woman? Go about your business.

Juan. [Again in a female voice.] The sick man has heard wonders related of your famous drops, Signor.

Tho. Eh! what!—Oh ho! he has heard of my drops. Well, Madam?

Juan. And he wishes you would come to him directly, and bring a bottle in your pocket.

Tho. Aye, that I will—poor soul! poor soul!—I'll cure him in spite of his physician. [Calls within.] Halloo! Pedro! [To JUAN.] I'll go with you, good woman; and as we walk, I'll tell you some of the cures I have performed. I'll wait on you instantly. [Shuts the window.

Car. This is a prosperous beginning, Juan.

Juan. Hush, not a word—we must retire.

[They retire.

Enter THOMASO, from the house.

Tho. And so, good woman, you say,—Hey day, she is gone! The poor gentleman's case is

urgent, I suppose—so I'll lose no time. What a pleasure it is to attend sensible patients! I dare say, he is a shrewd fellow, by his wishing to try my drops. [Exit THOMASO.

Juan. Ha, ha, ha! The old fox is fairly un-kennel'd.

Car. But how are we to get into the house?

Juan. The door is fast. Eh! i'faith this shutter is unbolted. [Opens part of the shutter.] So we will e'en get in at the shop window.

Car. My best friend!

[Going to climb in at the window.

Juan. Hold! let me reconnoitre first. I know every part of the house—follow me.

Car. Kind Cupid light us on our way!

Juan. Psha! Zounds! a lantern would light us much better. So, rot your heroics, and follow me.

[Gets in at the window, and CARLOS follows.

Enter STURMWALD, drunk.

Stur. Tol de rol, de rol—halt! Stand to your arms, Captain Sturmwald. Do my eyes deceive me, or have the enemy besieged my father-in-law's house, and made a practicable breach in the shop-window? Who the devil are they?—Thieves! No, i'faith, that can't be—Who'd think of stealing any thing out of an apothecary's shop! Perhaps they are gallants—have at you, my boys; I must enter and defend my father-in-law. [Going to climb in at the window, he stops.] But hold! a prudent general should know what force he has to contend with—besides, I forget—old Bolus is not at home—I remember I met him just now—Egad, I'll go and fetch him, and we'll surprise the enemy together.—How lucky it is that I am sober! If I had taken the other bottle, my senses might have been confused; but now I am cool and collected. Ah! there is nothing like drinking in moderation. [Exit.

SCENE II.—The inside of THOMASO's Shop.

Enter JUAN and CARLOS.

Car. Hush! tread softly, for your life.

Juan. Why, what are you afraid of?

Car. If Thomaso should return! and then, perhaps—

Juan. Perhaps what? Why, your whole conversation is composed of ifs—buts—perhappes—and supposes—a mere vocabulary of doubts.

Car. Hark! I hear Anna's voice—the sound transports me. Oh, Juan, I scarcely know where I am!

Juan. Why, then, I'll tell you.—This is an apothecary's shop; it is dark, and you are surrounded with phials, therefore take care you break none—Those are stairs before us, and lead to the room where our dear girls are—I shall go up first, and you may follow, unless you prefer staying here—I have now given you full information, and so come along. [Exit

SCENE III.—A Room in THOMASO's House.

The Moon is seen through a window.

DUET.—ANNA and ISABELLA.

Two maidens sat complaining,
And mourn'd their hapless lot
The pangs of absence paining,
Each by her love forgot.

On every former token
Of love, while fancy hung,
Of vows so sweet, yet broken,
They, deeply sighing, sung.

At every sound they hear,
 With fond alarm they start;
 Alternate hope and fear,
 Now joy, now pain, impart.
 But by each sound misguided,
 Alas, they only find
 Their tears, their sighs, derided,
 By mocking rain and wind.

On every former, &c.

Anna. Isabella, 'tis a whole week since I saw my Carlos. How can he say he loves me, and yet suffer them to marry me to this hateful German officer?

The. [*Within.*] Anna, why don't you go to your chamber, child?

Isa. Heavens! your mother is not gone to bed yet.

Anna. And do you think my Carlos has really forsaken me? My Carlos, did I say—Yes, I will repeat it—My heart yields to the fond delusion of my tongue; and I think I love him better every time I call him mine. [*Exit.*]

ISABELLA *alone.*

Poor Anna! I love her sincerely, and yet I am not sorry she is gone—I think Juan must be here soon—and—perhaps our conversation would be very uninteresting to her.

Re-enter ANNA.

Anna. Oh, Isabella, I'm frightened out of my wits. Two men have got into the house; and I think it is your lover and mine.

Isa. Well, my dear, and what is there so alarming in all that?

Enter CARLOS and JUAN.

Car. My dear Anna!

Anna. Ah! [*Screams.*]

Juan. My dear Isabella!

Isa. Hush! you'll wake your mother.

[*CARLOS shows ANNA a marriage-contract.*
The. [*Within.*] Anna! what's the matter, child?

Isa. My cousin was frightened at something; but I am sure there was no reason to be afraid.

Anna. Do you know, Isabella, this unreasonable creature has brought me a marriage-contract, and would have me seize this moment to elope with him!

Car. [*To ISABELLA.*] And do you know, Madam, this unreasonable creature hesitates, though she promised me long ago to elope, whenever I could find an opportunity.

Juan. Psha! Marry first, and dispute afterwards; that would be much more in the common order of things.—Come, my dear Isabella, let us set them a good example; leave dissimulation to knaves and coquettes, and lead up the dance of Hymen as first couple.

Isa. Why, if I were sure you would never wish to change partners—

Car. Consider, my dear Anna, the moments fly. *Isa.* [*Peeping through the key-hole.*] I vow, your mother is not in bed yet—[*To ANNA.*] Away, away instantly, and leave me to keep her quiet; I'll follow you directly. [*Exit ANNA, CARLOS, and JUAN.*] I'll sing, that she may suspect nothing.

Ye hours that part my love and me,
 And slow with envy creep,
 The dawn of bliss obscured by clouds
 Of doubt, in vain ye keep.

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Still I through Sorrow's tedious night,
 Hope's friendly star discern;
 On that I fix my anxious eye
 Until my love return.
 By Jealousy's pernicious power,
 Untainted are my sighs;
 Confiding in my Juan's truth,
 My fondest wishes rise.

Still I through Sorrow's, &c.

Tho. [*Without.*] Hey, Guzman! Pedro! where the devil are ye?

Re-enter CARLOS, JUAN, and ANNA.

Anna. Oh, Isabella, my father is come home! all the doors are locked.

Car. And our retreat cut off.

Isa. Then we are lost.

Juan. No, faith, I'm afraid we are all found. Where can we hide ourselves?

Isa. Go into our chamber.

Anna. My father is now at the chamber-door.

Car. In here, then.

[*Going into THERESA's chamber.*]

Anna. That's my mother's room.

Isa. We are in luck. My uncle, in his hurry to visit his patient, has left the door of his study open. In, in, directly. [*Exit CARLOS, and JUAN into the closet.*] Here comes your father.

Enter THOMASO and STURMWALD.

Tho. Anna! Theresa! Isabella! there are thieves in the house.

Anna. Thieves! bless me, Sir, what shall we do?
Stur. Take 'em, to be sure; take 'em, dead or alive.

Enter THERESA.

The. What's that you say.—Thieves in our house?

Tho. The captain saw them get in. He'll tell you the whole story.

Stur. That I will, with a great deal of pleasure. As I was coming from the tavern, where I had been drinking a glass in moderation, as sober as I am now—I saw two men getting into my father-in-law's house. What's to be done, thought I; for this was enough to stagger me, you may suppose—

Tho. Oh! certainly. [*Aside.*] That you had enough to stagger you, I believe.

The. [*Taking the contract from ANNA's pocket.*] Yes, and here is enough to stagger us all. This paper explains to me, that these thieves are of Cupid's gang; gentlemen who commit sentimental robberies on the hearts of young ladies. There, Thomaso, read that! [*Gives the contract.*]

Tho. What do I see! a contract of marriage between my daughter and Carlos?

Stur. Carlos! What the devil! the enemy surprise us in our own camp! Egad, we'll hold a council of war immediately; I have something in my head—

Tho. [*Aside.*] Yes, rather more than you ought to have.

The. I tell you, I am sure young Carlos is in the house.

Stur. Is he? Why, then, we'll break up the council.—*Bella! horrida bella!* is our resolve; and so let us search for the enemy.

[*Going to open THERESA's chamber-door.*]

The. Bless me, Captain Sturmwald—do you know that is my chamber?

Stur. Well, my dear mother-in-law; and is not a lady's chamber the most likely place to find a

man of gallantry? However, I'll wheel to the right about, if you please.

[Goes to THOMASO'S closet-door.

Tho. Stop, captain; no person ever enters that closet but myself—'Tis there where I compose my miraculous drops.

Stur. Ay, ay, I understand you—'Tis your hocus pocus shop.

Tho. No, Sir, 'tis my miracle shop.

Stur. Your magazine for the destructive ammunition of physic.

Tho. My laboratory for the arcana of the Materia Medica. 'Tis the Temple of Health; and the rosy Goddess herself presides over my pestle and mortar.

Stur. A small room for the Temple of Health, I think, and rather dark.—Suppose, father-in-law, instead of confining the poor Goddess of Health to her room, you were to let her visit some of your patients?

Tho. You may sneer as you please, Captain Sturmwald; I have the key of that closet in my pocket, and there it shall remain—So let us finish a foolish adventure, by wishing each other a good night.

Tho. I shall take you with me, young ladies, to prevent further accidents. Captain Sturmwald, where will you sleep?

Stur. Nowhere, Madam—I suspect the enemy is in ambushade. I will be the centinel of the night—Rest securely, while I guard you—Here I take my post, and shall be on the watch, in case the enemy should make a sally.

Tho. Well, captain, I have no objection. Here is the key of the house, in case you choose to refresh yourself with a walk in the morning.

[Hangs up the key.

QUINTET.—ANNA, ISABELLA, THERESA, STURMWALD, and GUZMAN.

But see the moon, ascending high,
Reigns the empress of the sky;
And, in the zenith of her power,
Preside's o'er midnight's solemn hour.

Tho. You must bid adieu— [To ANNA.
Yes, Miss, so must you—

[To ISABELLA.

Anna & Isa. Must we bid adieu?
Wherefore should we part?
Spare my aching heart.

Tho. Come, let's go to bed;
Spare my aching head.

Stur. Let him go to bed;
Spare his aching head.

All. Bid adieu!
[Exit THER. with ANNA and ISA.

[Exit THOMASO and GUZMAN at the door in the middle of the Scene, and STURMWALD places himself on a couch, before THOMASO'S closet door.

Stur. Come on, my boys, now I'm commander, Though you're as brave as Alexander,
—Heigho! [Yawning.]
—You lie.

On my guard here am I.

I fear no ambush, no entrapping;

No one shall catch old Sturmwald napping.
[Falls asleep.]

JUAN and CARLOS come out of the closet.

Car. Softly, softly—First let us secure the key of the shop-door, to let ourselves out.

[Takes the key.

Juan. That this old remnant of mortality should think of rivalling a young fellow, with his five senses in perfection!

Car. But to our plot, good Juan—our plot. We have no time to lose.

Juan. 'Faith, that's very true—So in you must go, my old commander.

[They wheel the couch into THOMASO'S closet

Car. Bacchus now his nap is taking;

But his power can ne'er subdue
Watchful Love, who, ever waking,
Bids the sleeping sot adieu.

Bacchus should, on Venus waiting,
Hold the cup with bended knee;
None but fools, his worth o'er-rating,
With the servant make too free.

[JUAN comes out of the closet, and brings with him STURMWALD'S cloak, hat, and patch.

DUET.—CARLOS and JUAN.

Bacchus now his nap is taking;
But his power can ne'er subdue
Watchful Love, who, ever waking,
Bids the sleeping sot adieu. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The outside of DR. BILIOSO'S House.

Enter GUZMAN and PEREZ.

Guz. But pray, Perez, is Doctor Bilioso informed of his son's attachment to my cousin Anna?

Per. Oh, dear, no. My old master hates Signor Thomaso to that degree, that he would rather see his son hanged, than married into the family.

Guz. Though unacquainted with poor Carlos, I sympathize with him—had my Leonora lived—

Per. Ah! but she is gone—and your honour has been doleful and dumphish, as one may say ever since you came home from sea. Oh, I love to hear you talk of old stories—you make me so melancholy and so happy, that I cry by the hour together.

Guz. Poor fellow!

Per. And pray, good Signor Guzman, when you was voyaging about on the stormy main, and fighting the Algerines, was not you now and then frightened too much to think of your love?

Guz. No, Perez—pure love purifies the soul from every base alloy.

Let angry Ocean to the sky,
In proud despite his billows roll;
Let thunders to his threats reply,
Fear is a stranger to my soul.

Within the heart which Love illumines,
And blesses with his sacred rays,
If meaner passion e'er presumes,
It fades before the hallowed blaze.

Though War with sullen aspect lower,
And crimson o'er the troubled wave,
And emulate the lightning's power,
The dangers of the fight I brave,

Within the heart, &c. [Exit.

Per. Here comes my master—and as cross as usual.

Enter DR. BILIOSO.

Dr. Bil. What a cursed neighbourhood is this for a physician to live in! No such thing as an asthma, or a fit of the gout, to be met with from year's end to year's end. All the villagers are such a set of damn'd, vulgar, healthy dogs—never have the pleasure of seeing a meagre, bilious gentleman-like man within ten miles of the place. How comfortable it would be to live at Constantinople, where the plague rages all the year?—And then people laugh more here than in all Spain besides.—Ah! I don't like laughing. Well Perez—any body ill this morning?

Per. [*Sighing.*] No, Sir, all well.

Dr. Bil. Ay—and will remain so as long as this plaguy fine weather lasts—no chance of another influenza—I, who am the physician, am the only sick man in the parish.

Per. Yes, your worship seems stuck up here by way of a medical scarecrow, to frighten away sickness.

Dr. Bil. Or rather, like an electrical conductor, I save the neighbourhood from danger, by attracting it to myself.—Ah! I lost the only good patient I had, in my friend Alvarez—as fine a corpulent—inactive subject as a physician would wish for. What with repletion, and want of exercise, the good soul was always ailing. I had great expectations from him—but he grew stingy as he grew rich—avarice produced abstinence, and he starved away the only hopes I had left.

Per. There's the traveller who was taken ill at the next inn.

Dr. Bil. Ay, the only person I have at present under my care, and he is a foreigner—no native would have behaved so civilly as to be taken ill—Not got well, I hope?

Per. Yes, so they say—the apothecary, Thomaso, was sent for to him last night.

Dr. Bil. What! send for my enemy—my antagonist, Thomaso, the apothecary? A man of honour would have sooner died under his physician's hands, than have played him such a trick.

Per. And he took some of Thomaso's quack medicine.

Dr. Bil. O curse his quack medicine—I hate all violent remedies—they make an end of a business so soon. They either kill or cure; and then, either way, one loses the patient.

Per. And so Thomaso—

Dr. Bil. Oh rot him—I'll go to the rascally quack directly; my patients are my property—and shall I tamely suffer my property to be taken from me? I'll trounce the dog. No, no, if a doctor's patients are permitted to slip through his fingers, and get well by stealth, there's an end to all law and justice. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in THOMASO'S House.

Enter THOMASO.

Tho. Ah ha! the captain off already—I didn't expect he had shaken off the effects of last night's dose quite so soon. I can hardly reconcile it to myself to sacrifice poor Anna to such a sot. My conscience revolts against it, and whispers aye—but then my wife talks so much louder than my conscience; and so there's an end of the matter.

Enter JUAN [*behind,*] *disguised as* STURMWALD, *and* CARLOS *disguised as a notary, who listens at the corner of the scene.*

Juan. [*In a hoarse voice.*] Father-in-law, good morning to you.

Tho. Eh! what! bless my soul, son-in-law, how do ye do? There seems to be a wonderful change in your voice.

Juan. All the effects of last night.

Tho. I suppose so—a violent cold, no doubt—my drops are remarkably good for the voice.

Juan. No, no, never mind—I'll tell you a story—

Tho. I'd rather you'd let it alone. Come, now—one spoonful will be enough.—'Tis a most wonderful remedy—I have it here in this closet.

Juan. Curse your drops.—I am sure the lovers of your daughter and niece are now in the house.

Tho. Well, captain, perhaps you know best—but, upon my soul, I don't believe a word of the matter. Now, let me fetch a bottle of drops.

Juan. My jealousy is alarm'd, Sir—and I must be your son-in-law this morning, or not at all—No reply! I have brought this gentleman with me; he is my notary, and has drawn up a marriage-contract. So call your wife and the bride; let us sign and seal, and then to church immediately.

Tho. Well, but Captain—

Juan. I'm commanding officer to-day; so no more words, father-in-law. [*Exit* THOMASO.] Ha, ha, ha! Well, Carlos, how have I imitated the old German captain?

Car. To a miracle. I wish I may play my part half so well.

Juan. Psha! what difficulty is there in it—the old folks will take you for the notary who has prepared the contract of marriage between Anna and Sturmwald; instead of that, you will substitute the other contract, in which your own name is inserted. But here they come.

Enter THOMASO, THERESA, and ANNA.

Anna. No, nothing shall shake my constancy—every obstacle you raise, serves but to increase my affection.

The summer heats, bestowing

Their influence on the rose,

Perfect its charms when blowing,

And every sweet disclose.

Yet summer suns denying

The zephyr and the shower;

Their fervid glow applying,

Destroy their fav'rite flower.

The love-sick heart requiring

The sunshine of success;

Continual bliss desiring,

Yet sickens with excess.

The fond, the secret tear,

Soft passion keeps alive;

The breath of doubt and fear,

Like zephyrs, bids it thrive.

Juan. Well, Signor Thomaso, have you look'd over the contract?

Tho. I have; and find it perfectly right.

Juan. Very well; but where's Isabella?

The. Oh, I'll call her.—Isabella!—but I assure you I would not trust her with any body else.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. My dear Juan, what means—

Juan. [*Aside to her.*] Hush, my love—ask no questions—persuade Anna to sign that paper—it is a contract of marriage between her and Carlos, who you see personates the notary.

[*Carlos offers the contract to ANNA, who puts it aside.*]

Anna. No, nothing shall induce me to sign this nated paper. Oh, Carlos, why are you not here to snatch me from impending ruin?

Tho. Daughter, do not oblige me to exert my authority.

The. Let her beware of my authority, which is much greater.

Juan. Psha, psha! persuasion is better than authority. Let her cousin talk to her. [*ISABELLA whispers ANNA.*] These girls know the way to each other's hearts; there—mother-in-law, you see, she hangs out a smile of truce already.

The. My dear daughter, you transport me!

Juan. Come, sign your consent to the marriage.

The. Sign it—aye, that I will—Come, husband. [*ANNA and THERESA sign the contract.*]

Tho. Egad, captain, I don't understand that notary's whispering my daughter, I—

Juan. 'Tis his way—come, sign your name.

Tho. No, Sir—[*To CARLOS.*] I insist upon knowing what you mean?

Car. What I mean!

Juan. If you put him in a passion, take care of yourself; he is the most choleric fellow—you had better sign at once.

Car. This marriage article, [*To THOMASO.*
In every particle,
Is free from flaw, Sir;
I know what's law, Sir.

Zounds, Sir, my character none shall accuse!
Behold this artifice, true love's devising,

[*To ANNA, aside.*]

Your Carlos thus to all but you disguising;

Witness—Thomaso my skill dares abuse.

[*To JUAN.*]

My only chance I see, is pique pretending;

[*To ANNA, aside.*]

On that alone success is now depending.

Throughout this nation, [*To THOMASO.*

High my reputation,

For law precision is,

And expedition is,

In bonds, conveyances, d've mind,

And instruments of any kind.

Kind fortune see, at length, our prayers heeding,
Relenting, gives us promise of succeeding.

[*To ANNA, aside.*]

In this transaction [*To THOMASO.*

The law is my friend;

I'll bring my action,

Which you must defend.

[*THOMASO, frightened, signs the contract.*]

Juan. Come, come, now all's finished, let us away to church.

The. Well, I'll be with you in a moment.

[*Exit.*]

Car. [*Aside to JUAN.*] For heaven's sake, Juan, let us be gone. If Sturmwald should wake, we are ruined.

Juan. [*Aloud.*] I beg your pardon for detaining you. Mr. Notary, conduct these ladies to my house, and I'll follow you immediately.

[*Exeunt ANNA, ISABELLA, and CARLOS.*]

Tho. Stop! stay—What, without my wife's leave?

Stur. [*In the closet.*] Halloo! death and fury! where am I?

Tho. Eh, what's that?

Stur. Thieves! thieves!

Tho. I'm lost in amazement.

Juan. Did not I tell you one of the rogues was hid there! I'll run and fetch an alguazil.

Tho. You run?—Why, you forget you are lame!

Juan. [*In his natural voice.*] Egad, so I do—but I am so interested in this business.

Tho. And you have recovered your voice too!

Juan. [*Resuming his hoarse voice.*] No, faith, I think I'm as hoarse as ever.

Stur. Thomaso! Signor Thomaso!

Tho. 'Tis the captain's voice. Egad, I'll fetch an alguazil myself, and make sure of one of ye.

[*Exit.*]

Stur. Signor Thomaso!

Juan. Have a little patience. [*Aside.*] What's to be done! If I attempt the door, I meet the alguazil. I must e'en try this chamber-window.

[*Pulls off STURMWALD's hat, cloak, and patch; throws them down at the closet-door, and then goes into THERESA's chamber.*]

Re-enter THOMASO.

Tho. An alguazil will be here presently, and then, Mr. Scoundrel—[*Sees the cloak and patch.*] Hey-day! what's all this? [*Takes them up.*]

Stur. [*In the closet.*] Will nobody hear me!

Tho. It is Sturmwald! Oh, my mind misgives me.

[*He hears the noise of phials breaking in the closet, and rushes in.*]

Re-enter THOMASO and STURMWALD.

Tho. All my phials of drops broken! Let me tell you, Captain Sturmwald.

Stur. Zounds! Sir, you shall tell me nothing but what I desire to know. I say, Sir, how did I come in that closet?

Tho. That's the very question I want to ask you: and, if we both ask the same question, how the devil are we to get an answer?

Stur. Why, you dirty scrap of an apothecary, how dare you laugh at me thus?

Tho. I laugh! Look at the bottles you've broke—I believe I shall never laugh again.

Stur. You are all in the plot—'tis a trick to abuse me; but I'll be revenged. 'Blood and thunder! to make a jest of me, who have fought in sixteen different battles! Did you know that?

Tho. Yes, you have often told me the names of them all. But do you hear me, captain.

Stur. I'll hear nothing but revenge. To cram me up in a dark closet, among pickled snakes, and stuffed alligators; me, who have lived amidst fire and smoke, who have fought for every prince in Europe by turns, and always had the honour to be wounded! Who, to this hour, bear the trophies of war in every limb, and rejoice in the aches, the cramps, and the twinges of glory!

THERESA enters, and THOMASO explains to her, in dumb show, what has passed.

The. I am sure, captain, I don't wonder at your being angry with my husband—he's a poor blundering creature, as I often tell him.

Tho. Nay, the captain knows, I never mean to offend him. I've done all I can—

The. Psha! so you always say. Go, get an alguazil, and seek for the rogues that have stolen our two girls, do. [*Exit THOMASO.*] Come, captain, suppose you and I follow him? For my sake, be patient. The brave never refuse the requests of the fair.

Stur. Never; and to prove it, I'll tell you a story of what happened when I was in Germany. [*Exeunt.*]

JUAN comes softly out of THERESA'S room, in woman's clothes.

Juan. This confounded window is too closely barred even for a mouse to creep through. However, in this disguise, I think I shall get off undiscovered;—or, if I should be questioned, I'll pass for a patient come to ask Thomaso's advice.

Dr. Bil. [*Speaking to a Servant as he comes on.*] Don't tell me—I say he is at home, and I will see him.

Juan. Who comes here?—Dr. Bilioso himself!

Enter DR. BILIOSO, seeing JUAN.

Dr. Bil. But I beg pardon; you want advice, I presume;—let me feel your pulse.

[*Attempting to take JUAN'S hand.*]

Juan. [*Struggling.*] Zounds! I shall be discovered. [*Aside.*] Dear Sir, pray let me alone—my nerves are so weak, and you agitate me so.—

Dr. Bil. Why, really, Madam, you have rather agitated me. I think I never yet met with a lady so strong in the arm. Pray, what is your complaint, Ma'am?

Juan. My complaint is against Thomaso, who has killed a poor friend of mine.

Dr. Bil. Oh, he has done worse than that—he has taken a patient away from me, after I had given him over. So, if he recovers the man, he ruins my reputation. There's an unfeeling scoundrel for you!

Juan. Ah, you and I mean the same person—the poor gentleman at the next inn.—But Thomaso's drops have done for him—my poor friend is no more.

Dr. Bil. I'm heartily glad of it—very sorry for it, I mean. I thank you for the news, however. Now I have that rogue Thomaso in my gripe.

Juan. Lose no time, Sir, but get an officer immediately, and secure Thomaso.

Dr. Bil. That I will.—Ay, ay— [*Going.*]

Juan. Surely, Sir, you will have the gallantry to conduct me safe out of this house—if I should be insulted,

Dr. Bil. Insulted! Lord, Ma'am, there's no danger of that. Nature has furnished you with such powers of defence; united the charms of your sex to the strength of ours. You are a glass of Nature's choicest cordial, Madam; sweet and strong at the same time.

[*Exit, leading JUAN off.*]

SCENE III.—A Wood; a Village seen through the Trees.

Enter ANNA and CARLOS.

Car. Consider, my dear Anna, we have your father's signature to our contract of marriage.

Anna. But will he give his voluntary consent to what has been procured by artifice?

Car. Fear nothing, my dear; trust to me.

Am I beloved? Can you refuse?

Alas! my heart for pity sues.

That heart whose constancy you've known;

That heart you've fondly call'd your own.

Every moment, as it flies,

Warns us where our danger lies.

Ah! there's ruin in delay;

Lovely Anna! let's away.

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Enter ISABELLA.

Car. Well, Isabella, any news of Juan?

Isa. Alas! none—Every human being that passed at a distance, did my pliant fancy conjure up into a likeness of Juan.

Car. The rising ground, on the left hand, commands a prospect of the road.—Let me try whether friendship cannot see more clearly than love.

Anna. Are not we a couple of wild girls, Isabella?

Isa. Not incorrigible, my dear cousin, however; we have pursued a very effectual mode of taming ourselves,—by getting married.

Anna. To be sure, we have uttered the fatal yes.

Isa. The fatal yes! Why, my dear, do you think our lovers are such fools, as to think the better or the worse of our affection for them, because we have said yes?

How mistaken is the lover,

Who on words builds hopes of bliss!

And fondly thinks we love discover,

If perchance we answer Yes.

Prompted often by discretion

Is the seeming kind expression,

When the tongue, the heart belying,

Dares not venture on denying;

But, in spite of discontent,

Gives the semblance of consent.

How mistaken, &c.

Ah! how vain is art's profession,

Though the faltering tongue comply!

What avails the cold confession,

If the averted eyes deny!

Happier far, the experienced swain

Knows he triumph must attain,

When in vain successful trial,

Language gives the faint denial;

While the eyes betray the fiction

In delightful contradiction;

And the cheeks with blushes glow.

And the tongue still falters No.

How mistaken, &c.

Enter CARLOS.

Car. Here is Juan—So all we have to do, is to mount our horses, and gallop off.

Enter JUAN.

Juan. Hold! you're mistaken—You've something else to do, I assure you. We have certainly been traced from the village—Dr. Bilioso and Signor Thomaso are both coming up the hill different ways, and will most likely meet at this spot—But they are here.

[*ANNA, ISABELLA, CARLOS, and JUAN, retire up the Stage.*]

Enter DR. BILIOSO and THOMASO, meeting, each with an Alguazil.

Dr. Bil. Oh, you vile quack! Where's my patient?

Tho. Where is my daughter, you old rogue? You have assisted your son to run away with her. Lay hold of him, Alguazil.

Dr. Bil. What! why, I brought an officer to seize you. Here, do your duty.

[*To the Alguazil.*]

Juan. [*Coming forward.*] Dear gentlemen, what's the matter?

Dr. Bil. Why, Sir, that fellow is a quack, and has killed one of my patients.

Tho. That's impossible; for, though he calls himself a physician, he has no patients to kill.

Dr. Bil. What! do you forget the poor gentleman at the inn?

Tho. Well, he was fair game. You had given him over.

Dr. Bil. Zounds, Sir, what does that signify? I have given over fifty people in my time, who have recovered afterwards.

Juan. [*Aside.*] My plot has taken, I perceive; they believe him dead yet. [*To THOMASO.*] I'faith, this is a serious affair. You had better compound this business.

Tho. He wont agree to it; he hates me so.

Juan. [*Aside to THOMASO.*] Let me talk to him.—[*Aside to DR. BILIOSO.*] Sir, when I see so valuable a life as yours in danger——

Dr. Bil. My life in danger!

Juan. From that bloody-minded apothecary. I find your son has eloped with his daughter, and he is resolved to be revenged, by assassinating you and your whole family. See, how he looks at you!

Dr. Bil. Ratsbane and arsenic in his countenance!

Juan. [*Aside to THOMASO.*] Did you ever see such a determined dog. He is resolved to hang you!

Tho. I dare say he has the rope in his pocket. Pray, mollify him.

Dr. Bil. [*Aside to JUAN.*] I'faith, I don't half like him. Tell him I'll forgive him.

Juan. Dismiss your alguazils.—[*Exeunt Alguazils.*] You bind yourselves to stand by my determination?

Dr. Bil. and Tho. We do.

Juan. Then, I believe, all parties are satisfied.—Appear, appear.

ANNA, CARLOS, and ISABELLA, come forward.

Anna. My dear father!

Tho. Zounds, what is all this?

Enter THERESA, STURMWALD, and GUZMAN.

Stur. A general muster of the whole corps, egad; deserters and all. You are my prisoner, Madam. [*To ANNA.*]

Car. No, Sir, not while I can defend her.

Anna. [*To STUR.*] Oh, Sir, hear me! the brave are ever generous: do not attempt a life so dear to me—

Stur. Bullets and gunpowder! why, don't you love me then? I thought you told me, mother-in-law, it was all maiden coyness in her.

The. Stuff and nonsense! Take her, Captain Sturmwald, she is yours. Defend your honour.

Stur. And that my honour may be worth defending, I'll take care it shall not be tarnished by an unjust action. Anna, your mother says you are mine. If so, I dispose of what is mine—thus:—[*Giving her hand to CARLOS.*] Come, come, we have by mistake opposed the union of hearts on their march to form a junction, and we are defeated. So much the better; who would wish to conquer in a bad cause? You must consent to unite these turtles. [*To THOMASO.*]

Tho. Has my wife any objection?

The. I'll have nothing to do with it; so, act as you please.

Tho. Why then, give me your hand, doctor [*To DR. BILIOSO.*] and here's an end of old quarrels. Take my daughter, young man, [*To CARLOS.*] and you take my niece, [*To JUAN.*] and you [*To STURMWALD.*] take my wife, if you will. Egad, I am in such a good humour, I could give away any thing.

FINALE.

'Tis joy inspires the vocal lay,
And animates the choral song;
Of love we sing the gentle sway,
May constancy the theme prolong!
Old Time with joys unceasing,
Shall add to Hymen's store;
Our friendship still increasing,
When youth shall be no more.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE GAMESTER:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY EDWARD MOORE

REMARKS.

WHEN this tragedy was shown in manuscript to Dr. Young, he remarked, that "Gaming wanted such a caustic as the concluding scene presented." It is certainly the best drama produced by Mr. Moore; but, although its merits are considerable, the audience of 1753 did not bestow that perfect approbation it has since uniformly received. The language is nervous and pathetic; the plot artful, yet clearly conducted; and the catastrophe truly tragic. *Beverley* has been a successful character of several of our most eminent actors; of Garrick, Young, Kemble, &c.: the late Mr. John Palmer was so superior in *Stukely*, that the character is said to have died with him. Mrs. Siddons and Miss O'Neil have, also, acquired additional claims to the public regard in their delineation of the heroine.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY LANE, 1814.		DRURY LANE, 1814.	
BEVERLEY,.....	Mr. Rae.	WAITER,.....	Mr. Maddocks.
LEWSON,.....	Mr. Elrington.	MRS. BEVERLEY,.....	Miss Smith.
STUKELY,.....	Mr. Raymond.	CHARLOTTE.....	Miss Boyce.
MARVIS,.....	Mr. Powell.	LUCY,.....	Miss Tidswell.
BATES,.....	Mr. R. Phillips.		
DAWSON,.....	Mr. J. Wallack.		

ACT I.

SCENE I.—BEVERLEY'S Lodgings.

MRS. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE discovered.

Mrs. B. Be comforted, my dear, all may be well yet. And now, methinks, the lodging begins to look with another face. Oh, sister! sister! if these were all my hardships; if all I had to complain of were no more than quitting my house, servants, equipage, and show, your pity would be weakness.

Char. Is poverty nothing, then?

Mrs. B. Nothing in the world, if it affected only me. While we had a fortune, I was the happiest of the rich; and now 'tis gone, give me but a bare subsistence and my husband's smiles, and I shall be the happiest of the poor. Why do you look at me?

Char. That I may hate my brother.

Mrs. B. Don't talk so, Charlotte.

Char. Has he not undone you?—Oh, this pernicious vice of gaming! but methinks his usual hours of four or five in the morning might

have contented him. Need he have staid out all night?—I shall learn to detest him.

Mrs. B. Not for the first fault. He never slept from me before.

Char. Slept from you! No, no, his nights have nothing to do with sleep. How has this one vice driven him from every virtue!—Nay, from his affections too!—The time was, sister—

Mrs. B. And is. I have no fear of his affections. 'Would I knew that he were safe!

Char. From ruin and his companions. But that 's impossible.—His poor little boy, too! what must become of him?

Mrs. B. Why, want shall teach him industry. From his father's mistakes he shall learn prudence, and from his mother's resignation, patience. Poverty has no such terrors in it as you imagine. There's no condition of life, sickness and pain excepted, where happiness is excluded. The husbandman, who rises early to his labour, enjoys more welcome rest at night forth. His bread is sweeter to him; his home happier; his family dearer; his enjoyments surer. The sun that rouses him in the morning, sets in the evening to

release him. All situations have their comforts, if sweet contentment dwell in the heart. But my poor Beverley has none. The thought of having ruined those he loves is misery for ever to him. 'Would I could ease his mind of that!

Char. If he alone were ruined, 'twere just he should be punished. He is my brother, 'tis true; but when I think of what he has done—of the fortune you brought him—of his own large estate too, squandered away upon this vilest of passions, and among the vilest of wretches! oh, I have no patience!—My own little fortune is untouched, he says. 'Would I were sure on't.

Mrs. B. And so you may—'twould be a sin to doubt it.

Char. I will be sure on't—'twas madness in me to give it to his management. But I'll demand it from him this morning. I have a melancholy occasion for it.

Mrs. B. What occasion?

Char. To support a sister.

Mrs. B. No; I have no need on't. Take it, and reward a lover with it.—The generous Lewson deserves much more.—Why wont you make him happy?

Char. Because my sister's miserable.

Mrs. B. You must not think so. I have my jewels left yet. And when all's gone, these hands shall toil for our support. The poor should be industrious.—Why those tears, Charlotte?

Char. They flow in pity for you.

Mrs. B. All may be well yet. When he has nothing to lose, I shall fetter him in these arms again: and then what is it to be poor?

Char. Cure him but of this destructive passion, and my uncle's death may retrieve all yet.

Mrs. B. Ay, Charlotte, could we cure him!—But the disease of play admits no cure but poverty; and the loss of another fortune would but increase his shame and his affliction.—Will Mr. Lewson call this morning?

Char. He said so last night. He gave me hints, too, that he had suspicions of our friend Stukely.

Mrs. B. Not of treachery to my husband? That he loves play, I know, but surely he's honest.

Char. He would fain be thought so;—therefore I doubt him. Honesty needs no pains to set itself off.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Your old steward, Madam. I had not the heart to deny him admittance, the good old man begged so hard for't. *[Exit.]*

Enter JARVIS.

Mrs. B. Is this well, Jarvis? I desired you to avoid me.

Jar. Did you, Madam? I am an old man, and had forgot. Perhaps, too, you forbade my tears; but I am old, Madam, and age will be forgetful.

Mrs. B. The faithful creature! how he moves me! *[To CHARLOTTE.]*

Jar. I have forgot these apartments too. I remember none such in my young master's house; and yet I have lived in it these five and twenty years. His good father would not have dismissed me.

Mrs. B. He had no reason, Jarvis.

Jar. I was faithful to him while he lived, and

when he died he bequeathed me to his son. I have been faithful to him too.

Mrs. B. I know it, I know it, Jarvis.

Jar. I have not a long time to live. I asked but to have died with him, and he dismissed me.

Mrs. B. Prythee, no more of this! 'Twas his poverty that dismissed you.

Jar. Is he indeed so poor, then?—Oh! he was the joy of my old heart—But must his creditors have all?—And have they sold his house too? His father built it when he was but a prating boy. The times that I have carried him in these arms! And, Jarvis, says he, when a beggar has asked charity of me, why should people be poor? You sha'n't be poor, Jarvis; if I were a king, nobody should be poor. Yet he is poor. And then he was so brave!—Oh, he was a brave little boy! and yet so merciful, he'd not have killed the gnat that stung him.

Mrs. B. Speak to him, Charlotte, for I cannot.

Jar. I have a little money, Madam; it might have been more, but I have loved the poor. All that I have is yours.

Mrs. B. No, Jarvis; we have enough yet. I thank you though, and I will deserve your goodness.

Jar. But shall I see my master? And will he let me attend him in his distresses? I'll be no expense to him; and 'twill kill me to be refused.—Where is he, Madam?

Mrs. B. Not at home, Jarvis. You shall see him another time.

Char. To-morrow, or the next day—Oh, Jarvis! what a change is here!

Jar. A change indeed, Madam! my old heart aches at it. And yet, methinks—But here's somebody coming.

Re-enter LUCY, with STUKELY.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, Madam. *[Exit.]*

Stuke. Good morning to you, ladies. Mr. Jarvis, your servant. Where's my friend, Madam?

[To MRS. BEVERLEY.]

Mrs. B. I should have asked that question of you. Have you seen him to-day?

Stuke. No, Madam.

Char. Nor last night?

Stuke. Last night! did he not come home then?

Mrs. B. No.—Were you not together?

Stuke. At the beginning of the evening, but not since.—Where can he have staid?

Char. You call yourself his friend, Sir—why do you encourage him in his madness of gaming?

Stuke. You have asked me that question before, Madam; and I told you my concern was that I could not save him; Mr. Beverley is a man, Madam; and if the most friendly entreaties have no effect upon him, I have no other means. My purse has been his, even to the injury of my fortune. If that has been encouragement, I deserve censure; but I meant it to retrieve him.

Mrs. B. I don't doubt it, Sir, and I thank you—But where did you leave him last night?

Stuke. At Wilson's, Madam, if I ought to tell, in company I did not like. Possibly he may be there still. Mr. Jarvis knows the house, I believe.

Jar. Shall I go, Madam?

Mrs. B. No; he may take it ill.

Char. He may go as from himself.

Stuke. And if he pleases, Madam, without naming me I am faulty myself, and should con-

ceal the errors of a friend. But I can refuse nothing here.

[*Bowing to the ladies.*]

Jar. I would fain see him, methinks.

Mrs. B. Do so then, but take care how you upbraid him—I have never upbraided him.

Jar. 'Would I could bring him comfort! [*Exit.*]

Stuke. Don't be too much alarmed, Madam. All men have their errors, and their times of seeing them. Perhaps my friend's time is not come yet. But he has an uncle; and old men don't live for ever. You should look forward, Madam; we are taught how to value a second fortune by the loss of the first.

[*Knocking at the door.*]

Mrs. B. Hark!—No—that knocking was too rude for Mr. Beverley. Pray heaven he be well!

Stuke. Never doubt it, Madam. You shall be well too—Every thing shall be well.

[*Knocking again.*]

Mrs. B. The knocking is a little loud though—Who waits there? Will none of you answer?—None of you, did I say?—Alas, what was I thinking of! I had forgot myself.

Char. I'll go, sister—but don't be alarmed so.

[*Exit.*]

Stuke. What extraordinary accident have you o fear, Madam?

Mrs. B. I beg your pardon; but 'tis ever thus with me in Mr. Beverley's absence. No one knocks at the door, but I fancy it is a messenger of ill news.

Stuke. You are too fearful, Madam; 'twas but one night of absence; and if ill thoughts intrude (as love is always doubtful,) think of your worth and beauty, and drive them from your breast.

Mrs. B. What thoughts? I have no thoughts that wrong my husband.

Stuke. Such thoughts indeed would wrong him. The world is full of slander; and every wretch that looks himself unjust, charges his neighbour with like passions; and by the general frailty hides his own—If you are wise, and would be happy, turn a deaf ear to such reports. 'Tis ruin to believe them.

Mrs. B. Ay, worse than ruin. 'Twould be to sin against conviction. Why was it mentioned?

Stuke. To guard you against rumour. The sport of half mankind is mischief; and for a single error they make men devils; if their tales reach you, disbelieve them.

Mrs. B. What tales? by whom? why told? I have heard nothing—or, if I had, with all his errors, my Beverley's firm faith admits no doubt—it is my safety, my seat of rest and joy, while the storm threatens round me. I'll not forsake it. [*STUKELY sighs, and looks down.*] Why turn you, Sir, away? and why that sigh?

Stuke. I was attentive, Madam; and sighs will come, we know not why. Perhaps I have been too busy—If it should seem so, impute my zeal to friendship, that meant to guard you against evil tongues. Your Beverley is wronged, slandered most vilely—My life upon his truth.

Mrs. B. And mine too. Who is't that doubts it? but no matter—I am prepared, Sir—Yet why this caution?—You are my husband's friend; I think you mine too; the common friend of both. [*Pauses.*] I had been unconcerned else.

Stuke. For Heaven's sake, Madam, be so still! I meant to guard you against suspicion, not to alarm it.

Mrs. B. Nor have you, Sir. Who told you of suspicion? I have a heart it cannot reach.

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Stuke. Then I am happy—I would say more—but am prevented.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. What a heart has that Jarvis!—A creditor sister. But the good old man has taken him away—"Don't distress his wife—don't distress his sister," I could hear him say. "'Tis cruel to distress the afflicted."—And when he saw me at the door, he begged pardon that his friend had knocked so loud.

Stuke. I wish I had known of this. Was it a large demand, Madam.

Char. I heard not that; but visits such as these we must expect often—Why so distressed, sister? This is no new affliction.

Mrs. B. No, Charlotte; but I am faint with watching—quite sunk and spiritless—Will you excuse me, Sir? I'll to my chamber, and try to rest a little.

[*Exit.*]

Stuke. Good thoughts go with you, Madam. My bait has taken then. [*Aside.*]—poor Mrs. Beverley! How my heart grieves to see her thus.

Char. Cure her, and be a friend then.

Stuke. How cure her, Madam?

Char. Reclaim my brother.

Stuke. Ay; give him a new creation, or breathe another soul into him. I'll think on't, Madam. Advice, I see is thankless.

Char. Useless I am sure it is, if, through mistaken friendship, or other motives, you feed his passion with your purse, and sooth it by example. Physicians, to cure fevers, keep from the patient's thirsty lip the cup that would inflame him. You give it to his hands. [*A knocking.*] Hark, Sir!—These are my brother's desperate symptoms—Another creditor!

Stuke. One not so easily got rid of—What, Lewson!

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. Madam, your servant—Yours, Sir. I was inquiring for you at your lodgings.

Stuke. This morning! You had business then?

Lew. You'll call it by another name, perhaps. Where's Mr. Beverley, Madam?

Char. We have sent to inquire for him.

Lew. Is he abroad then? he did not use to go out so early.

Char. No, nor stay out so late.

Lew. Is that the case? I am sorry for it. But Mr. Stukely, perhaps, may direct you to him.

Stuke. I have already, Sir. But what was your business with me?

Lew. To congratulate you upon your late success at play. Poor Beverley!—But you are his friend; and there's a comfort in having successful friends.

Stuke. And what am I to understand by this?

Lew. That Beverley's a poor man with a rich friend; that's all.

Stuke. Your words would mean something, I suppose. Another time, Sir, I shall desire an explanation.

Lew. And why not now? I am no dealer in long sentences. A minute or two will do for me.

Stuke. But not for me, Sir.—I am slow of apprehension, and must have time and privacy. A lady's presence engages my attention. Another morning I may be found at home.

Lew. Another morning, then, I'll wait upon you.

Stuke. I shall expect you, Sir. Madam, your servant.

[*Exit.*]

Char. What mean you by this?

Lew. To hint to him that I know him.

Char. How know him? Mere doubt and supposition!

Lew. I shall have proof soon.

Char. And what then? Would you risk your life to be his punisher?

Lew. My life, Madam! Don't be afraid. But let it content you that I know this Stukely.—'T would be as easy to make him honest as brave.

Char. And what do you intend to do?

Lew. Nothing, till I have proof. But methinks, Madam, I am acting here without authority. Could I have leave to call Mr. Beverley brother, his concerns would be my own. Why will you make my services appear officious?

Char. You know my reasons, and should not press me. But I am cold, you say; and cold I will be, while a poor sister's destitute.—But let us change this subject: your business here this morning is with my sister. Misfortunes press too hard upon her; yet, till to-day, she has borne them nobly.

Lew. Where is she?

Char. Gone to her chamber. Her spirits failed her.

Lew. I hear her coming. Let what has passed with Stukely be a secret.—She has already too much to trouble her.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY.

Mrs. B. Good morning, Sir; I heard your voice, and, as I thought, inquiring for me. Where's Mr. Stukely, Charlotte?

Char. This moment gone. You have been in tears, sister; but here's a friend shall comfort you.

Lew. Or, if I add to your distresses, I'll beg your pardon, Madam. The sale of your house and furniture was finished yesterday.

Mrs. B. I know it, Sir. I know too your generous reason for putting me in mind of it. But you have obliged me too much already.

Lew. There are trifles, Madam, which I know you have set a value on: those I have purchased, and will deliver; I have a friend too that esteems you. He has bought largely; and will call nothing his, till he has seen you. If a visit to him would not be painful, he has begged it may be this morning.

Mrs. B. Not painful in the least: my pain is from the kindness of my friends. Why am I to be obliged beyond the power of return?

Lew. You shall repay us at your own time. I have a coach waiting at the door. Shall we have your company, Madam? [*To CHARLOTTE.*]

Char. No; my brother may return soon. I'll stay and receive him.

Mrs. B. He may want a comforter, perhaps. But don't upbraid him, Charlotte. We sha'n't be absent long. Come, Sir, Since I must be so obliged.

Lew. 'Tis I that am obliged. An hour, or less, will be sufficient for us. We shall find you at home, Madam?

[*To CHARLOTTE; exit with MRS. B.*]

Char. Certainly. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—STUKELY'S Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY.

Stuke. That Lewson suspects me, 'tis too plain. Yet why should he suspect me? I appear the friend of Beverley, as much as he. But I am rich, it seems, and so I am;—thanks to another's

folly and my own wisdom. To what use is wisdom, but to take advantage of the weak? This Beverley's my fool; I cheat him, and he calls me friend. But more business must be done yet. His wife's jewels are unsold: so is the reversion of his uncle's estate. I must have these too. And then there's a treasure above all—I love his wife. Before she knew this Beverley I loved her; but, like a cringing fool, bowed at a distance, while he stepped in and won her—Never, never, will I forgive him for it. Those hints, this morning, were well thrown in—Already they have fastened on her. If jealousy should weaken her affections, want may corrupt her virtue—These jewels may do much. He shall demand them of her; which, when mine, shall be converted to special purposes.

Enter BATES.

What now, Bates?

Bates. Is it a wonder then to see me? The forces are all in readiness, and only wait for orders. Where's Beverley?

Stuke. At last night's rendezvous, waiting for me. Is Dawson with you?

Bates. Dressed like a nobleman; with money in his pocket, and a set of dice that shall deceive the devil.

Stuke. That fellow has a head to undo a nation: but for the rest, they are such low-mannered, ill-looking dogs, I wonder Beverley has not suspected them.

Bates. No matter for manners and looks. Do you supply them with money, and they are gentlemen by profession. The passion of gaming casts such a mist before the eyes, that the nobleman shall be surrounded with sharpers, and imagine himself in the best company.

Stuke. There's that Williams, too—It was he, I suppose, that called at Beverley's, with the note, this morning. What directions did you give him?

Bates. To knock loud, and be clamorous. Did not you see him?

Stukes. No; the fool sneaked off with Jarvis. Had he appeared within doors, as directed, the note had been discharged. I waited there on purpose. I want the women to think well of me; for Lewson's grown suspicious.—He told me so himself.

Bates. What answer did you make him?

Stuke. A short one;—that I would see him soon, for further explanation.

Bates. We must take care of him. But what have we to do with Beverley?—Dawson and the rest are wondering at you.

Stuke. Why, let them wonder: I have designs above their narrow reach. They see me lend him money, and they stare at me. But they are fools. I want him to believe me beggared by him.

Bates. And what then.

Stuke. Ay, there's the question; but no matter: at night you may know more. He waits for me at Wilson's.—I told the women where to find him.

Bates. To what purpose?

Stuke. To save suspicion. It looked friendly, and they thanked me.—Old Jarvis was despatched to him.

Bates. And may entreat him home—

Stuke. No; he expects money from me, but I'll have none. His wife's jewels must go.—Women are easy creatures, and refuse nothing where they love. Follow to Wilson's—Come, Sir.

Let drudging fools by honesty grow great ;
The shorter road to riches is deceit. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Gaming-house, with a Table,
Boz, Dice, &c.*

BEVERLEY *discovered, sitting.*

Bev. Why, what a world is this ! The slave that digs for gold receives his daily pittance, and sleeps contented ; while those, for whom he labours, convert their good to mischief, making abundance the means of want. What had I to do with play ? I wanted nothing.—My wishes and my means were equal.—The poor followed me with blessing, love scattered roses on my pillow, and morning waked me to delight. Oh, bitter thought, that leads to what I was, by what I am ! I would forget both.—Who's there ?

Enter a WAITER.

Wait. A gentleman, Sir, inquires for you.

Bev. He might have used less ceremony. Stukely, I suppose ?

Wait. No, Sir, a stranger.

Bev. Well, show him in. [*Exit WAITER.*] A messenger from Stukely, then ; from him that has undone me ! yet all in friendship—And now he lends me his little, to bring back fortune to me.

Enter JARVIS.

Jarvis !—Why this intrusion ?—Your absence had been kinder.

Jar. I came in duty, Sir. If it be troublesome—

Bev. It is. I would be private—hid even from myself. Who sent you hither ?

Jar. One that would persuade you home again. My mistress is not well ; her tears told me so.

Bev. Go with thy duty there then.—Pr'ythee begone ; I have no business for thee.

Jar. Yes, Sir ; to lead you from this place. I am your servant still. Your prosperous fortune blessed my old age. If that has left you, I must not leave you.

Bev. Not leave me !—Recall past time then ; or, through this sea of storms and darkness, show me a star to guide me.—But what canst thou ?

Jar. The little that I can, I will. You have been generous to me—I would not offend you, Sir, but—

Bev. No ; think'st thou I'd ruin thee, too ? I have enough of shame already.—My wife ! my wife !—Wouldst thou believe it, Jarvis ? I have not seen her all this long night—I, who have loved her so, that every hour of absence seemed as a gap in life. But other bonds have held me.—Oh ! I have played the boy ! dropping my counters in the stream, and reaching to redeem them, lost myself !

Jar. For pity's sake, Sir !—I have no heart to see this change.

Bev. Nor I to bear it.—How speaks the world of me, Jarvis ?

Jar. As of a good man dead. Of one who, walking in a dream, fell down a precipice. The world is sorry for you.

Bev. Ay, and pities me—Says it not so ? But I was born to infamy. I'll tell thee what it says.—It calls me villain ; a treacherous husband ; a cruel father ; a false brother ; one lost to nature and her charities : or, to say all in one short word, it calls me—gamester. Go to thy mistress, I'll see her presently.

Jar. And why not now ? Rude people press upon her ; loud bawling creditors ; wretches who know no pity. I met one at the door ; he would have seen my mistress. I wanted means of present payment, so promised it to-morrow. But others may be pressing ; and she has grief enough already. Your absence hangs too heavy on her.

Bev. Tell her I'll come then. I have a moment's business. But what hast thou to do with my distresses ? thy honesty has left thee poor, and age wants comfort.—Keep what thou hast ; lest, between thee and the grave, misery steal in. I have a friend shall counsel me.—This is that friend.

Enter STUKELY.

Stuke. How fares it, Beverley ? Honest Mr. Jarvis, well met. That viper, Williams ! was it not he that troubled you this morning ?

Jar. My mistress heard him, then ; I am sorry that she heard him.

Bev. And Jarvis promised payment.

Stuke. That must not be.—Tell him I'll satisfy him.

Jar. Will you, Sir ? Heaven will reward you for it.

Bev. Generous Stukely ! Friendship like yours, had it ability like will, would more than balance the wrongs of fortune.

Stuke. You think too kindly of me.—Make haste to Williams ; his clamours may be rude else. [*To JARVIS.*]

Jar. And my master will go home again.—Alas ! Sir, we know of hearts there breaking for his absence. [*Exit.*]

Bev. Would I were dead !

Stuke. Ha, ha, ha ! Pr'ythee, be a man, and leave dying to disease and old age.—Fortune may be ours again ; at least we'll try for't.

Bev. No ; it has fooled us on too far.

Stuke. Ay, ruined us ; and therefore we'll sit down contented. These are the despondings of men without money ; but let the shining ore chink in the pocket, and folly turns to wisdom. We are fortune's children.—True, she's a fickle mother ; but shall we droop because she's peevish ?—No ; she has smiles in store, and these her frowns are meant to brighten them.

Bev. Is this a time for levity ?—But you are single in the ruin, and therefore may talk lightly of it ; with me 'tis complicated misery.

Stuke. You censure me unjustly ; I but assumed these spirits to cheer my friend : Heaven knows, he wants a comforter.

Bev. What new misfortune ?

Stuke. I would have brought you money ; but lenders want securities. What's to be done ?—All that was mine is yours already.

Bev. And there's the double weight that sinks me. I have undone my friend too ; one who, to save a drowning wretch, reached out his hand, and perished with him.

Stuke. Have better thoughts.

Bev. Whence are they to proceed ! I have nothing left.

Stuke. [*Sighing.*] Then we're indeed undone. What, nothing ? no moveables, nor useless trinkets ? baubles locked up in caskets to starve their owners ?—I have ventured deeply for you.

Bev. Therefore this heart-ache ; for I am lost beyond all hope.

Stuke. No ; means may be found to save us.

Jarvis is rich.—Who made him so? This is no time for ceremony.

Bev. And is it for dishonesty? The good old man! Shall I rob him too? My friend would grieve for't. No; let the little that he has buy food and clothing for him.

Stuke. Good morning, then. [*Going.*]

Bev. So hasty! Why then, good morning.

Stuke. And when we meet again, upbraid me. Say it was I that tempted you. Tell Lewson so; and tell him I have wronged you. He has suspicions of me, and will thank you.

Bev. No; we have been companions in a rash voyage, and the same storm has wrecked us both. Mine shall be self-upbraidings.

Stuke. And will they feed us? You deal unkindly by me. I have sold and borrowed for you while land or credit lasted; and now, when fortune should be tried, and my heart whispers me success, I am deserted, turned loose to beggary, while you have hoards.

Bev. What hoards? Name them, and take them.

Stuke. Jewels.

Bev. And shall this thriftless hand seize them too? My poor, poor wife! must she lose all? I would not wound her so.

Stuke. Nor I, but from necessity. One effort more, and fortune may grow kind. I have unusual hopes.

Bev. Think of some other means, then.

Stuke. I have, and you rejected them.

Bev. Pr'ythee, let me be a man.

Stuke. Ay, and your friend a poor one: but I have done. And, for those trinkets of a woman, why, let her keep them to deck out pride with, and show a laughing world that she has finery to starve in.

Bev. No; she shall yield him up all: my friend demands it. But need we have talked lightly of her? The jewels that she values are truth and innocence.—Those will adorn her for ever; and, for the rest, she wore them for a husband's pride, and to his wants will give them. Alas! you know her not. Where shall we meet?

Stuke. No matter; I have changed my mind. Leave me to a prison; 'tis the reward of friendship.

Bev. Perish mankind first! Leave you to a prison! No! fallen as you see me, I'm not that wretch: nor would I change this heart, o'ercharged as 'tis with folly and misfortune, for one most prudent and most happy, if callous to a friend's distress.

Stuke. You are too warm.

Bev. In such a cause, not to be warm is to be frozen. Farewell.—I'll meet you at your lodgings.

Stuke. Reflect a little.—The jewels may be lost.—Better not hazard them.—I was too pressing.

Bev. And I ungrateful.—Reflection takes up time. I have no leisure for't.—Within an hour expect me. [*Exit.*]

Stuke. The thoughtless, shallow prodigal! We shall have sport at night, then—but hold!—The jewels are not ours yet.—The lady may refuse them.—The husband may relent too. 'Tis more than probable.—I'll write a note to Beverley, and the contents shall spur him to demand them.—But am I grown this rogue through avarice? No; I have warmer motives, love and revenge.—Ruin the husband, and the wife's virtue may be bid for.

Enter BATES.

Look to your men, Bates; there's money stirring.

We meet to-night upon this spot.—Hasten, and tell them.—Hasten, I say, the rogues will scatter else.

Bates. Not till their leader bids them.

Stuke. Give them the word, and follow me; I must advise with you—This is a day of business. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—BEVERLEY'S Lodgings.

Enter BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Char. Your looks are changed too; there's wildness in them. My wretched sister! How will it grieve her to see you thus!

Bev. No, no; a little rest will ease me. And for your Lewson's kindness to her, it has my thanks; I have no more to give him.

Char. Yes: a sister and her fortune. I trifle with him, and he complains.—My looks, he says, are cold upon him. He thinks too—

Bev. That I have lost your fortune.—He dares not think so.

Char. Nor does he. You are too quick at guessing. He cares not if you had. That care is mine. I lent it you to husband, and now I claim it.

Bev. You have suspicions, then?

Char. Cure them, and give it me.

Bev. To stop a sister's chiding?

Char. To vindicate her brother.

Bev. How if it needs no vindication?

Char. I would fain hope so.

Bev. Ay, would and cannot. Leave it to time, then; 'twill satisfy all doubts.

Char. Mine are already satisfied.

Bev. 'Tis well. And when the subject is renewed, speak to me like a sister, and I will answer like a brother.

Char. To tell me I'm a beggar. Why, tell it now. I, that can bear the ruin of those dearer to me,—the ruin of a sister and her infant, can bear that too.

Bev. No more of this—you ring my heart.

Char. Would that the misery were all your own! But innocence must suffer. Unthinking rioter! whose home was heaven to him! an angel dwelt there, and a little cherub, that crowned his days with blessings. How has he lost this heaven, to league with devils!

Bev. Forbear, I say; reproaches come too late;—they search, but cure not. And, for the fortune you demand, we'll talk to-morrow on't—our tempers may be milder.

Char. Or, if 'tis gone, why farewell all. I claimed it for a sister. But I'll upbraid no more. What heaven permits, perhaps it may ordain. Yet, that the husband, father, brother, should be its instruments of vengeance!—'Tis grievous to know that.

Bev. If you are my sister, spare the remembrance—it wounds too deeply. To-morrow shall clear all; and when the worst is known, it may be better than your fears. Comfort my wife; and for the pains of absence, I'll make atonement.

Char. See where she comes!—Look cheerfully upon her. Affections such as hers are prying, and lend those eyes that read the soul.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and LEWSON.

Mrs. B. My life!

Bev. My love! how fares it? I have been a truant husband.

Mrs. B. But we meet now, and that heals all.

—Doubts and alarms have I had, but in this dear embrace I bury and forget them. My friend here [*Pointing to LEWSON.*] has been indeed a friend. Charlotte, 'tis you must thank him: your brother's thanks and mine are of too little value.

Bev. Yet what we have we'll pay. I thank you, Sir, and am obliged. I would say more, but that your goodness to the wife upbraids the husband's follies. Had I been wise, she had not trespassed on your bounty.

Lew. Nor has she trespassed. The little I have done acceptance overpays.

Char. So friendship thinks—

Mrs. B. And doubles obligations, by striving to conceal them.—We'll talk another time on't. You are too thoughtful, love.

Bev. No, I have reason for these thoughts.

Char. And hatred for the cause.—'Would you had that too!

Bev. I have.—The cause was avarice.

Char. And who the tempter.

Bev. A ruined friend;—ruined by too much kindness.

Lew. Ay, worse than ruined; stabbed in his fame, mortally stabbed. Riches can't cure him.

Bev. Or if they could, those I have drained him of.—Something of this he hinted in the morning.—That Lewson had suspicions of him.—Why these suspicions?

[*Angrily.*]

Lew. At school we knew this Stukely. A cunning, plodding boy he was, sordid and cruel, slow at his task, but quick at shifts and tricking. He schemed out mischief, that others might be punished; and would tell his tale with so much art, that for the lash he merited, rewards and praise were given him. Show me a boy with such a mind, and time, that ripens manhood in him, shall ripen vice too.—I'll prove him, and lay him open to you:—till then, be warned. I know him, and therefore shun him.

Bev. As I would those that wrong him. You are too busy, Sir.

Mrs. B. No, not too busy. Mistaken, perhaps.—That had been milder.

Lew. No matter, Madam. I can bear this, and praise the heart that prompts it. Pity such friendship should be so placed!

Bev. Again, Sir! but I'll bear too. You wrong him, Lewson, and will be sorry for it.

Char. Ay, when 'tis proved he wrongs him. The world is full of hypocrites.

Bev. And Stukely one,—so you would infer, I think. I'll hear no more of this; my heart aches for him. I have undone him.

Lew. The world says otherwise.

Bev. The world is false then.—I have business with you, love. [*To Mrs. B.*] We'll leave them to their rancour.

[*Going.*]

Char. No; we shall find room within fort.—Come this way, Sir. [*To LEWSON.*]

Lew. Another time my friend will thank me; that time is hastening too.

[*Exit LEW. and CHAR.*]

Bev. They hurt me beyond bearing.—Is Stukely false? Then honesty has left us. 'Twere sinning against Heaven to think so.

Mrs. B. I never doubted him.

Bev. No; you are charity. Meekness and ever-during patience live in that heart, and love that knows no change. Why did I ruin you?

Mrs. B. You have not ruined me. I have no wants when you are present, nor wishes in your

absence, but to be bless'd with your return. But be resigned to what has happened, and I am rich beyond the dreams of avarice.

Bev. My generous girl!—But memory will be busy; still crowding on my thoughts, to sour the present by the past. I have another pang, too.

Mrs. B. Tell it, and let me cure it.

Bev. That friend, that generous friend, whose fame they have traduced—I have undone him too. While he had means, he lent me largely; and now a prison must be his portion.

Mrs. B. No; I hope otherwise.

Bev. To hope must be to act. The charitable wish feeds not the hungry.—Something must be done.

Mrs. B. What?

Bev. In bitterness of heart he told me, just now he told me, I had undone him. Could I hear that, and think of happiness! No; I have disclaimed it, while he is miserable.

Mrs. B. What may mend with us, and then we may be grateful. There's comfort in that hope.

Bev. Ay, 'tis the sick man's cordial, his promised cure; while, in preparing it, the patient dies.—What now?—

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. A letter, Sir. [*Delivering it, and exit.*]

Bev. The hand is Stukely's.

[*Opens it, and reads it to himself.*]

Mrs. B. And brings good news—at least I hope so. What says he, love?

Bev. Why this—too much for patience. Yet he directs me to conceal it from you. [*Reads.*] *Let your haste to see me be the only proof of your esteem for me. I have determined, since we parted, to bid adieu to England: choosing rather to forsake my country, than owe my freedom in it to the means we talked of. Keep this a secret at home, and hasten to the ruined.*

R. STUKELY.

Ruined by friendship! I must relieve or follow him.

Mrs. B. Follow him, did you say? Then I am lost indeed!

Bev. O this infernal vice! how has it sunk me! a vice, whose highest joy was poor to my domestic happiness. Yet how have I pursued it! turned all my comforts to bitterest pangs, and all my smiles to tears! Damned, damned infatuation!

Mrs. B. Be cool, my life! What are the means the letter talks of? Have you—have I, those means? Tell me, and ease me. I have no life while you are wretched.

Bev. No, no; it must not be. 'Tis I alone have sinned; 'tis I alone must suffer. You shall reserve those means to keep my child and his wronged mother from want and wretchedness.

Mrs. B. What means?

Bev. I came to rob you of them—but cannot dare not. Those jewels are your sole support. I should be more than monster to request them.

Mrs. B. My jewels! Trifles, not worth speaking of, if weighed against a husband's peace: but let them purchase that, and the world's wealth is of less value.

Bev. How little do I seem before such virtues!

Mrs. B. No more, my love. I kept them till occasion called to use them; now is the occasion, and I'll resign them cheerfully.

Bev. Why, we'll be rich in love then. But this excess of kindness melts me. Yet, for

friend, one would do much. He has denied me nothing.

Mrs. B. Come to my closet. But let him manage wisely. We have no more to give him.

Bev. Where learned my love this excellence? 'Tis Heaven's own teaching: that Heaven, which to an angel's form has given a mind more lovely. I am unworthy of you, but will deserve you better.

Henceforth my follies and neglects shall cease,
And all to come be penitence and peace;
Vice shall no more attract me with her charms,
Nor pleasure reach me, but in these dear arms.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—STUKELY'S Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY and BATES.

Stuke. So runs the world, Bates. Fools are the natural prey of knaves: nature designed them so, when she made lambs for wolves. The laws, that fear and policy have framed, nature disclaims; she knows but two; and those are force and cunning. The nobler law is force, but then there's danger in't: while cunning, like a skilful miner, works safely and unseen.

Bates. And therefore wisely. Force must have nerves and sinews; cunning wants neither. The dwarf that has it shall trip the giant's heels up.

Stuke. And bind him to the ground. Why, we'll erect a shrine for nature, and be her oracles. Conscience is weakness; fear made it, and fear maintains it. The dread of shame, inward reproaches, and fictitious burnings, swell out the phantom. Nature knows none of this; her laws are freedom.

Bates. Sound doctrine, and well delivered!

Stuke. We are sincere too, and practise what we teach. Let the grave pedant say as much. But now to business. The jewels are disposed of; and Beverley again worth money. If my design succeeds, this night we finish with him. Go to your lodgings, and be busy.—You understand conveyances, and can make ruin sure.

Bates. Better stop here. The sale of this reversion may be talked of: there's danger in it.

Stuke. No, 'tis the mark I aim at. We'll thrive and laugh. You are the purchaser, and there's the payment. [*Giving a pocket-book.*] He thinks you rich; and so you shall be. Inquire for titles, and deal hardly; 'twill look like honesty.

Bates. How, if he suspects us?

Stuke. Leave it to me. I study hearts, and when to work upon them. Go to your lodgings; and if we come, be busy over papers. Talk of a thoughtless age, of gaming and extravagance; you have a face for't.

Bates. A feeling too that would avoid it. We push too far; but I have cautioned you. If it ends ill, you'll think of me—adieu. [*Exit.*]

Stuke. This fellow sins by halves; his fears are conscience to him. I'll turn these fears to use. Rogues that dread shame, will still be greater rogues to hide the guilt. Lewson grows troublesome.—We must get rid of him.—He knows too much. I have a tale for Beverley; part of it is truth too—He shall call Lewson to account—If it succeeds, 'tis well; if not, we must try other means—But here he comes. I must dissemble.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Look to the door there. [*In a seeming fright.*]—My friend! I thought of other visitors.

Bev. No: these shall guard you from them—[*Offering notes.*] Take them, and use them cautiously—The world deals hardly by us.

Stuke. And shall I leave you destitute? No: your wants are the greatest. Another climate may treat me kinder. The shelter of to-night takes me from this.

Bev. Let these be your support then.—Yet is there need of parting? I may have means again; we'll share them, and live wisely.

Stuke. No; I should tempt you on. Habit is nature in me; ruin can't cure it. Even now I would be gaming. Taught by experience as I am, and knowing this poor sum is all that's left us, I am for venturing still.—And say I am to blame.—Yet will this supply our wants? No, we must put it out to usury. Whether 'tis madness in me, or some restless impulse of good fortune, I yet am ignorant; but—

Bev. Take it, and succeed then. I'll try no more.

Stuke. 'Tis surely impulse; it pleads so strongly—But you are cold. We'll e'en part here then. And for this last reserve, keep it for better uses; I'll have none on't. I thank you though, and will seek fortune singly. One thing I had forgot—

Bev. What is it?

Stuke. Perhaps 'twere best forgotten. But I am open in my nature, and zealous for the honour of my friend—Lewson speaks freely of you.

Bev. Of you I know he does.

Stuke. I can forgive him for't; but for my friend, I'm angry.

Bev. What says he of me?

Stuke. That Charlotte's fortune is embezzled—He talks on't loudly.

Bev. He shall be silenced then—How heard you of it?

Stuke. From many. He questioned Bates about it. You must account with him, he says.

Bev. Or he with me—and soon too.

Stuke. Speak mildly to him. Cautions are best.

Bev. I'll think on't—But whither go you?

Stuke. From poverty and prisons—No matter whither. If fortune changes, you may hear from me.

Bev. May these be prosperous then. [*Offering the notes, which he refuses.*] Nay, they are yours. I have sworn it, and will have nothing—Take them and use them.

Stuke. Singly I will not. My cares are for my friend: for his lost fortune and ruined family. All separate interest I disclaim. Together we have fallen, together we must rise. My heart, my honour, and affections, all will have it so.

Bev. I am weary of being fooled.

Stuke. And so am I. Here let us part, then. These bodings of good fortune shall all be stifled; call them folly, and forget them. This one embrace, and then farewell. [*Offering to embrace.*]

Bev. No; stay a moment—How my poor heart's distracted! I have the bodings too; but whether caught from you, or prompted by my good or evil genius, I know not—The trial shall determine—And yet, my wife—

Stuke. Ay, ay, she'll chide.

Bev. No; my chidings are all here.

[*Pointing to his heart.*]

Stuke. I'll not persuade you.

Bev. I am persuaded; by reason too; the strongest reason, necessity. Oh! could I but regain the height I have fallen from, Heaven should

for sake me in my latest hour, if I again mixed in these scenes, or sacrificed the husband's peace, his joys, and best affections, to avarice and infamy.

Stuke. I have resolved like you; and since our motives are so honest, why should we fear success?

Bev. Come on, then—Where shall we meet?

Stuke. At Wilson's—Yet if it hurts you, leave me; I have misled you often.

Bev. We have misled each other—But come! fortune is fickle, and may be tired with plaguing us—There let us rest our hopes.

Stuke. Yet think a little—

Bev. I cannot—thinking but distracts me. When desperation leads, all thoughts are vain. Reason would lose what rashness may obtain.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—BEVERLEY'S Lodgings.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Char. 'Twas all a scheme; a mean one; unworthy of my brother.

Mrs. B. No, I am sure it was not—Stukely is honest too; I know he is. This madness has undone them both.

Char. My brother irrecoverably—You are too spiritless a wife—A mournful ale, mixed with a few kind words, will steal away your soul. The world's too subtle for such goodness. Had I been by, he should have asked your life sooner than those jewels.

Mrs. B. He should have had it then. [*Warmly.*] I live but to oblige him. She who can love, and is beloved, like me, will do as much. Men have done more for mistresses, and women for a base deluder; and shall a wife do less? Your chidings hurt me, Charlotte.

Char. And come too late: they might have saved you else. How could he use you so?

Mrs. B. 'Twas friendship did it. His heart was breaking for a friend.

Char. The friend that has betrayed him.

Mrs. B. Pr'ythee, don't think so.

Char. To-morrow he accounts with me.

Mrs. B. And fairly—I will not doubt it.

Char. Unless a friend has wanted!—I have no patience—Sister! sister! we are bound to curse this friend.

Mrs. B. My Beverley speaks nobly of him.

Char. And Lewson truly—But I displease you with this talk—To-morrow will instruct us.

Mrs. B. Stay till it comes then—I would not think so hardly.

Char. Nor I, but from conviction—Yet we have hope of better days. My uncle is infirm, and of an age that threatens hourly—Or, if he lives, you never have offended him: and for distresses so unmerited he will have pity.

Mrs. B. I know it, and am cheerful. We have no more to lose; and for what's gone, if it brings prudence home, the purchase was well made.

Char. My Lewson will be kind too. While he and I have life and means, you shall divide with us—And see, he's here!

Enter LEWSON.

We were just speaking of you.

Lew. 'Tis best to interrupt you then. Few characters will bear a scrutiny; and where the bad outweighs the good, he's safest that's least talked of. What say you, Madam?

[*To CHARLOTTE.*]

Char. That I hate scandal, though a woman therefore talk seldom of you.

Mrs. B. Or, with more truth, that though a woman, she loves to praise—therefore talks always of you. I'll leave you to decide it. [*Exit.*]

Lew. How good and amiable! I came to talk in private with you, of matters that concern you.

Char. What matters?

Lew. First answer me sincerely to what I ask.

Char. Propose your question.

Lew. 'Tis now a tedious twelvemonth since, with an open and kind heart, you said you loved me. And when, in consequence of such sweet words, I pressed for marriage, you gave a voluntary promise that you would live for me.

Char. You think me changed then? [*Angrily.*]

Lew. I did not say so. Time and a near acquaintance with my faults, may have brought change. If it be so, or for a moment if you have wished this promise were unmade, here I acquit you of it. This is my question, then; and with such plainness as I ask it, I shall entreat an answer.—Have you repented of your promise?

Char. Why am I doubted?

Lew. My doubts are of myself. I have my faults, and you have observation. If, from my temper, my words, or actions, you have conceived a thought against me, or even a wish for separation, all that has passed is nothing.

Char. Why, now I'll answer you. Your doubts are prophecies. I am really changed.

Lew. Indeed!

Char. I could torment you now, as you have me, but it is not in my nature.—That I am changed, I own, for what at first was inclination is now grown reason in me; and from that reason, had I the world, nay, were I poorer than the poorest, and you too wanting bread, with but a hovel to invite me to—I would be yours, and happy.

Lew. My kindest Charlotte! [*Taking her hand.*] thanks are too poor for this—and words too weak! but, if we love so, why should our union be delayed?

Char. For happier times. The present are too wretched.

Lew. I may have reasons that press it now.

Char. What reasons?

Lew. The strongest reasons; unanswerable ones.

Char. Be quick, and name them.

Lew. First promise, that, to-morrow or the next day, you will be mine for ever.

Char. I do—though misery should succeed.

Lew. Thus then I seize you! and with you every joy on this side heaven!

Char. Now, Sir, your secret.

Lew. Your fortune's lost.

Char. My fortune lost! I'll study to be humble, then. But was my promise claimed for this? how nobly generous! where learnt you this sad news?

Lew. From Bates, Stukely's prime agent. I have obliged him, and he's grateful. He told it me in friendship, to warn me from my Charlotte.

Char. 'Twas honest in him, and I'll esteem him for it.

Lew. He knows much more than he has told.

Char. For me it is enough. And for your generous love, I thank you from my soul. If you'd oblige me more, give me a little time.

Lew. Why time? it robs us of our happiness.

Char. I have a task to learn first. The little pride this fortune gave me must be subdued. Once

we were equal; and might have met, obliging and obliged. But now 'tis otherwise; and for a life of obligations, I have not learned to bear it.

Lew. Mine is that life. You are too noble.

Char. Leave me to think on't.

Lew. To-morrow then you'll fix my happiness!

Char. All that I can, I will.

Lew. It must be so; we live but for each other. Keep what you know a secret: and when we meet to-morrow, more may be known. Farewell.

[*Exit.*]

Char. My poor, poor sister! how would this wound her! but I'll conceal it, and speak comfort to her.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Room in the Gaming House.

Enter BEVERLEY and STUKELY.

Bev. Whither would you lead me? [*Angrily.*]

Stuke. Where we may vent our curses.

Bev. Ay, on yourself, and those damned counsels that have destroyed me. A thousand fiends were in that bosom, and all let loose to tempt me—I had resisted else.

Stuke. Go on, Sir.—I have deserved this from you.

Bev. And curses everlasting—Time is too scanty for them—

Stuke. What have I done?

Bev. What the arch-devil of old did—soothed with false hopes, for certain ruin.

Stuke. Myself unhurt; nay, pleased at your destruction.—So your words mean. Why, tell it to the world. I am too poor to find a friend in't.

Bev. A friend? what's he! I had a friend.

Stuke. And have one still.

Bev. Ay; I'll tell you of this friend. He found me happiest of the happy. Fortune and honour crowned me, and love and peace lived in my heart. One spark of folly lurked there; that too he found; and by deceitful breath blew it to flames that have consumed me. This friend were you to me.

Stuke. A little more, perhaps—The friend who gave his all to save you; and, not succeeding, chose ruin with you. But no matter; I have undone you, and am a villain.

Bev. No; I think not—the villains are within.

Stuke. What villains?

Bev. Dawson and the rest. We have been dupes to sharpers.

Stuke. How know you this? I have had doubts as well as you; yet still, as fortune changed, I blushed at my own thoughts.—But you have proofs, perhaps?

Bev. Ay, damned ones. Repeated losses—night after night, and no reverse. Chance has no hand in this.

Stuke. I think more charitably; yet I am peevish in my nature, and apt to doubt. The world speaks fairly of this Dawson; so does it of the rest. We have watched 'em closely too. But 'tis a right usurped by losers, to think the winners knaves. We'll have more manhood in us.

Bev. I know not what to think. This night has stung me to the quick—blasted my reputation too—I have bound my honour to these vipers; played meanly upon credit, 'till I tired 'em; and now they shun me to rifle one another. What's to be done?

Stuke. Nothing. My counsels have been fatal.

Bev. By Heaven, I'll not survive this shame. Traitor! 'tis you have brought it on me. [*Taking*

hold of him.] Snow me the means to save me, or I'll commit a murder here, and next upon myself.

Stuke. Why, do it then, and rid me of ingratitude.

Bev. Pr'ythee, forgive this language; I speak I know not what. Rage and despair are in my heart, and hurry me to madness. My home is horror to me. I'll not return to't. Speak quickly; tell me if, in this wreck of fortune, one hope remains? name it, and be my oracle.

Stuke. To vent your curses on. You have bestowed 'em liberally. Take your own counsel; and, should a desperate hope present itself, 'twill suit your desperate fortune. I'll not advise you.

Bev. What hope? by Heaven! I'll catch at it however desperate. I am sunk in misery; it cannot lay me lower.

Stuke. You have an uncle.

Bev. Ay, what of him?

Stuke. Old men live long by temperance, while their heirs starve on expectation.

Bev. What mean you?

Stuke. That the reversion of his estate is yours, and will bring money to pay debts with. Nay, more, it may retrieve what's past.

Bev. Or leave my child a beggar.

Stuke. And what's his father? a dishonourable one; engaged for sums he cannot pay. That should be thought of.

Bev. It is my shame—the poison that inflames me. Where shall we go? To whom? I am impatient till all's lost.

Stuke. All may be yours again—Your man is Bates—He has large funds at his command, and will deal justly by you.

Bev. I am resolved. Tell 'em within, we'll meet 'em presently, and with full purses too. Come, follow me.

Stuke. No; I'll have no hand in this, nor do I counsel it. Use your discretion, and act from that. You'll find me at my lodgings.

Bev. Succeed what will, this night I'll dare the worst;

'Tis loss of fear to be completely curs'd.

[*Exit BEVERLEY.*]

Stuke. Why, lose it then for ever—Fear is the mind's worst evil, and 'tis a friendly office to drive it from the bosom. Thus far has fortune crown'd me. Yet Beverley is rich; rich in his wife's best treasure, her honour and affections. I would supplant him there too. Charlotte is sometimes absent. The seeds of jealousy are sown already. If I mistake not, they have taken root too. Now is the time to ripen them, and reap the harvest. The softest of her sex, if wronged in love, or thinking that she's wronged, becomes a tigress in revenge. I'll instantly to Beverley's—No matter for the danger. When beauty leads us on, 'tis indiscretion to reflect, and cowardice to doubt.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—BEVERLEY'S Lodgings.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and LUCY.

Mrs. B. Did Charlotte tell you any thing?

Lucy. No, Madam.

Mrs. B. She looked confused, methought; said she had business with her Lewson; which, when I pressed to know, tears were her only answer.

Lucy. She seem'd in haste too—Yet her return may bring you comfort.

Mrs. B. No, my kind girl!—I was not born

for't. But why do I distress thee? Thy sympathizing heart bleeds for the ills of others. What pity that thy mistress can't reward thee! But there's a power above, that sees, and will remember all. [*Knocking, g.*] Hark! there's some one entering.

Lucy. Perhaps 'tis my master, Madam.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter LUCY, with STUKELY.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, Madam.

[*Exit.*]

Stuke. To meet you thus alone, Madam, was what I wished. Unseasonable visits, when friendship warrants them, need no excuse—therefore I make none.

Mrs. B. What mean you, Sir? and where's your friend?

Stuke. Men may have secrets, Madam, which their best friends are not admitted to. We parted in the morning, not soon to meet again.

Mrs. B. You mean to leave us, then?—to leave your country, too? I am no stranger to your reasons, and pity your misfortunes.

Stuke. Your pity has undone you. Could Beverley do this? That letter was a false one; a mean contrivance to rob you of your jewels. I wrote it not.

Mrs. B. Impossible! whence came it then?

Stuke. Wronged as I am, Madam, I must speak plainly—

Mrs. B. Do so, and ease me. Your hints have troubled me. Reports, you say, are stirring—Reports of whom? You wished me not to credit them. What, Sir, are these reports?

Stuke. I thought them slander, Madam; and cautioned you in friendship, lest from officious tongues the tale had reached you with double aggravations.

Mrs. B. Proceed, Sir.

Stuke. It is a debt due to my fame, due to an injured wife, too.—We are both injured.

Mrs. B. How injured, and who has injured us?

Stuke. My friend, your husband.

Mrs. B. You would resent for both, then? But know, Sir, my injuries are my own, and do not need a champion.

Stuke. Be not too hasty, Madam. I come not in resentment, but for acquittance. You thought me poor, and to the feigned distresses of a friend gave up your jewels.

Mrs. B. I gave them to a husband.

Stuke. Who gave them to a—

Mrs. B. What? whom did he give them to?

Stuke. A mistress.

Mrs. B. No; on my life, he did not.

Stuke. Himself confessed it, with curses on her avarice.

Mrs. B. I'll not believe it.—He has no mistress; or, if he has, why is it told to me?

Stuke. To guard you against insults. He told me, that, to move you to a compliance, he forged that letter, pretending I was ruined, ruined by him too. The fraud succeeded; and what a trusting wife bestowed on pity, was lavished on a wanton.

Mrs. B. Then I am lost indeed! and my afflictions are too powerful for me.—His follies I have borne without upbraiding, and saw the approach of poverty without a tear.—My affections, my strong affections, supported me through every trial.

Stuke. Be patient, Madam.

Mrs. B. Patient! the barbarous, ungrateful man! And does he think that the tenderness of my heart is his best security for wounding it?

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But he shall find that injuries such as these can arm my weakness for vengeance and redress.

Stuke. Ha! then I may succeed. [*Aside.*] Redress is in your power.

Mrs. B. What redress?

Stuke. Forgive me, Madam, if, in my zeal to serve you, I hazard your displeasure. Think of your wretched state. Already, want surrounds you. Is it in patience to bear that? To see your helpless little one robbed of his birthright! A sister too, with unavailing tears, lamenting her lost fortune? No comfort left you, but ineffectual pity from the few, outweighed by insults from the many.

Mrs. B. Am I so lost a creature? Well, Sir, my redress?

Stuke. To be resolved is to secure it. The marriage vow, once violated, is in the sight of Heaven dissolved;—start not, but hear me. 'Tis now the summer of your youth; time has not cropped the roses from your cheek, though sorrow long has washed 'em.—Then use your beauty wisely; and, freed by injuries, fly from the cruellest of men, for shelter with the kindest.

Mrs. B. And who is he?

Stuke. A friend to the unfortunate; a bold one, too; who, while the storm is bursting on your brow, and lightning flashing from your eyes, dares tell you that he loves you.

Mrs. B. 'Would that these eyes had Heaven's own lightning, that with a look thus I might blast thee! Am I then fallen so low? Has poverty so humbled me, that I should listen to a hellish offer, and sell my soul for bread? O villain! villain! But now I know thee, and thank thee for the knowledge.

Stuke. If you are wise, you shall have cause to thank me.

Mrs. B. An injured husband, too, shall thank thee.

Stuke. Yet know, proud woman, I have a heart as stubborn as your own; as haughty and imperious: and as it loves, so it can hate.

Mrs. B. Mean, despicable villain! I scorn thee and thy threats. Was it for this that Beverley was false! that his too credulous wife should in despair and vengeance give up her honour to a wretch? But he shall know it, and vengeance shall be his.

Stuke. Why, send him for defiance then. Tell him, I love his wife; but that a worthless husband forbids our union. I'll make a widow of you, and court you honourably.

Mrs. B. O coward! coward! thy soul will shrink at him. Yet, in the thoughts of what may happen, I feel a woman's fears. Keep thy own secret, and begone. [*Rings a bell.*] Who's there?

Enter LUCY.

Your absence, Sir, will please me.

Stuke. I'll not offend you, Madam.

[*Exit with LUCY.*]

Mrs. B. Why opens not the earth to swallow such a monster? Be conscience then his punisher, till Heaven, in mercy, gives him penitence, or dooms him in its justice. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—STUKELY'S Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY and BATES, meeting.

Bates. Where have you been?

Stuke. Fooling my time away—Playing my tricks, like a tame monkey, to entertain a woman—No matter where—I have been vexed and disappointed. Tell me of Beverley—How bore he his last shock?

Bates. Like one (so Dawson says) whose senses had been numbed with misery. When all was lost, he fixed his eyes upon the ground, and stood some time with folded arms, stupid and motionless.—Then, snatching his sword, that hung against the wainscot, he sat him down, and, with a look of fixed attention, drew figures on the floor.—At last he started up, looked wild, and trembled; and like a woman, seized with her sex's fits, laughed out aloud, while the tears trickled down his face—so left the room.

Stuke. Why this was madness.

Bates. The madness of despair.

Stuke. We must confine him then. A prison would do well. [*A knocking at the door.*] Hark! that knocking may be his. Go that way down. [*Exit BATES.*] Who's there?

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. An enemy, an open and avowed one.

Stuke. Why am I thus broke in upon? This house is mine, Sir, and should protect me from insult and ill manners.

Lew. Guilt has no place of sanctuary: wherever found, 'tis virtue's lawful game. The fox's hole and tiger's den are no security against the hunter.

Stuke. Your business, Sir?

Lew. To tell you that I know you. Why this confusion? that look of guilt and terror?—Is Beverley awake? Or has his wife told tales? The man that dares like you, should have a soul to justify his deeds, and courage to confront accusers,—not with a coward's fear to shrink beneath reproof.

Stuke. Who waits there?

[*Aloud, and in confusion.*]

Lew. By Heaven! he dies that interrupts us. [*Shutting the door.*] You should have weighed your strength, Sir: and then, instead of climbing to high fortune, the world had marked you for what you are, a little paltry villain.

Stuke. You think I fear you.

Lew. I know you fear me. This is to prove it. [*Pulls him by the sleeve.*] You wanted privacy! A lady's presence took up your attention! Now we are alone, Sir. Why, what a wretch! [*Flings him from him.*] The vilest insect in creation will turn when trampled on; yet has this thing undone a man! By cunning and mean arts undone him! But we have found you, Sir; traced you through all your labyrinths. If you would save yourself, fall to confession. No mercy will be shown else.

Stuke. First prove me what you think me.—Till then your threatenings are in vain,—and for this insult vengeance may yet be mine.

Lew. Infamous coward! why take it now, then.—[*Draws, and STUKELEY retires.*] Alas! I pity thee.—Yet that a wretch like this should overcome a Beverley! It fills me with astonishment!—A wretch, so mean of soul, that even desperation cannot animate him to look upon his enemy. You should not have thus soared, Sir, unless, like others of your black profession, you had a sword to keep the fools in awe your villany has ruined.

Stuke. Villany! 'Twere best to curb this li-

cense of your tongue; for know, Sir, while there are laws, this outrage on my reputation will not be borne with.

Lew. Laws! dar'st thou seek shelter from the laws? those laws, which thou and thy infernal crew live in the constant violation of? Talk'st thou of reputation, too? when under friendship's sacred name, thou hast betrayed, robbed, and destroyed?

Stuke. Ay, rail at gaming; 'tis a rich topic, and affords noble declamation. Go preach against it in the city; you'll find a congregation in every tavern. If they should laugh at you, fly to my lord, and sermonize it there. He'll thank you, and reform.

Lew. And will example sanctify a vice? no, wretch! the custom of my lord, or of the cit that apes him, cannot excuse a breach of law, or make the gamester's calling reputable.

Stuke. Rail on, I say.—But is this zeal for beggared Beverley? Is it for him that I am treated thus? No! he and his wife might both have groaned in prison, had but the sister's fortune escaped the wreck, to have rewarded the disinterested love of honest Mr. Lewson.

Lew. How do I detest thee for the thought! But thou art lost to every human feeling. Yet let me tell thee, and may it wring thy heart, that, though my friend is ruined by thy snares, thou hast unknowingly been kind to me.

Stuke. Have I? It was, indeed, unknowingly.

Lew. Thou hast assisted me in love; given me that merit that I wanted; since but for thee, my Charlotte had not known 'twas her dear self I sighed for, and not her fortune.

Stuke. Thank me, and take her then.

Lew. And as a brother to poor Beverley, I will pursue the robber that has stripped him, and snatch him from his gripe.

Stuke. Then know, imprudent man, he is within my gripe; and should my friendship for him be slandered once again, the hand that has supplied him shall fall and crush him.

Lew. Why, now there's spirit in thee; this is indeed to be a villain! But I shall reach thee yet.—Fly where thou wilt, my vengeance shall pursue thee.—And Beverley shall yet be saved; be saved from thee, thou monster! nor owe his rescue to his wife's dishonour. [*Exit.*]

Stuke. [*Pausing.*] Then ruin has inclosed me. Curse on my coward heart! I would be bravely villanous; but 'tis my nature to shrink at danger, and he has found me. Yet fear brings caution, and that security—More mischief must be done to hide the past. Look to yourself, officious Lewson—there may be danger stirring. How now, Bates?

Enter BATES.

Bates. What is the matter? 'Twas Lewson, and not Beverley, that left you—I heard him loud—You seem alarmed too.

Stuke. Ay, and with reason—we are discovered. *Bates.* I feared as much, and therefore cautioned you—but you were peremptory.

Stuke. Thus fools talk ever; spending their idle breath on what is past, and trembling at the future. We must be active. Beverley, at worst, is but suspicious; but Lewson's genius, and his hate to me, will lay all open. Means must be found to stop him.

Bates. What means?

Stuke. Despatch him. Nay, start not; desperate occasions call for desperate deeds. We live but by his death.

Bates. You cannot mean it?

Stuke. I do, by Heaven.

Bates. Good night, then. [Going.]

Stuke. Stay—I must be heard, then answered. Perhaps the motion was too sudden, and human weakness starts at murder, though strong necessity compels it. I have thought long of this, and my first feelings were like yours; a foolish conscience awed me, which soon I conquered. The man that would undo me, nature cries out, undo. Brutes know their foes by instinct; and where superior force is given, they use it for destruction. Shall man do less? Lewson pursues us to our ruin; and shall we, with the means to crush him, fly from our hunter, or turn and tear him? 'Tis folly even to hesitate.

Bates. He has obliged me, and I dare not.

Stuke. Why, live to shame, then, to beggary and punishment. You would be privy to the deed, yet want the soul to act it. Nay more, had my designs been levelled at his fortune, you had stept in the foremost.—And what is life without its comforts? Those you would rob him of; and, by a lingering death, add cruelty to murder. Henceforth, adieu to half-made villains—there's danger in them. What you have got is yours; keep it, and hide with it—I'll deal my future bounty to those that merit it.

Bates. What's the reward?

Stuke. Equal division of our gains. I swear it, and will be just.

Bates. Think of the means then.

Stuke. He's gone to Beverley's—Wait for him in the street—'Tis a dark night, and fit for mischief. A dagger would be useful.

Bates. He sleeps no more.

Stuke. Consider the reward! when the deed's done, I have other business with you. Send Dawson to me.

Bates. Think it already done—and so, farewell. [Exit.]

Stuke. Why, farewell, Lewson then; and farewell to my fears. This night secures me. I'll wait the event within. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—The Street.—Stage darkened.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. How like an outcast do I wander! Loaded with every curse that drives the soul to desperation! The midnight robber, as he walks his rounds, sees, by the glimmering lamp, my frantic looks, and dreads to meet me. Whither am I going? My home lies there; all that is dear on earth it holds too; yet are the gates of death more welcome to me—I'll enter it no more—Who passes there? 'Tis Lewson.—He meets me in a gloomy hour; and memory tells me he has been meddling with my fame.

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. Beverley! well met. I have been busy in your affairs.

Bev. So I have heard, Sir; and now I must thank you as I ought.

Lew. To-morrow I may deserve your thanks. Late as it is, I go to Bates. Discoveries are making that an arch villain trembles at.

Bev. Discoveries are made, Sir, that you shall tremble at. Where is this boasted spirit, this

high demeanour, that was to call me to account? You say, I have wronged my sister.—Now say as much. But, first be ready for defence, as I am for resentment. [Draws.]

Lew. What mean you? I understand you not.

Bev. The coward's stale acquaintance! who, when he spreads foul calumny abroad, and dreads just vengeance on him, cries out, "What mean you? I understand you not."

Lew. Coward and calumny! Whence are those words? But I forgive and pity you.

Bev. Your pity had been kinder to my fame: but you have traduced it; told a vile story to the public ear, that I have wronged my sister.

Lew. 'Tis false! Show me the man that dares accuse me.

Bev. I thought you brave, and of a soul superior to low malice; but I have found you, and will have vengeance. This is no place for argument.

Lew. Nor shall it be for violence. Imprudent man! who, in revenge for fancied injuries, would pierce the heart that loves him! But honest friendship acts from itself, unmoved by slander or ingratitude: the life you thirst for shall be employed to serve you.—You know me not.

Bev. Yes; for the slander of my fame—who, under show of friendship, arraigns me of injustice; buzzing in every ear foul breach of trust, and family dishonour.

Lew. Have I done this? Who told you so?

Bev. The world—'Tis talked of every where. —It pleased you to add threats too—You were to call me to account—Why, do it now then; I should be proud of such an arbiter.

Lew. Put up your sword, and know me better. I never injured you. The base suggestion comes from Stukely; I see him and his aims.

Bev. What aims? I'll not conceal it; 'twas Stukely that accused you.

Lew. To rid him of an enemy—Perhaps of two—He fears discovery, and frames a tale of falsehood, to ground revenge and murder on.

Bev. I must have proof of this.

Lew. Wait till to-morrow then.

Bev. I will.

Lew. Good night—I go to serve you—Forget what's past, as I do; and cheer your family with smiles—To-morrow may confirm them, and make all happy. [Exit.]

Bev. [Pausing.] How vile and how absurd is man! His boasted honour is but another name for pride, which easier bears the consciousness of guilt, than the world's just reproofs! But 'tis the fashion of the times; and in defence of falsehood and false honour, men die martyrs. I knew not that my nature was so bad.— [Stands musing.]

Enter BATES and JARVIS.

Jar. This way the noise was; and yonder's my poor master.

Bates. I heard him at high words with Lewson.

Jar. I heard him too. Misfortunes vex him.

Bates. Go to him, and lead him home.—I'll not be seen by him. [Exit.]

Bev. [Starting.] What fellow's that? [Seeing JARVIS.] Art thou a murderer, friend? Come, lead the way—I have a hand as mischievous as thine; a heart as desperate too.—Jarvis! To bed, old man; the cold will chill thee.

Jar. Why are you wandering at this late hour?

—Your sword drawn too! For Heaven's sake, sheathe it, Sir: the sight distracts me.

Bev. Whose voice is that? [*Wildly.*]

Jar. 'Twas mine, Sir: let me entreat you to give the sword to me.

Bev. Ay, take it; quickly take it. Perhaps I am not so cursed, but Heaven may have sent thee at this moment to snatch me from perdition.

Jar. Then I am blessed.

Bev. Continue so, and leave me; my sorrows are contagious. No one is blessed that's near me.

Jar. I came to seek you, Sir.

Bev. And now thou hast found me, leave me. My thoughts are wild, and will not be disturbed.

Jar. Such thoughts are best disturbed.

Bev. Who sent thee hither?

Jar. My weeping mistress.—Alas, forget your griefs, and let me lead you to her. The streets are dangerous.

Bev. Be wise, and leave me then. The night's black horrors are suited to my thoughts.—These stones shall be my resting-place. [*Throws himself on the ground.*] Here shall my soul brood o'er its miseries; till, with the fiends of hell and guilty of the earth, I start and tremble at the morning's light.

Jar. Let patience, not despair, possess you—Rise, I beseech you.—There's not a moment of your absence that my poor mistress does not mourn for.

Bev. Have I undone her, and is she still so kind? [*Starting up.*] It is too much—My brain can't hold it. Oh, Jarvis! how desperate is that wretch's state, which only death or madness can relieve!

Jar. Appease his mind, good Heaven, and give him resignation! Alas, Sir, could beings in the other world perceive the events of this, how would your parents' blessed spirits grieve for you, even in heaven!—Let me conjure you, by their honoured memories—by the sweet innocence of your yet helpless child, and by the ceaseless sorrows of my poor mistress, to rouse your manhood, and struggle with these griefs!

Bev. Thou virtuous, good, old man! Thy tears and thy entreaties have reached my heart, through all its miseries.

Jar. Be but resigned, Sir, and happiness may yet be yours. Hark! I hear voices.—Come this way: we may reach home unnoticed.

Bev. Unnoticed, didst thou say? Alas! I dread no looks but of those wretches I have made at home. Oh, had I listened to thy honest warnings, no earthly blessing had been wanting to me; but I have warred against the power that blessed me, and now am sentenced to the hell I merit.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—STUKELY'S Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY and DAWSON.

Stuke. Come hither, Dawson; my limbs are on the rack, and my soul shivers in me, till this night's business be complete.—Tell me thy thoughts; is Bates determined, or does he waver?

Daw. At first, he seemed irresolute; wished the employment had been mine, and muttered curses on his coward hand, that trembled at the deed.

Stuke. And did he leave you so?

Daw. No; we walked together; and, sheltered by the darkness, saw Beverley and Lewson in warm debate: but soon they cooled; and then I

left them to hasten hither; but not till 'twas resolved Lewson should die.

Stuke. Thy words have given me life.—That quarrel, too, was fortunate; for, if my hopes deceive me not, it promises a rave to Beverley.

Daw. You misconceive me. Lewson and he were friends.

Stuke. But my prolific brain shall make them enemies. If Lewson falls, he falls by Beverley. Ask me no question, but do as I direct. This writ [*Takes out a pocket-book.*] for some days past I have treasured here, till a convenient time called for its use. That time is come: take it, and give it to an officer. It must be served this instant.

[*Gives a paper.*]

Daw. On Beverley?

Stuke. Look at it. It is for the sums that I have lent him.

Daw. Must he to prison then?

Stuke. I ask obedience, not replies. This night a gaol must be his lodging. 'Tis probable he is not gone home yet. Wait at his door, and see it executed.

Daw. Upon a beggar? He has no means of payment.

Stuke. Dull and insensible! If Lewson dies, who was it killed him? Why, he that was seen quarrelling with him; and I, that knew of Beverley's intents, arrested him in friendship.—A little late, perhaps; but it was a virtuous act, and men will thank me for it.—Now, Sir, you understand me.

Daw. Most perfectly; and will about it.

Stuke. Haste, then; and when it is done, come back and tell me.

Daw. Till then, farewell.

[*Exit.*]

Stuke. Now tell thy tale, fond wife! and Lewson, if again thou can'st, insult me.

Not avarice now, but vengeance fires my breast!

And one short hour must make me curs'd or bless'd.

[*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—STUKELY'S Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY, BATES, and DAWSON.

Bates. Poor Lewson!—But I told you enough last night. The thought of him is horrible to me.

Stuke. In the street did you say; and no one near him?

Bates. By his own door; he was leading me to his house. I pretended business with him, and stabbed him to the heart, while he was reaching at the bell.

Stuke. And did he fall so suddenly?

Bates. The repetition pleases you, I see.—I told you he fell without a groan.

Stuke. What heard you of him this morning?

Bates. That the watch found him in their rounds, and alarmed the servants. I mingled with the crowd just now, and saw him dead in his own house. The sight terrified me.

Stuke. Away with terrors, till his ghost rise and accuse us. We have no living enemy to fear, unless 'tis Beverley; and him we have lodged safe in prison.

Bates. Must he be murdered too?

Stuke. No; I have a scheme to make the law his murderer.—At what hour did Lewson fall?

Bates. The clock struck twelve as I turned to leave him. 'Twas a melancholy bell, I thought tolling for his death.

Stuke. The time was lucky for us.—Beverley was arrested at one, you say? [*To* DAWSON.]

Daw. Exactly.

Stuke. Good! We'll talk of this presently.—The women were with him, I think.

Daw. And old Jarvis. I would have told you of them last night, but your thoughts were too busy. 'Tis well you have a heart of stone, the tale would melt it else.

Stuke. Out with it, then.

Daw. I traced him to his lodgings; and, pretending pity for his misfortunes, kept the door open while the officers seized him. 'Twas a damned deed—but no matter—I followed my instructions.

Stuke. And what said he?

Daw. He upbraided me with treachery; called you a villain; acknowledged the sums you had lent him; and submitted to his fortune.

Stuke. And the women?

Daw. For a few moments astonishment kept them silent. They looked wildly at one another, while the tears streamed down their cheeks. But rage and fury soon gave them words; and then, in the very bitterness of despair, they cursed me, and the monster that had employed me.

Stuke. And you bore it with philosophy?

Daw. Till the scene changed, and then I melted. I ordered the officers to take away their prisoner. The women shrieked, and would have followed him; but we forbade them. 'Twas then they fell upon their knees, the wife fainted, the sister raving, and both, with all the eloquence of misery, endeavouring to soften us. I never felt compassion till that moment; and, had the officers been moved like me, we had left the business undone, and fled with curses on ourselves. But their hearts were steeled by custom. The sighs of beauty, and the pangs of affection, were beneath their pity. They tore him from their arms, and lodged him in prison, with only Jarvis to comfort him.

Stuke. There let him lie, till we have further business with him.—But how to proceed will require time and thought.—Come along with me; the room within is fitted for privacy.—But no compassion, Sir. [*To* DAWSON.] We want leisure for't.—This way. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—BEVERLEY'S Lodgings.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. B. No news of Lewson yet?

Char. None. He went out early, and knows not what has happened.

Mrs. B. The clock strikes eight; I'll wait no longer. Oh, what a night was last night! I would not pass another such to purchase worlds by it.—My poor Beverley too! What must he have felt?—The very thought distracts me!—To have him torn at midnight from me! A loathsome prison his habitation! A cold damp room his lodging! The bleak winds, perhaps, blowing upon his pillow! No fond wife to lull him to his rest! And no reflections to wound and tear him!—'Tis too horrible!—I wanted love for him, or they had not forced him from me.—They should have parted soul and body first.—I was too tame.

Char. You must not talk so. All that we could we did; and Jarvis did the rest. The faithful creature will give him comfort. See where he comes! His looks are cheerful too!

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Enter JARVIS.

Mrs. B. Are tears then cheerful? Alas, he weeps! Speak to him, Charlotte.

Char. How does your master, Jarvis?

Jar. I am old and foolish, Madam; and tears will come before my words. But don't you weep; [*To* MRS. BEVERLEY.] I have a tale of joy for you.

Mrs. B. Say but he's well, and I have joy enough.

Jar. All shall be well.—I have news for him, that will make his poor heart bound again. Fie upon old age! How childish it makes me! I have a tale of joy for you, and my tears drown it.

Mrs. B. What is it, Jarvis?

Jar. Your uncle, Madam, died yesterday.

Mrs. B. My uncle!—Oh Heavens!

Char. How heard you of his death?

Jar. His steward came express, Madam; I met him in the street, inquiring for your lodgings. I should not rejoice, perhaps—but he was old, and my poor master a prisoner. Now he shall I've again. Oh, 'tis a brave fortune! and 'twas death to me to see him a prisoner.

Char. How did he pass the night, Jarvis?

Jar. Like a man dreaming of death and horrors.—When they led him to his cell, he flung himself upon a wretched bed, and lay speechless till day-break. I spoke to him, but he would not hear me; and when I persisted, he raised his hand at me, and knit his brow so—I thought he would have struck me. I bid him be of comfort.—Be gone, old wretch, says he. My wife! my child! my sister! I have undone them all, and will know no comfort! Then, falling upon his knees, he imprecated curses upon himself.

Mrs. B. This is too horrible! But we have staid too long. Let us haste to comfort him, or die with him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Prison.

BEVERLEY is discovered, sitting.

Bev. Why there's an end then; I have judged deliberately, and the result is death! How the self-murderer's account may stand I know not, but this I know—the load of hateful life oppresses me too much.—The horrors of my soul are more than I can bear [*Offers to kneel.*] Father of mercy!—I cannot pray.—Despair has laid his iron hand upon me, and sealed me for perdition—Conscience! conscience! thy clamours are too loud!—Here's that shall silence thee. [*Takes a vial out of his pocket, and looks at it.*] Thou art most friendly to the miserable. Come then, thou cordial for sick minds—Come to my heart. [*Drinks.*] Oh, that the grave would bury memory as well as body! For if the soul sees and feels the sufferings of those dear ones it leaves behind, the Everlasting has no vengeance to torment it deeper—I'll think no more on't—Reflection comes too late—Once there was a time for't—but now 'tis past.—Who's there?

Enter JARVIS.

Jar. One that hoped to see you with better looks—Why do you turn so from me? I have brought comfort with me. And see who comes to give it welcome!

Bev. My wife and sister! Why 'tis but one pang more, and then, farewell, world!

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. B. Where is he? [*Runs and embraces*

him.] Oh, I have him! I have him! And now they shall never part us more—I have news, love, to make you happy for ever. Alas, he hears us not!—Speak to me, love. I have no heart to see you thus.

Bev. This is a sad place!

Mrs. B. We come to take you from it—to tell you the world goes well again—that Providence has seen our sorrows, and sent the means to help them. Your uncle died yesterday.

Bev. My uncle!—No, do not say so!—Oh, I am sick at heart!

Mrs. B. Indeed! I meant to bring you comfort.

Bev. Tell me he lives then—If you would bring me comfort, tell me he lives!

Mrs. B. And if I did—I have no power to raise the dead—He died yesterday.

Bev. And am I heir to him?

Jar. To his whole estate, Sir—But bear it patiently—pray, bear it patiently.

Bev. Well, well—[*Pausing.*] Why fame says I am rich then?

Mrs. B. And truly so—Why do you look so wildly?

Bev. Do I? The news was unexpected.—But has he left me all?

Jar. All, all, Sir. He could not leave it from you.

Bev. I am sorry for it.

Mrs. B. Why are you disturbed so?

Bev. Has death no terrors in it?

Mrs. B. Not an old man's death. Yet, if it troubles you, I wish him living.

Bev. And I, with all my heart, for I have a tale to tell, shall turn you into stone; or, if the power of speech remain, you shall kneel down and curse me.

Mrs. B. Alas! what tale is this? and why are we to curse you?—I'll bless you for ever.

Bev. No, I have deserved no blessings; the world holds not such another wretch. All this large fortune, this second bounty of Heaven, that might have healed our sorrows, and satisfied our utmost hopes, in a cursed hour I sold last night.

Char. Sold! how sold?

Mrs. B. Impossible!—it cannot be.

Bev. That devil Stukely, with all hell to aid him, tempted me to the deed. To pay false debts of honour, and to redeem past errors, I sold the reversion—Sold it for a scanty sum, and lost it among villains.

Char. Why, farewell all then.

Bev. Liberty and life. Come, kneel and curse me.

Mrs. B. Then hear me, Heaven! [*Kneels.*] Look down with mercy on his sorrows! give softness to his looks, and quiet to his heart! take from his memory the sense of what is past, and cure him of despair! On me! on me! if misery must be the lot of either, multiply misfortunes! I'll bear them patiently, so he is happy: these hands shall toil for his support, these eyes be lifted up for hourly blessings on him; and every duty of a fond and faithful wife be doubly done to cheer and comfort him!—So hear me! so reward me!

Bev. I would kneel too, but that offended Heaven would turn my prayers into curses; for I have done a deed, to make life horrible to you—

Jar. Ask him no questions, Madam. This last misfortune has hurt his brain: a little time will give him patience.

Enter STUKELY.

Bev. Why is this villain here?

Stuke. To give you liberty and safety. There, Madam, is his discharge. [*Giving a paper to Mrs. BEVERLEY.*] Let him fly this moment. The arrest last night was meant in friendship, but came too late.

Char. What mean you, Sir?

Stuke. The arrest was too late, I say; I would have kept his hands from blood—but was too late.

Mrs. B. His hands from blood—Whose blood?

Stuke. From Lewson's blood.

Char. No, villain! yet what of Lewson?

Speak quickly.

Stuke. You are ignorant, then; I thought I heard the murderer at confession.

Char. What murderer?—And who is murdered? not Lewson!—Say he lives, and I'll kneel and worship you.

Stuke. In pity, so I would: but that the tongues of all cry murder: I came in pity, not in malice, to save the brother, not kill the sister. Your Lewson's dead.

Char. Oh, horrible!

Bev. Silence; I charge you—Proceed, Sir.

Stuke. No, justice may stop the tale—and here's an evidence.

Enter BATES.

Bates. The news, I see, has reached you; but take comfort, Madam. [*To CHAR.*] There's one without inquiring for you—Go to him, and lose no time.

Char. O misery! misery! misery! [*Exit.*]

Mrs. B. Follow her, Jarvis; if it be true that Lewson's dead, her grief may kill her.

Bates. Jarvis must stay here, Madam: I have some questions for him.

Stuke. Rather let him fly; his evidence may crush his master.

Bev. Why ay, this looks like management.

Bates. He found you quarrelling with Lewson in the street last night. [*To BEV.*]

Mrs. B. No, I am sure he did not.

Jar. Or if I did—

Mrs. B. 'Tis false, old man—They had no quarrel: there was no cause for quarrel.

Bev. Let him proceed, I say—Oh! I am sick! sick!—Reach me a chair. [*He sits down.*]

Mrs. B. If Lewson's dead, you killed him not.

Enter DAWSON.

Stuke. Who sent for Dawson?

Bates. 'Twas I—We have a witness too, you little think of—Without, there.

Stuke. What witness?

Bates. A right one. Look at him.

Enter LEWSON and CHARLOTTE.

Stuke. Lewson! O villains! villains! [*To BATES and DAWSON.*]

Mrs. B. Risen from the dead! why, this is unexpected happiness!

Char. Or is it his ghost? [*To STUKELY.*]—That sight would please you, Sir.

Jar. What riddle's this?

Bev. Be quick and tell it. My minutes are but few.

Mrs. B. Alas! why so? you shall live long and happily.

Lew. While shame and punishment shall rack that viper. [*Pointing to STUKELY.*]—The tale is short—I was too busy in his secrets, and therefore

doomed to die: Bates, to prevent the murder, undertook it. I kept aloof to give it credit.

Char. And gave me pangs unutterable.

Lew. I felt them all, and would have told you.—But vengeance wanted ripening. The villain's scheme was but half executed. The arrest by Dawson followed the supposed murder—And now, depending on his once wicked associates, he comes to fix the guilt on Beverley.

Mrs. B. Oh! execrable wretch!

Bates. Dawson and I are witnesses of this.

Lew. And of a thousand frauds; his fortune ruined by sharpers and false dice; and Stukely sole contriver and possessor of all.

Daw. Had he but stopped on this side murder, we had been villains still.

Mrs. B. Thus Heaven turns evil into good; and, by permitting sin, warns men to virtue.

Lew. Yet punishes the instrument: so shall our laws, though not with death: but death were mercy. Shame, beggary, and imprisonment: unpitied misery, the stings of conscience, and the curses of mankind, shall make life hateful to him—till at last his own hand end him. How does my friend?

Bev. Why, well; who is he that asks me? *[To BEV.]*

Mrs. B. 'Tis Lewson, love—Why do you look so at him?

Bev. They told me he was murdered.

[Wildly.]

Mrs. B. Ay, but he lives to save us.

Bev. Lend me your hand—the room turns round.

Mrs. B. Oh! Heaven.

Lew. This villain here disturbs him: remove him from his sight—And for your lives see that you guard him. *[STUKELY is taken off by DAWSON and BATES.]* How is it now, Sir?

Bev. 'Tis here—and here, *[Pointing to his head and heart.]* and now it tears me!

Mrs. B. You feel convulsed too—What is't disturbs you?

Bev. A furnace rages in this heart.—Down, restless flames!—*[Laying his hand on his heart.]* down to your native hell—there you shall rack me—Oh! for a pause from pain! Where's my wife? Can you forgive me, love?

Mrs. B. Alas! for what?

Bev. For meanly dying.

Mrs. B. No—do not say it.

Bev. As truly as my soul must answer it.—

Had Jarvis staid this morning, all had been well. But, pressed by shame—pent in a prison—tormented with my pangs for you—driven to despair and madness—I took the advantage of his absence, corrupted the poor wretch he left to guard me, and swallowed—poison.

Lew. O fatal deed!

Char. Dreadful and cruel!

Bev. Ay, most accursed—And now I go to my account.—Bend me and let me kneel. *[They lift him from his chair, he kneels.]* I'll pray for you too.—Thou Power that madest me, hear me; if, for a life of frailty, and this too hasty deed of death, thy justice dooms me, here I acquit the sentence. But if, enthroned in mercy where thou sittest, thy pity has beheld me, send me a gleam of hope, that in these last and bitter moments my soul may taste of comfort! and for these mourners here, O let their lives be peaceful, and their deaths happy! *[They lift him to the chair.]*

Mrs. B. Restore him, Heaven! Oh save him! save him! or let me die too.

Bev. No, live, I charge you.—We have a little one. Though I have left him, you will not leave him.—To Lewson's kindness I bequeath him—Is not this Charlotte? we have lived in love, though I have wronged you;—can you forgive me, Charlotte?

Char. Forgive you!—O, my poor brother!

Bev. Oh! for a few short moments, to tell you how my heart bleeds for you—that even now, thus dying as I am, dubious and fearful of hereafter, my bosom pang is for your miseries. Support her, Heaven!—And now, I go—Oh mercy, mercy! *[Dies.]*

Lew. Then all is over—How is it, Madam?

—My poor Charlotte, too!

Char. Her grief is speechless.

Lew. Remove her from this sight—Lead and support her. Some ministering angel bring her peace! *[CHARLOTTE leads her off.]* And thou poor, breathless corse, may thy departed soul have found the rest it prayed for! save but one error, and this last fatal deed, thy life was lovely. Let frailer minds take warning; and from example learn, that want of prudence is want of virtue.

*Follies, if uncontrolled, of every kind,
Grow into passions, and subdue the mind;
With sense and reason hold superior strife,
And conquer honour, nature, fame and life.*

[Exit.]

THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY DR. HOADLY.

REMARKS.

'This comedy arose at the time when a systematic opposition to new pieces placed the hapless authors in double peril; but, in the instance before us, all prejudice gradually subsided, and the *Suspicious Husband* continued to attract crowded houses as frequently as any modern comedy on the list. What Mr. Foote has said of this play is so just, that we shall transcribe it here.

"Most of the characters are real; the incidents are interesting; the catastrophe pleasing; and the language pure, spirited, and natural. Among the scenes in which the author designed to ridicule the absurdity of suspicion, is that where Mr. Strickland is desirous, and yet afraid, of engaging his domestics in the service of his passion. His perplexity, his resolutions, and hesitations, make up so natural and so comic a description of that disease of the mind, that the play, were there no other reason, deserves the highest commendation.

Mrs. Strickland's innocence, joined to her other amiable qualities, interests the audience in her favour.

The two fine gentlemen, Frankly and Bellamy, differ little from the fine gentlemen of other writers; they laugh, sing, say good things, and are in love.

"The rake is a lively portrait of that character in life; his errors arise from the want of reflection. A lively imagination, with a great flow of spirits, hurries him into all the follies of the town; but there is not the least shadow of wickedness or dishonour in any of his actions: he avoids both with the same care that he would a precipice. Our author was willing to try whether Italy could furnish a fool as ridiculous and diverting as our neighbours of France. But no sooner has Jack Meggot raised our attention, than he slips through our fingers like an eel, and we hear no more of him till the last scene. He does, in truth, survive the loss of his monkey, but is never tolerable company after." *The Roman and English Comedy compared.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN, 1809.

DRURY LANE, 1813.

STRICTLAND.....	Mr. Egerton.....	Mr. Powell.
RANGER.....	Mr. Jones.....	Mr. Elliston.
FRANKLY.....	Mr. Brunton.....	Mr. Decamp.
BELLAMY.....	Mr. Claremont.....	Mr. Holland.
JACK MEGGOT.....	Mr. Farley.....	Mr. R. Palmer.
TESTER.....	Mr. Simmons.....	Mr. Penley.
JOHN.....	Mr. Holland.....	Mr. West.
THOMAS.....	Mr. Trueman.....	Mr. Buxton.
GEORGE.....	Mr. Louis.....	Mr. Ebsworth.
SIMON.....	Mr. Jefferies.....	Mr. Chatterley.
BUCKLE.....	Mr. Menage.....	Mr. Fisher.
WILLIAM.....	Mr. Atkins.....	Mr. Miller.
JAMES.....	Mr. Sarjant.....	Mr. Jameson.
CHAIRMEN.....	Mess. Wilde and Powers.....	Mess. Maddocks and Appleby.
MRS. STRICTLAND.....	Miss Logan.....	Mrs. Moore.
CLARINDA.....	Mrs. H. Johnston.....	Mrs. Davison.
JACINTHA.....	Miss Norton.....	Mrs. Orger.
LANDLADY.....	Mrs. Emery.....	Mrs. Maddocks.
MILLINER.....	Mrs. Ridgway.....	Mrs. Scott.
LUCETTA.....	Mrs. Gibbs.....	Miss Mellon.
JENNY.....	Miss Cox.....	Mrs. Chatterley.
FANNY.....	Mrs. Bologna.....	Miss Cooke.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—RANGER's Chambers in the Temple.

A knocking is heard at the door for some time ; when RANGER enters, having let himself in.

Ran. Once more I am got safe to the Temple. Let me reflect a little. I have sat up all night; I have my head full of bad wine, and the noise of oaths, dice, and the damned tingling of tavern bells; my spirits jaded, and my eyes sunk in my

head; and all this for the conversation of a company of fellows I despise. Their wit lies only in obscenity, their mirth in noise, and their delight in a box and dice. Honest Ranger, take my word for it, thou art a mighty silly fellow.

Enter a SERVANT.

Where have you been, rascal? If I had not had the key in my pocket, I must have waited at the door in this dainty dress.

Serv. I was only below, brushing your honour's coat.

Ran. Well, get breakfast.—Why, how like a raking dog do you look, compared to that spruce sober gentleman. [*Aside.*] Go, you battered devil, and be made fit to be seen.

[*Throwing his hat to the SERVANT.*

Serv. 'Egad, my master's very merry this morning. [*Exit.*

Ran. And now for the law.

[*Sits down and reads.*

*Tell me no more, I am deceiv'd,
That Chloe's false and common;
By Heaven, I all along believ'd,
She was a very woman.
As such I liked, as such caress'd;
She still was constant when possess'd:
She could do more for no man.*

Honest Congreve was a man after my own heart.

Enter SERVANT.

Have you been for the money this morning, as I ordered you?

Serv. No, Sir; you bade me go before you was up; I did not know your honour meant before you went to bed.

Ran. None of your jokes, I pray; but to business. Go to the coffee-house, and inquire if there has been any letter or message left for me. [*Exit.*

Serv. I shall, Sir.

Ran. [*Reads.*] *You think she's false, I'm sure she's kind,*

*I take her body, you her mind;
Which has the better bargain?*

Oh that I had such a soft deceitful fair to lull my senses to their desired sleep. [*Knocking at the door.*] Come in.

Enter SIMON.

Oh, Master Simon, is it you? How long have you been in town?

Sim. Just come, Sir, and but for a little time neither; and yet I have as many messages as if we were to stay the whole year round. Here they are, all of them. [*Pulls out a number of cards.*] And among them one for your honour.

Ran. [*Reads.*] *Clarinda's compliments to her cousin Ranger, and should be glad to see him, for ever so little a time that he can be spared from the more weighty business of the law.*—

Ha, ha, ha! the same merry girl I ever knew her.

Sim. My lady is never sad, Sir.

[*Knock at the door.*

Ran. Pr'ythee, Simon, open the door.

Enter MILLINER.

Well, child—and who are you?

Mil. Sir, my mistress gives her service to you, and has sent you home the linen you bespoke.

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Ran. Well, Simon, my service to your lady, and let her know I will most certainly wait upon her. I am a little busy, Simon—and so—

Sim. Ah, you're a wag, Master Ranger, you're a wag—but mum for that. [*Exit.*

Ran. I swear, my dear, you have the prettiest pair of eyes—the loveliest pouting lips—I never saw you before.

Mil. No, Sir! I was always in the shop.

Ran. Were you so? Well, and what does your mistress say?—The devil fetch me, child, you looked so prettily, that I could not mind one word you said.

Mil. Lard, Sir, you are such another gentleman! Why, she says she is sorry she could not send them sooner. Shall I lay them down?

Ran. No, child; give 'em to me—Dear, little, smiling angel— [*Catches and kisses her.*

Mil. I beg, Sir, you would be civil.

Ran. Civil! 'Egad, I think I am very civil.

[*Kisses her.*

Re-enter a SERVANT, with BELLAMY.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Bellamy. [*Exit.*

Ran. Damn your impertinence. [*Aside.*]—Oh, Mr. Bellamy, your servant.

Mil. What shall I say to my mistress?

Ran. Bid her make half a dozen more; but be sure you bring them home yourself. [*Exit MILLINER.*] Pshaw! Pox! Mr. Bellamy, how should you like to be served so yourself?

Bel. How can you, Ranger, for a minute's pleasure, give an innocent girl the pain of heart I am confident she felt?—There was a modest blush upon her cheek convinces me she is honest.

Ran. May be so. I was resolved to try, however, had not you interrupted the experiment.

Bel. Fie, Ranger, will you never think?

Ran. Yes, but I can't be always a thinking. The law is a damnable dry study, Mr. Bellamy, and without something now and then to amuse and relax, it would be too much for my brain, I promise ye—But I am a mighty sober fellow grown. Here have I been at it these three hours, but the wenches will never let me alone.

Bel. Three hours! Why, do you usually study in such shoes and stockings?

Ran. Rat your inquisitive eyes. *Ex pede Herculem.* 'Egad, you have me. The truth is, I am but this moment returned from the tavern. What, Frankly here too!

Enter FRANKLY.

Frank. My boy, Ranger, I am heartily glad to see you; Bellamy, let me embrace you; you are the person I want; I have been at your lodgings, and was directed hither.

Ran. It is to him then I am obliged for this visit; but with all my heart. He is the only man to whom I don't care how much I am obliged.

Bel. Your humble servant, Sir.

Frank. You know, Ranger, I want no inducement to be with you. But—you look sadly—What—no merciless jade has she?

Ran. No, no: sound as a roach, my lad. . . only got a little too much liquor last night, which I have not slept off yet.

Bel. Thus, Frankly, it is every day. All the morning his head aches; at noon he begins to clear up; towards evening he is good company,

and all night he is carefully providing for the same course the next day.

Ran. Why, I must own, my ghostly father, I did relapse a little last night, just to furnish out a decent confession for the day.

Frank. And he is now doing penance for it. Were you his confessor, indeed, you could not well desire more.

Ran. Charles, he sets up for a confessor with the worst grace in the world. Here has he been reproving me for being but decently civil to my milliner. Plague! because the coldness of his constitution makes him insensible of a fine woman's charms, every body else must be so too.

Bel. I am no less sensible of their charms than you are, though I cannot kiss every woman I meet, or fall in love, as you call it, with every face which has the bloom of youth upon it. I would only have you a little more frugal of your pleasures.

Frank. My dear friend, this is very pretty talking! but let me tell you, it is in the power of the very first glance from a fine woman utterly to disconcert all your philosophy.

Bel. It must be from a fine woman then, and not such as are generally reputed so. And it must be a thorough acquaintance with her too, that will ever make an impression on my heart.

Ran. Would I could see it once! for, when a man has been all his life hoarding up a stock, without allowing himself common necessities, it tickles me to the soul to see him lay it all out upon a wrong bottom, and become bankrupt at last.

Bel. Well, I don't care how soon you see it. For the minute I find a woman capable of friendship, love, and tenderness, with good sense enough to be always easy, and good nature enough to like me, I will immediately put it to the trial, which of us shall have the greatest share of happiness from the sex, you or I.

Ran. By marrying her, I suppose? capable of friendship, love, and tenderness! ha, ha, ha! that a man of your sense should talk so. If she be capable of love, 'tis all I require of my mistress; and as every woman, who is young, is capable of love, I am very reasonably in love with every young woman I meet. My lord Coke, in a case I read this morning, speaks my sense.

Bel. Frank. My lord Coke?

Ran. Yes, my lord Coke. What he says of one woman, I say of the whole sex:

*I take their bodies, you their minds;
Which has the better bargain?*

Frank. There is no arguing with so great a lawyer. Suppose, therefore, we adjourn the debate to some other time. I have some serious business with Mr. Bellamy, and you want sleep, I am sure.

Ran. Sleep! mere loss of time and hinderance of business.—We men of spirit, Sir, are above it.

Bel. Whither shall we go?

Frank. Into the park. My chariot is at the door.

Bel. Then if my servant calls, you'll send him after us?

[*Exeunt BELLAMY and FRANKLY.*]

Ran. I will. [*Looks on the card.*]—Clarinda's compliments.—A pox of this head of mine! never once to ask where she was to be found. It's plain

she is not one of us, or I should not have been so remiss in my inquiries. No matter; I shall meet her in my walks.

Re-enter a SERVANT.

Serv. There is no letter nor message, Sir.

Ran. Then my things, to dress.

[*Exit SERVANT.*]

I take her body, you her mind;

Which has the better bargain?

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter MRS. STRICTLAND and JACINTHA, meeting.

Mrs. S. Good morning, my dear Jacintha.

Jac. Good morrow to you, Madam. I have brought my work, and intend to sit with you this morning. I hope you have got the better of your fatigue. Where is Clarinda? I should be glad if she would come and work with us.

Mrs. S. She work! she is too fine a lady to do any thing. She is not stirring yet—we must let her have her rest. People of her waste of spirits require more time to recruit again.

Jac. It is pity she should be ever tired with what is so agreeable to every body else. I am prodigiously pleased with her company.

Mrs. S. And when you are better acquainted, you will be still more pleased with her. You must rally her upon her partner at Bath; for I fancy part of her rest has been disturbed on his account.

Jac. Was he really a pretty fellow?

Mrs. S. That I can't tell; I did not dance myself, and so did not much mind him. You must have the whole story from herself.

Jac. Oh, I warrant ye, I get it all out. None are so proper to make discoveries in love, as those who are in the secret themselves.

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Madam, Mr. Strictland is inquiring for you. Here has been Mr. Buckle with a letter from his master, which has made him very angry.

Jac. Mr. Bellamy said indeed he would try him once more, but I fear it will prove in vain. Tell your master I am here. [*Exit LUCETTA.*]

What signifies fortune, when it only makes us slaves to other people?

Mrs. S. Do not be uneasy, my Jacintha. You shall always find a friend in me; but as for Mr. Strictland, I know not what ill temper hangs about him lately—nothing satisfies him. You saw how he received us when we came off our journey. Though Clarinda was so good company, he was barely civil to her, and downright rude to me.

Jac. I cannot help saying, I did observe it.

Mrs. S. I saw you did. Hush! he's here.

Enter STRICTLAND.

Strict. Oh, your servant, Madam! Here, I have received a letter from Mr. Bellamy, wherein he desires I would once more hear what he has to say. You know my sentiment; nay, so does he.

Jac. For Heaven's sake, consider, Sir, this is no new affair, no sudden start of passion: we have known each other long. My father valued and loved him, and I am sure, were he alive, I should have his consent.

Strict. Don't tell me. Your father would not have you marry against his will, neither will I against mine. I am your father now.

Jac. And you take a fatherly care of me.

Strict. I wish I had never had any thing to do with you.

Jac. You may easily get rid of the trouble.

Strict. By listening, I suppose, to the young gentleman's proposals?

Jac. Which are very reasonable, in my opinion.

Strict. Oh, very modest ones truly; and a very modest gentleman he is that proposes them! A fool, to expect a lady of thirty thousand pounds fortune should, by the care and prudence of her guardian, be thrown away upon a young fellow not worth three hundred a year. He thinks being in love is an excuse for this; but I am not in love: what does he think will excuse me?

Mrs. S. Well; but, Mr. Strictland, I think the gentleman should be heard.

Strict. Well, well, seven o'clock 's the time; and if the man has had the good fortune, since I saw him last, to persuade somebody or other to give him a better estate, I give him my consent, not else. His servant waits below: you may tell him I shall be at home. [*Exit JACINTHA.*] But where is your friend, your other half, all this while? I thought you could not have breathed a minute without your Clarinda.

Mrs. S. Why the truth is, I was going to see what makes her keep her chamber so long.

Strict. Lookye, Mrs. Strictland, you have been asking for money this morning. In plain terms, not one shilling shall pass through these fingers, till you have cleared my house of this Clarinda.

Mrs. S. How can her innocent gayety have offended you? she is a woman of honour, and has as many good qualities—

Strict. As women of honour generally have. I know it, and therefore am uneasy.

Mrs. S. But, Sir—

Strict. But, Madam—Clarinda, nor e'er a rake of fashion in England, shall live in my family to debauch it.

Mrs. S. Sir, she treated me with so much civility in the country, that I thought I could not do less than invite her to spend as much time with me in town as her engagements would permit. I little imagined you could have been displeased at my having so agreeable a companion.

Strict. There was a time when I was company enough for leisure hours.

Mrs. S. There was a time when every word of mine was sure of meeting with a smile; but those happy days, I know not why, have long been over.

Strict. I cannot bear a rival even of your own sex. I hate the very name of female friends. No two of you can ever be an hour by yourselves, but one or both are the worse of it.

Mrs. S. Dear Mr. Strictland—

Strict. This I know, and will not suffer.

Mrs. S. It grieves me, Sir, to see you so much in earnest: but, to convince you how willing I am to make you easy in every thing, it shall be my request to her to remove immediately.

Strict. Do it—harkye—your request?—Why yours!—'tis mine—my command—tell her so. I will be master of my own family, and I care not who knows it.

Mrs. S. You fright me, Sir.—But it shall be as you please. [*Exit, in tears.*]

Strict. Ha! have I gone too far? I am not master of myself. Mrs. Strictland!

Re-enter MRS. STRICTLAND.

Understand me right. I do not mean, by what I have said, that I suspect your innocence; but by crushing this growing friendship all at once, I may prevent a train of mischief which you do not foresee. I was perhaps too harsh, therefore do it in your own way; but let me see the house fairly rid of her. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. S. His earnestness in this affair amazes me; I am sorry I made this visit to Clarinda; and yet I'll answer for her honour. What can I say to her? Necessity must plead in my excuse—for at all events Mr. Strictland must be obeyed. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—ST. JAMES'S Park.

Enter BELLAMY and FRANKLY.

Bel. Is love the secret Ranger is not fit to hear? In my mind, he would prove the more able counsellor. And is all the gay indifference of my friend at last reduced to love?

Frank. Even so.—Never was prude more resolute in chastity and ill nature, than I was fixed in indifference: but love has raised me from that inactive state above the being of a man.

Bel. Faith, Charles, I begin to think it has; but pray bring this rupture into order a little, and tell me regularly, how, where, and when.

Frank. If I was not more unreasonably in love, those horrid questions would stop my mouth at once; but as I am armed against reason—I answer—at Bath, on Tuesday, she danced and caught me.

Bel. Danced! and was that all? But who is she? what is her name? her fortune? where does she live?

Frank. Hold! hold! not so many hard questions; have a little mercy. I know but little of her, that's certain; but all I do know you shall have. That evening was the first of her appearing at Bath; the moment I saw her, I resolved to ask the favour of her hand: but the easy freedom with which she gave it, and her unaffected good humour during the whole night, gained such a power over my heart, as none of her sex could ever boast before. I waited on her home, and the next morning, when I went to pay the usual compliments, the bird was flown; she was set out for London two hours before, and in a chariot and six, you rogue.

Bel. But was it her own, Charles?

Frank. That I don't know; but it looks better than being dragged to town in the stage. That day and the next I spent in inquiries. I waited on the ladies who came with her; they knew no thing of her. So, without learning either her name or fortune, I e'en called for my boots, and rode post after her.

Bel. And how do you find yourself after your journey?

Frank. Why, as yet, I own I am but upon a cold scent: but a woman of her sprightliness and gentility cannot but frequent all public places and when once she is found, the pleasure of the chase will over-pay the pains of rousing her. Oh Bellamy! there was something peculiarly charming in her, that seemed to claim my further acquaintance; and if in the other more familiar parts of life she shines with that superior lustre, and at last I win her to my arms, how shall I bless my resolution in pursuing her!

Bel. But if at last she should prove unworthy—

Frank. I would endeavour to forget her.

Bel. Promise me that, Charles, [*Takes his hand.*] and I allow—But we are interrupted.

Enter JACK MEGGOT.

J. Meg. Whom have we here? My old friend, Frankly! thou art grown a mere antique since I saw thee. How hast thou done these five hundred years?

Frank. Even as you see me; well, and at your service ever.

J. Meg. Ha! who's that?

[*Apart to FRANKLY.*

Frank. A friend of mine. [*Apart.*] Mr. Bellamy, this is Jack Meggot, Sir, as honest a fellow as any in life.

J. Meg. Pho! pry'thee! pox! Charles—Don't be silly.—Sir, I am your humble: any one who is a friend of my Frankly's, I am proud of embracing.

Bel. Sir, I shall endeavour to deserve your civility.

J. Meg. Oh, Sir!—Well, Charles; what, dumb?—Come, come, you may talk, though you have nothing to say, as I do. Let us hear; where have you been?

Frank. Why, for this last week, Jack, I have been at Bath.

J. Meg. Bath! the most ridiculous place in life! amongst tradesmen's wives who hate their husbands, and people of quality that had rather go to the devil than stay at home—people of no taste, no *gout*; and for *divertimenti*, if it were not for the puppet-show, *la vertu* would be dead amongst you. But the news, Charles; the ladies—I fear your time hung heavy on your hands, by the small stay you made there.

Frank. Faith, and so it did, Jack; the ladies are grown such idiots in love. The cards have so debauched their five senses, that love, almighty love himself, is utterly neglected.

J. Meg. It is the strangest thing in life, but it is just so with us abroad. Faith, Charles, to tell you a secret which I don't care if all the world knows, I am almost surfeited with the service of the ladies; the modest ones, I mean. The vast variety of duties they expect, as dressing up to the fashion, losing fashionably, keeping fashionable hours, drinking fashionable liquors, and fifty other such irregular niceties, so ruin a man's pocket and constitution, that, 'fore gad, he must have the estate of a duke, and the strength of a gondolier, who would list himself into their service.

Frank. A free confession truly, Jack, for one of your coat.

Bel. The ladies are obliged to you.

Enter BUCKLE, with a letter to BELLAMY.

J. Meg. Oh lard, Charles! I have had the greatest misfortune in life since I saw you: poor Otto, that I brought from Rome with me is dead.

Frank. Well, well, get you another, and all will be well again.

J. Meg. No; the rogue broke me so much china, and gnawed my Spanish-leather shoes so filthily, that when he was dead, I began not to endure him.

Bel. Exactly at seven! Run back and assure him I will not fail. [*Exit BUCKLE.*] Dead! pray who was the gentleman?

J. Meg. This gentleman was my monkey, Sir; an odd sort of a fellow, that used to divert me, and pleased every one so at Rome, that he always made one in our conversations. But, Mr. Bellamy, I saw a servant; I have no engagement, for you two positively shall dine with me: I have the finest macaroni in life. Oblige me so far.

Bel. Sir, your servant; what say you, Frankly?

J. Meg. Pho! pox! Charles, you shall go. My aunts think you begin to neglect them; and old maids, you know, are the most jealous creatures in life.

Frank. Ranger swears they can't be maids, they are so good-natured. Well, I agree, on condition I may eat what I please, and go away just when I will.

J. Meg. Ay, ay, you shall do just what you will. But how shall we do? my post-chaise wont carry us all.

Frank. My chariot is here, and I will conduct Mr. Bellamy.

Bel. Mr. Meggot, I beg pardon, I can't possibly dine out of town; I have an engagement early in the evening.

J. Meg. Out of town! No, my dear, I live just by. I see one of the dilettanti I would not miss speaking to for the universe. And so I expect you at three. [*Exit.*

Frank. Ha, ha, ha! and so you thought you had at least fifty miles to go post for a spoonful of macaroni?

Bel. A special acquaintance I have made to-day!

Frank. For all this, Bellamy, he has a heart worthy your friendship. He spends his estate freely; and you cannot oblige him more than by showing him how he can be of service to you.

Bel. Now you say something. It is the heart, Frankly, I value in a man.

Frank. Right—and there is a heart even in a woman's breast that is worth the purchase, or my judgment has deceived me. Dear Bellamy, I know your concern for me; see her first, and then blame me if you can.

Bel. So far from blaming you, Charles, that if my endeavours can be serviceable, I will beat the bushes with you.

Frank. That I am afraid will not do; for you know less of her than I: but if, in your walks, you meet a finer woman than ordinary, let her not escape till I have seen her. Wheresoever she is, she cannot long lie hid. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—St. James' Park.

Enter CLARINDA, JACINTHA, and MRS. STRICTLAND.

Jac. Ay, ay, we both stand condemned out of our own mouths.

Cl. Why, I cannot but own I never had thought of any man that troubled me but him.

Mrs. S. Then I dare swear, by this time, you heartily repent your leaving Bath so soon.

Cl. Indeed, you are mistaken. I have not had one scruple since.

Jac. Why, what one inducement can he have ever to think of you again?

Cl. Oh, the greatest of all inducements, curiosity: let me assure you a woman's surest hold over a man is to keep him in uncertainty. As soon as ever you put him out of doubt, you put

him out of your power: but, when once a woman has awakened his curiosity, she may lead him a dance of many a troublesome mile, without the least fear of losing him at last.

Jac. Now do I heartily wish he may have spirit enough to follow, and use you as you deserve. Such a spirit, with but a little knowledge of our sex, might put that heart of yours into a strange flutter.

Cla. I care not how soon. I long to meet with such a fellow. Our modern beaux are such joint-babies in love, they have no feeling; they are entirely insensible either of pain or pleasure but from their own dear persons; and according as we flatter or affront their beauty, they admire or forsake ours: they are not worthy even of our displeasure: and, in short, abusing them is but so much ill nature merely thrown away. But the man of sense, who values himself upon his high abilities, or the man of wit, who thinks a woman beneath his conversation—to see such the subjects of our power, the slaves of our frowns and smiles, is glorious indeed!

Mrs. S. No man of sense, or wit either, if he be truly so, ever did or ever can think a woman of merit beneath his wisdom to converse with.

Jac. Nor will such a woman value herself upon making such a lover uneasy.

Cla. Amazing! Why, every woman can give ease. You cannot be in earnest.

Mrs. S. I can assure you she is, and has put in practice the doctrine she has been teaching.

Cla. Impossible! Who ever heard the name of love mentioned without an idea of torment? But pray let us hear.

Jac. Nay, there is nothing to hear, that I know of.

Cla. So I suspected indeed. The novel is not likely to be long, when the lady is so well prepared for the *denouement*.

Jac. The novel, as you call it, is not so short as you may imagine. I and my spark have been long acquainted: as he was continually with my father, I soon perceived he loved me; and the manner of his expressing that love was what pleased and won me most.

Cla. Well, and how was it? the old bait, flattery; dear flattery, I warrant ye.

Jac. No, indeed; I had not the pleasure of hearing my person, wit, and beauty, painted out with forced praises; but I had a more sensible delight, in perceiving the drift of his whole behaviour was to make every hour of my time pass away agreeably.

Cla. The rustic! what, did he never say a handsome thing of your person?

Mrs. S. He did, it seems, what pleased her better; he flattered her good sense, as much as a less cunning lover would have done her beauty.

Cla. On my conscience, you are well matched.

Jac. So well, that if my guardian denies me happiness (and this evening he is to pass his final sentence,) nothing is left but to break my prison, and fly into my lover's arms for safety.

Cla. Hey-day! o my conscience, thou art a brave girl. Thou art the very first prude that ever had honesty enough to avow her passion for a man.

Jac. And thou art the first finished coquette who ever had any honesty at all.

Mrs. S. Come, come, you are both too good for either of those characters.

Cla. And my dear Mrs. Strictland here, is the first young married woman of spirit who has an ill-natured fellow for a husband, and never once thinks of using him as he deserves.—Good Heaven! If I had such a husband—

Mrs. S. You would be just as unhappy as I am!

Cla. But come now, confess—do not you long to be a widow?

Mrs. S. Would I were any thing but what I am!

Cla. Then go the nearest way about it. I'd break that stout heart of his in less than a fortnight. I'd make him know—

Mrs. S. Pray, be silent. You know my resolution.

Cla. I know you have no resolution.

Mrs. S. You are a mad creature, but I forgive you.

Cla. It is all meant kindly, I assure you. But since you won't be persuaded to your good, I will think of making you easy in your submission, as soon as ever I can. I dare say I may have the same lodging I had last year: I can know immediately.—I see my chair: and so, ladies both, adieu.

[*Exit.*]

Jac. Come, Mrs. Strictland, we shall but just have time to get home before Mr. Bellamy returns.

Mrs. S. Let us return then to our common prison. You must forgive my ill nature, Jacintha, if I almost wish Mr. Strictland may refuse to join your hand where your heart is given.

Jac. Lord, Madam, what do you mean?

Mrs. S. Self-interest only, child. Methinks your company in the country would soften all my sorrows, and I could bear them patiently.

Re-enter CLARINDA.

Cla. Dear Mrs. Strictland.—I am so confused, and so out of breath—

Mrs. S. Why, what's the matter?

Jac. I protest, you fright me.

Cla. Oh! I have no time to recover myself, I am so frightened and so pleased. In short then, the dear man is here.

Mrs. S. Here—Lord—Where?

Cla. I met him this instant; I saw him at a distance, turned short, and ran hither directly. Let us go home.—I tell you he follows me.

Mrs. S. Why, had you not better stay, and let him speak to you.

Cla. Ay!—But then—he won't know where I live, without my telling him.

Mrs. S. Come then. Ha, ha, ha!

Jac. Ay, poor Clarinda!—*Allons donc.*

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter FRANKLY.

Frank. Sure that must be she! her shape and easy air cannot be so exactly copied by another. Now, you young rogue, Cupid, guide me directly to her, as you would the surest arrow in your quiver.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Street before STRICTLAND'S door.

Enter CLARINDA, JACINTHA, and MRS. STRICTLAND.

Cla. Lord!—Dear Jacintha—for Heaven's sake make haste: he'll overtake us before we get in.

Jac. Overtake us! why, he is not in sight

Cla. Is he not? Ha! Sure I have not dropped my fan.—I would not have him lose sight of me neither.

Mrs. S. Here he is—

Cla. In—In—In, then.

Jac. [*Laughing*.] What, without your fan?

Cla. Pshaw! I have lost nothing.—In, in, I'll follow you.

[*Exeunt into the house, CLARINDA last.*]

Enter FRANKLY.

Frank. It is impossible I should be deceived. My eyes, and the quick pulses at the heart, assure me it is she. Ha! 'tis she, by Heaven! and the door left open too.—A fair invitation, by all the rules of love. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—An Apartment in STRICTLAND'S House.

Enter CLARINDA, FRANKLY following her.

Frank. I hope, Madam, you will excuse the boldness of this intrusion, since it is owing to your own behaviour that I am forced to it.

Cla. To my behaviour, Sir?

Frank. You cannot but remember me at Bath, Madam, where I so lately had the favour of your hand—

Cla. I do remember, Sir; but I little expected any wrong interpretation of my behaviour from one who had so much the appearance of a gentleman.

Frank. What I saw of your behaviour was so just, it would admit of no misrepresentation. I only feared, whatever reason you had to conceal your name from me at Bath, you might have the same to do it now; and though my happiness was so nearly concerned, I rather chose to venture thus abruptly after you, than be impertinently inquisitive.

Cla. Sir, there seems to be so much civility in your rudeness, that I can easily forgive it; though I don't see how your happiness is at all concerned.

Frank. No, Madam! I believe you are the only lady who could, with the qualifications you are mistress of, be insensible of the power they give you over the happiness of our sex.

Cla. How vain should we women be, if you gentlemen were but wise! If you did not all of you say the same things to every woman, we should certainly be foolish enough to believe some of you were in earnest.

Frank. Could you have the least sense of what I feel whilst I am speaking, you would know me to be in earnest, and what I say to be the dictates of a heart that admires you; may I not say that—

Cla. Sir, this is carrying the—

Frank. When I danced with you at Bath, I was charmed with your whole behaviour; and felt the same tender admiration: but my hope of seeing you afterwards kept in my passion till a more proper time should offer. You cannot therefore blame me now, if, after having lost you once, I do not suffer an inexcusable modesty to prevent my making use of this second opportunity.

Cla. This behaviour, Sir, is so different from the gaiety of your conversation then, that I am at a loss how to answer you.

Frank. There is nothing, Madam, which could take off from the gaiety with which your presence inspires every heart, but the fear of losing you. How can I be otherwise than as I am, when I

know not, but you may leave London as abruptly as you did Bath.

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Madam, the tea is ready, and my mistress waits for you.

Cla. Very well, I come. [*Exit LUCETTA*] You see, Sir, I am called away: but I hope you will excuse it, when I leave you with an assurance, that the business which brings me to town will keep me here some time.

Frank. How generous it is in you thus to ease the heart that knew not how to ask for such a favour—I fear to offend—But this house I suppose is yours?

Cla. You will hear of me, if not find me, here.

Frank. I then take my leave. [*Exit.*]

Cla. I'm undone!—He has me!

Enter MRS. STRICTLAND.

Mrs. S. Well; how do you find yourself?

Cla. I do find—that if he goes on as he has begun, I shall certainly have him without giving him the least uneasiness.

Mrs. S. A very terrible prospect, indeed!

Cla. But I must tease him a little—Where is Jacintha? how will she laugh at me, if I become a pupil of hers, and learn to give ease! No; positively, I shall never do it.

Mrs. S. Poor Jacintha has met with what I feared from Mr. Strictland's temper, an utter denial. I know not why, but he really grows more and more ill-natured.

Cla. Well; now do I heartily wish my affairs were in his power a little, that I might have a few difficulties to surmount: I love difficulties; and yet, I don't know—it is as well as it is.

Mrs. S. Ha, ha, ha! Come, the tea waits.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter STRICTLAND.

Strict. These doings in my house distract me. I met a fine gentleman; when I inquired who he was—why, he came to Clarinda. I met a footman too, and he came to Clarinda. I shall not be easy till she is decamped. My wife had the character of a virtuous woman—and they have not been long acquainted: but then they were by themselves at Bath—That hurts—that hurts—they must be watched, they must; I know them, I know all their wiles, and the best of them are but hypocrites—Ha!

Re-enter LUCETTA, who passes over the Stage.

Suppose I bribe the maid: she is of their council, the manager of their secrets: it shall be so; money will do it, and I shall know all that passes. Lucetta!

Luc. Sir.

Strict. Lucetta!

Luc. Sir.—If he should suspect, and search me now, I'm undone. [*Aside.*]

Strict. She is a sly girl, and may be serviceable. [*Aside.*—Lucetta, you are a good girl, and have an honest face. I like it. It looks as if it carried no deceit in it—Yet, if she should be false, she can do me most harm. [*Aside.*]

Luc. Pray, Sir, speak out.

Strict. No; she is a woman, and it is the highest imprudence to trust her. [*Aside.*]

Luc. I am not able to understand you.

Strict. I am glad of it. I would not have you understand me

Luc. Then what did you call me for?—If he should be in love with my face, it would be rare sport.

Strict. Tester, ay, Tester is the proper person. [*Aside.*] Lucetta, tell Tester I want him.

Luc. Yes, Sir.—Mighty odd, this! It gives me time, however, to send Buckle with this letter to his master.

Strict. Could I but be once well satisfied that my wife had really finished me, I believe I should be as quiet as if I were sure to the contrary: but whilst I am in doubt, I am miserable.

Enter TESTER.

Tes. Does your honour please to want me?

Strict. Ay, Tester—I need not fear. The honesty of his service, and the goodness of his look, make me secure. I will trust him. [*Aside.*]—Tester, I think I have been a tolerable good master to you.

Tes. Yes, Sir—very tolerable.

Strict. I like his simplicity well. It promises honesty. [*Aside.*] I have a secret, Tester, to impart to you: a thing of the greatest importance. Look upon me, and don't stand picking your fingers.

Tes. Yes, Sir.—No, Sir.

Strict. But will not his simplicity expose him the more to Lucetta's cunning? Yes, yes; she will worm the secret out of him. I had better trust her with it at once.—So—I will. [*Aside.*] Tester, go send Lucetta hither.

Tes. Yes, Sir—Here she is.

Re-enter LUCETTA.

Lucetta, my master wants you.

Strict. Get you down, Tester.

Tes. Yes, Sir.

Luc. If you want me, Sir, I beg you would make haste, for I have a thousand things to do.

Strict. Well, well; what I have to say will not take up much time, could I but persuade you to be honest.

Luc. Why, Sir, I hope you don't suspect my honesty?

Strict. Well, well; I believe you honest.

Luc. What can be at the bottom of all this?

Strict. So; we cannot be too private. Come hither, hussy; nearer yet.

Luc. Lord, Sir! you are not going to be rude. I vow I will call out.

Strict. Hold your tongue—Does the baggage laugh at me? She does; she mocks me, and will reveal it to my wife; and her insolence upon it will be more insupportable to me than cuckoldom itself. [*Aside.*] I have not leisure now. Lucetta—Some other time—Hush! Did not the bell ring? Yes, yes; my wife wants you. Go, go, go to her. [*Pushes her out.*] There is no hell on earth like being a slave to suspicion.

SCENE IV.—The Piazza, Covent Garden.

Enter BELLAMY and JACK MEGGOT.

Bel. Nay, nay; I would not put your family into any confusion.

J. Meg. None in life, my dear, I assure you. I will go and order every thing this instant for her reception.

Bel. You are too obliging, Sir; but you need not be in this hurry, for I am in no certainty when

I shall trouble you; I only know that my Jacinta has taken such a resolution.

J. Meg. Therefore we should be prepared; for, when once a lady has such a resolution in her head, she is upon the rack till she executes it. Fore gad, Mr. Bellamy, this must be a girl of fire.

Enter FRANKLY.

Frank. Buxom and lively as the bounding doe—Fair as painting can express, or youthful poets fancy when they love. Tol de rol lol!

[*Singing and dancing.*]

Bel. Who is this you talk thus rapturously of?

Frank. Who should it be, but—I shall know her name to-morrow.

J. Meg. What is the matter, ho! Is the man mad?

Frank. Even so, gentlemen; as mad as love and joy can make me.

Bel. But inform me whence this joy proceeds.

Frank. Joy! joy! my lads! she's found! my Perdita! my charmer!

J. Meg. 'Egad! her charms have bewitched the man, I think.—But who is she?

Bel. Come, come, tell us who is this wonder!

Frank. But will you say nothing?

Bel. Nothing, as I live.

Frank. Nor you?

J. Meg. I'll be as silent as the grave—

Frank. With a tombstone upon it, to tell every one whose dust it carries.

J. Meg. I'll be as secret as a debauched prude—

Frank. Whose sanctity every one suspects. Jack, Jack, 'tis not in thy nature; keeping a secret is worse to thee than keeping thy accounts. But to leave fooling, listen to me both, that I may whisper it into your ears, that echo may not catch the sinking sound.—I cannot tell who she is, faith.—Tol de rol lol—

J. Meg. Mad! mad! very mad!

Frank. All I know of her is, that she is a charming woman, and has given me liberty to visit her again.—Bellamy, 'tis she, the lovely she.

[*Apart to BELLAMY.*]

Bel. So I did suppose.

J. Meg. Poor Charles! for Heaven's sake, Mr. Bellamy, persuade him to go to his chamber, whilst I prepare every thing for you at home. Adieu. [*Aside to BELLAMY.*] B'ye, Charles. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*]

Frank. Oh, love! thou art a gift worthy of a god indeed! Dear Bellamy, nothing now could add to my pleasure, but to see my friend as deep in love as I am.

Bel. I show my heart is capable of love by the friendship it bears to you.

Frank. The light of friendship looks but dim before the brighter flame of love; love is the spring of cheerfulness and joy. Why, how dull and phlegmatic do you show to me now; whilst I am all life; light as feathered Mercury.—You, dull and cold as earth and water; I, light, and warm as air and fire.—These are the only elements in love's world! Why, Bellamy, for shame get thee a mistress, and be sociable.

Bel. Frankly, I am now going to—

Frank. Why that face now? Your humble servant, Sir. My flood of joy shall not be stopped by your melancholy fits, I assure you. [*Going.*]

Bel. Stay, Frankly, I beg you stay. What would you say now if I were really in love?

Frank. Why faith, thou hast such romantic notions of sense and honour, that I know not what to say.

Bel. To confess the truth then, I am in love.

Frank. And do you confess it as if it were a sin? Proclaim it aloud; glory in it—boast of it as your greatest virtue. Swear it with a lover's oath, and I will believe you.

Bel. Why then, by the bright eyes of her I love—

Frank. Well said!

Bel. By all that's tender, amiable, and soft, in woman—

Frank. Bravo!

Bel. I swear, I am as true an enamorate as ever tagged rhyme.

Frank. And art thou then thoroughly in love? Come to my arms, thou dear companion of my joys. [Embrace.]

Enter RANGER.

Ran. Why—Hey!—Is there never a wench to be got for love or money?

Bel. Pshaw! Ranger here?

Ran. Yes, Ranger is here, and perhaps does not come so impertinently as you may imagine. Faith! I think I have the knack of finding out secrets. Nay, never look so queer.—Here is a letter, Mr. Bellamy, that seems to promise you better diversion than your hugging one another.

Bel. What do you mean?

Ran. Do you deal much in these paper tokens?

Bel. Oh the dear, kind creature! it is from herself. [Apart to FRANKLY.]

Ran. What, is it a pair of laced shoes she wants? or have the boys broke her windows?

Bel. Hold your profane tongue!

Frank. Nay, prythee, Bellamy, don't keep it to yourself, as if her whole affections were contained in those few lines.

Ran. Prythee let him alone to his silent raptures. But it is as I always said—your grave men ever are the greatest whore-masters.

Bel. I cannot be disoblighd now, say what you will: but how came this into your hands?

Ran. Your servant Buckle and I changed commissions; he went on my errand, and I came on his.

Bel. 'Sdeath! I want him this very instant.

Ran. He will be here presently; but I demand to know what I have brought you.

Frank. Ay, ay! out with it! you know we never blab, and may be of service.

Bel. Twelve o'clock! oh, the dear hour!

Ran. Why it is a pretty convenient time, indeed.

Bel. By all that's happy, she promises in this letter here—to leave her guardian this very night, and run away with me.

Ran. How is this?

Bel. Nay, I know not how myself—she says at the bottom—

Your servant has full instructions from Lucretia, how to equip me for my expedition. I will not trust myself home with you to-night, because I know it is inconvenient; therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging; it is no matter how far off my guardian's.—Yours, JACINTHA.

Ran. Carry her to a bagnio, and there you may lodge with her.

Frank. Why this must be a girl of spirit faith!

Bel. And beauty equal to her sprightliness. I love her, and she loves me. She has thirty thousand pounds to her fortune.

Ran. The devil she has!

Bel. And never plays at cards.

Ran. Nor does any one thing like any other woman, I suppose.

Frank. Not so, I hope, neither.

Bel. Oh, Frankly, Ranger, I never felt such ease before! the secret's out, and you don't laugh at me.

Frank. Laugh at thee for loving a woman with thirty thousand pounds? thou art a most unaccountable fellow.

Ran. How the devil could he work her up to this! I never could have had the face to have done it. But—I know not how—there is a degree of assurance in you modest gentlemen, which we impudent fellows never can come up to.

Bel. Oh! your servant, good Sir. You should not abuse me now, Ranger, but do all you can to assist me.

Ran. Why, look ye, Bellamy, I am a damnable unlucky fellow, and so will have nothing to do in this affair: I'll take care to be out of the way, so as to do you no harm; that's all I can answer for; and so—success attend you. [Going.] I cannot leave you quite to yourself neither; for if this should prove a round-house affair, as I make no doubt it will, I believe I may have more interest there than you; and so, Sir, you may hear of me at— [Whispers.]

Bel. For shame, Ranger! the most noted gaming-house in town.

Ran. Forgive me this once, my boy. I must go, faith, to pay a debt of honour to some of the greatest rascals in town. [Exit.]

Frank. But where do you design to lodge her?

Bel. At Mr. Meggot's—He is already gone to prepare for her reception.

Frank. The properest place in the world: his aunts will entertain her with honour.

Bel. And the newness of her acquaintance will prevent its being suspected.—Frankly, give me your hand; this is a very critical time.

Frank. Pho! none of your musty reflections now! When a man is in love, to the very brink of matrimony, what the devil has he to do with Plutarch and Seneca? Here is your servant, with a face full of business—I'll leave you together—I shall be at the King's Arms, where, if you want my assistance, you may find me. [Exit.]

Enter BUCKLE.

Bel. So, Buckle, you seem to have your hands full.

Buck. Not fuller than my head, Sir, I promise you. You have had your letter, I hope?

Bel. Yes, and in it she refers me to you for my instructions.

Buck. Why, the affair stands thus. As Mr. Strickland sees the door locked and barred every night himself, and takes the key with him, it is impossible for us to escape any way but through the window: for which purpose I have a ladder of ropes.

Bel. Good—

Buck. And because a hoop, as the ladies wear them now, is not the most decent dress to come down a ladder in, I have in this other bundle a

suit of boy's clothes, which I believe will fit her; at least, it will serve the time she wants it.—You will soon be for pulling it off, I suppose.

Bel. Why, you are in spirits, you rogue.

Buck. These I am now to convey to Lucetta—Have you any thing to say, Sir?

Bel. Nothing, but that I will not fail at the hour appointed. Bring me word to Mr. Meggot's how you go on. Succeed in this, and it shall make your fortune. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street before Mr. STRICTLAND'S House.*

Enter BELLAMY, in a Chairman's coat.

Bel. How tediously have the minutes passed these last few hours! and the envious rogues will fly, no lightning quicker, when we would have them stay.—Hold! let me not mistake—this is the house. [*Pulls out his watch.*] By Heaven it is not yet the hour!—I hear somebody coming. The moon's so bright—I had better not be here till the happy instant comes. [*Exit.*]

Enter FRANKLY.

Frank. Wine is no antidote to love, but rather feeds the flame; now am I such an amorous puppy, that I cannot walk straight home, but must come out of my way to take a view of my queen's palace by moonlight—Ay, here stands the temple where my goddess is adored—the door's open. [*Retires.*]

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. [*Under the window.*] Madam, Madam, hist! Madam—How shall I make her hear?

JACINTHA in boy's clothes appears at the window.

Jac. Who is there? What's the matter?

Luc. It is I, Madam; you must not pretend to stir till I give the word; you'll be discovered if you do.

Frank. What do I see? A man! My heart misgives me. [*Aside.*]

Luc. My master is below, sitting up for Mrs. Clarinda. He raves as if he was mad about her being out so late.

Frank. Here is some intrigue or other. I must see more of this before I give further way to love. [*Aside.*]

Luc. One minute he is in the street: the next he is in the kitchen: now he will lock her out, and then he'll stay himself, and see what figure she makes when she vouchsafes to venture home.

Jac. I long to have it over: get me but once out of his house.

Frank. Cowardly rascal! would I were in his place! [*Aside.*]

Luc. If I can but fix him any where, I can let you out myself.—You have the ladder ready, in case of necessity?

Jac. Yes, yes. [*Exit LUCETTA.*]

Frank. The ladder! This must lead to some discovery; I shall watch you, my young gentleman, I shall. [*Aside.*]

Enter CLARINDA and SERVANT.

Cla. This whist is a most enticing devil. I am afraid I am too late for Mr. Strictland's sober hours.

Jac. Ha! I hear a noise!

Cla. No; I see a light in Jacintha's window.

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You may go home. [*Gives the Servant money.*] I am safe. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

Jac. Sure it must be he! Mr. Bellamy—Sir.

Frank. Does he not call me? [*Aside.*]

Cla. Ha! who's that? I am frightened out of my wits—A man!

Jac. Is it you?

Frank. Yes, yes; 'tis I, 'tis I.

Jac. Listen at the door.

Frank. I will; 'tis open—There is no noise: all's quiet.

Cla. Sure it is my spark—and talking to Jacintha.

Frank. You may come down the ladder—quick.

Jac. Catch it then, and hold it.

Frank. I have it. Now I shall see what sort of mettle my young spark is made of. [*Aside.*]

Cla. With a ladder too! I'll assure you. But I must see the end of it. [*Aside.*]

Jac. Hark! did not somebody speak?

Frank. No, no; be not fearful—'Sdeath! we are discovered!

[FRANKLY and CLARINDA retire.]

Re-enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Hist! hist! are you ready?

Jac. Yes. May I venture?

Luc. Now is your time. He is in high conference with his privy counsellor, Mr. Tester. You may come down the back stairs, and I'll let you out. [*Exit.*]

Jac. I will, I will; and am heartily glad of it. [*Exit.*]

Frank. [*Advancing.*] May be so; but you and I shall have a few words before you get off so cleanly.

Cla. [*Advancing.*] How lucky it was I came home at this instant. I shall spoil his sport, I believe. [*Aside.*] Do you know me, Sir?

Frank. I am amazed! You here! This was unexpected indeed!

Cla. Why, I believe I do come a little unexpectedly, but I shall amaze you more. I know the whole course of your amour: all the process of your mighty passion from its first rise.—

Frank. What is all this?

Cla. To the very conclusion, which you vainly hope to effect this night.

Frank. By Heaven, Madam, I know not what you mean! I came hither purely to contemplate on your beauties.

Cla. Any beauties, Sir, I find will serve your turn. Did I not hear you talk to her at the window?

Frank. Her?

Cla. Blush, blush, for shame; but be assured you have seen the last both of Jacintha and me. [*Exit.*]

Frank. Jacintha! Hear me, Madam—She is gone. This must certainly be Bellamy's mistress, and I have fairly ruined all his scheme. This it is to be in luck.

Re-enter BELLAMY, behind.

Bel. Ha! a man under the window! [*Aside.*]

Frank. No; here she comes, and I may convey her to him.

Re-enter JACINTHA, and runs to FRANKLY.

Jac. I have at last got to you. Let's haste away—Oh!

Frank. Be not frightened, lady.

Jac. Oh! I am abused, betrayed!

Bel. Betrayed!—Frankly!

Frank. Bellamy!

Bel. I can scarce believe it, though I see it.
Draw—

Frank. Hear me, Bellamy—Lady—

Jac. Stay—do not fight!

Frank. I am innocent; it is all a mistake!

Jac. For my sake, be quiet! We shall all be discovered! the family is alarmed!

Bel. You are obeyed. Mr. Frankly, there is but one way—

Frank. I understand you. Any time but now. You will certainly be discovered! To-morrow, at your chambers.

Bel. Till then farewell.

[*Exeunt BELLAMY and JACINTHA.*]

Frank. Then, when he is cool, I may be heard; and the real, though suspicious account of this matter may be believed. Yet, amidst all this perplexity, it pleases me to find my fair incognita is jealous of my love.

Strict. [*Within.*] Where's Lucetta? Search every place.

Frank. Hark! the cry is up! I must be gone.

[*Exit.*]

Enter STRICTLAND, TESTER, and SERVANTS.

Strict. She's gone! she's lost! I am cheated! pursue her! seek her!

Tes. Sir, all her clothes are in her chamber.

Serv. Sir, Mrs. Clarinda said she was in boy's clothes.

Strict. Ay, ay, I know it—Bellamy has her.—Come along—pursue her.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter RANGER.

Ran. Hark!—Was not the noise this way?—No, there is no game stirring. This same goddess Diana, shines so bright with her chastity, that 'egad, I believe the wenches are ashamed to look her in the face. Now I am in an admirable mood for a frolic—have wine in my head, and money in my pocket, and so am furnished out for the cannonading of any countess in Christendom. Ha! what have we here? a ladder!—this cannot be placed here for nothing—and a window open! Is it love or mischief now that is going on within? I care not which—I am in a right cue for either. Up I go, neck or nothing.—Stay—do I not run a greater chance of spoiling sport, than I do of making any? that I hate as much as I love the other. There can be no harm in seeing how the land lies—I'll up. [*Goes up softly.*] All is hush—Ha! a light, and a woman! by all that's lucky, neither old nor crooked! I'll in—Ha! she is gone again! I will after her. [*Gets in at the window.*] And for fear of the squalls of virtue, and the pursuit of the family, I will make sure of the ladder. Now, fortune be my guide.

SCENE II.—MRS. STRICTLAND'S Dressing-room.

Enter MRS. STRICTLAND, followed by LUCETTA.

Mrs. S. Well, I am in great hopes she will escape.

Luc. Never fear, Madam; the lovers have the start of him, and I warrant they'll keep it.

Mrs. S. Were Mr. Strictland ever to suspect my being privy to her flight, I know not what might be the consequence.

Luc. Then you had better be undressing. He may return immediately.

[*As she is sitting at the toilet, enter RANGER, behind.*]

Ran. Young and beautiful.

[*Aside.*]

Luc. I have watched him pretty narrowly of late, and never once suspected till this morning—

Mrs. S. And who gave you authority to watch his actions, or pry into his secrets?

Luc. I hope, Madam, you are not angry? I thought it might have been of service to you to know my master was jealous.

Ran. And her husband jealous! If she does but send away the maid, I am happy.

[*Aside.*]

Mrs. S. Leave me.

[*Angrily.*]

Luc. This it is to meddle with other people's affairs.

[*Exit in anger.*]

Ran. What a lucky dog I am! I never made a gentleman a cuckold before. Now impudence assist me.

[*Aside.*]

Mrs. S. [*Rises.*] Provoking! I am sure I never have deserved it of him.

Ran. Oh, cuckold him by all means, Madam: I am your man! [*She shrieks.*] Oh, fie, Madam! if you squall so cursedly, you will be discovered.

Mrs. S. Discovered! What mean you, Sir? Do you come to abuse me?

Ran. I'll do my endeavour, Madam; you can have no more.

Mrs. S. Whence came you? How got you here?

Ran. Dear Madam, so long as I am here, what signifies how I got here, or whence I came? But that I may satisfy your curiosity, first, as to your "Whence came you?" I answer, out of the street; and to your "How got you here?" I say, in at the window; it stood so invitingly open, it was irresistible. But, Madam—you were going to undress. I beg I may not incommode you.

Mrs. S. This is the most consummate piece of impudence!—

Ran. For Heaven's sake have one drop of pity for a poor young fellow, who long has loved you.

Mrs. S. What would the fellow have?

Ran. Your husband's usage will excuse you to the world.

Mrs. S. I cannot bear this insolence! help! help!

Ran. Oh, hold that clamorous tongue, Madam!—Speak one word more, and I am gone, positively gone.

Mrs. S. Gone! so I would have you.

Ran. Lord, Madam, you are so hasty.

Mrs. S. Shall I not speak when a thief, a robber, breaks into my house at midnight? help! help!

Ran. Ha! no one hears. Now, Cupid, assist me! [*Aside.*] Lookye, Madam, I never could make fine speeches, and cringe, and bow, and fawn, and flatter, and lie; I have said more to you already, than I ever said to a woman in such circumstances in all my life. But since I find that you will yield to no persuasion to your good, I will gently force you to be grateful. [*Throws down his hat and seizes her.*] Come, come, unbend that brow, and look more kindly on me.

Mrs. S. For shame, Sir! thus on my knees let me beg for mercy.

[*Kneels.*]

Ran. And thus on mine, let me beg the same.

[*Kneels, catches, and kisses her*]

Strict. [*Within.*] Take away her sword! she'll hurt herself!

Mrs. S. Oh, Heavens! that is my husband's voice!

Ran. [*Rises.*] The devil it is!

Strict. [*Within.*] Take away her sword, I say, and then I can close with her.

Mrs. S. He is upon the stairs, now coming up! I am undone if he sees you.

Ran. Pox on him, I must decamp then. Which way?

Mrs. S. Through this passage to the next chamber.

Ran. And so into the street. With all my heart. You may be perfectly easy, Madam; mum's the word; I never blab.—I shall not leave off so, but wait till the last moment. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Mrs. S. So he's gone. What could I have said, if he had been discovered!

Enter MR. STRICTLAND, drives JACINTHA, LUCETTA follows.

Strict. Once more, my pretty masculine Madam, you are welcome home; and I hope to keep you somewhat closer than I have done; for eight o'clock to-morrow morning is the latest hour you shall stay in this lewd town.

Jac. Oh, Sir, when once a girl is equipped with a hearty resolution, it is not your worship's sagacity, nor the great chain at your gate, can hinder her from doing what she has a mind.

Strict. Oh, Lord, Lord! how this love improves a young lady's modesty.

Jac. Am I to blame to seek for happiness any where, when you are resolved to make me miserable here?

Strict. I have this night prevented your making yourself so, and will endeavour to do it for the future. I have you safe now, and the devil shall not get you out of my clutches again. I have locked the doors and barred them, I warrant you. So here, [*Gives her a candle.*] troop to your chamber, and to bed, whilst you are well. Go! [*Treads on RANGER'S hat.*] What's here? a hat! a man's hat in my wife's dressing-room!

[*Looks at the hat.*]

Mrs. S. What shall I do?

[*Aside.*]

Strict. [*Takes up the hat and looks at Mrs. STRICTLAND.*] Ha! by hell, I see, 'tis true!

Mrs. S. My fears confound me. I dare not tell the truth, and know not how to frame a lie!

[*Aside.*]

Strict. Mrs. Strictland, Mrs. Strictland, how came this hat into your chamber?

Luc. Are you that way disposed, my fine lady, and will not trust me?

[*Aside.*]

Strict. Speak, wretch, speak!

Jac. I could not have suspected this. [*Aside.*]

Strict. Why dost thou not speak?

Mrs. S. Sir—

Strict. Guilt—'tis guilt that ties your tongue!

Luc. I must bring her off, however. [*Aside.*]

Strict. My fears are just, and I am miserable—thou worst of women!

Mrs. S. I know my innocence, and can bear this no longer.

Strict. I know you are false, and 'tis I who will bear my injuries no longer.

[*Both walk about in a passion.*]

Luc. [*Apart to JACINTHA.*] Is not the hat yours? Own it, Madam.

[*Takes away JACINTHA'S hat, and exit.*]

Mrs. S. What ground, what cause have you for jealousy, when you yourself can witness your leaving me was accidental, your return uncertain, and expected even sooner than it happened? The abuse is gross and palpable.

Strict. Why, this is true!

Mrs. S. Indeed, Jacintha, I am innocent.

Strict. And yet this hat must belong to somebody.

Jac. Dear Mrs. Strictland, be not concerned; when he has diverted himself a little longer with it—

Strict. Ha!—

Jac. I suppose he will give me my hat again.

Strict. Your hat?

Jac. Yes, my hat. You brushed it from my side yourself, and then trod upon it; whether on purpose to abuse this lady, or no, you best know yourself.

Strict. It cannot be—'tis all a lie.

Jac. Believe so still, with all my heart; but the hat is mine. Now, Sir, who does it belong to?

[*Snatches it, and puts it on.*]

Strict. Why did she look so?

Jac. Your violence of temper is too much for her. You use her ill, and then suspect her for that confusion which you yourself occasion.

Strict. Why did not you set me right at first?

Jac. Your hard usage of me, Sir, is a sufficient reason why I should not be much concerned to undeceive you at all. 'Tis for your lady's sake I do it now; who deserves much better of you than to be thus exposed for every slight suspicion. See where she sits—go to her.

Mrs. S. [*Rises.*] Indeed, Mr. Strictland, I have a soul as much above—

Strict. Whew! Now you have both found your tongues, and I must bear with their eternal rattle.

Jac. For shame, Sir! go to her, and—

Strict. Well, well, what shall I say? I forgive—all is over. I, I, I forgive.

Mrs. S. Forgive! What do you mean?

Jac. Forgive her! is that all? Consider, Sir—

Strict. Hold, hold your confounded tongues, and I'll do any thing. I'll ask pardon—or forgive—or any thing. Good now, be quiet—I ask your pardon—there—[*Kisses her.*] For you, Madam, I am infinitely obliged to you, and I could find in my heart to make you a return in kind, by marrying you to a beggar, but I have more conscience. Come, come, to your chamber. Here, take this candle.

Re-enter LUCETTA, pertly.

Luc. Sir, if you please, I will light my young lady to bed.

Strict. No, no! no such thing, good Madam. She shall have nothing but her pillow to consult this night, I assure you. So in, in. [*The ladies take leave; exit JACINTHA.*] Good night, kind Madam.

Luc. Pox of the jealous fool! we might both have escaped out of the window purely. [*Aside.*]

Strict. Go, get you down; and, do you hear, order the coach to be false in the morning at eight exactly. [*Exit LUCETTA.*] So she is safe till to-morrow, and then for the country; and when she is there, I can manage as I think fit.

Mrs. S. Dear Mr. Strictland—

Strict. I am not in a humour, Mrs. Strictland, fit to talk with you. Go to bed. I will endeavour

to get the better of my temper; if I can, I'll follow you.—[Exit MRS. STRICTLAND.] How despicable have I made myself! [Exit.]

SCENE III.—Another Chamber.

Enter RANGER.

Ran. All seems hushed again, and I may venture out. I may as well sneak off whilst I am in a whole skin. And shall so much love and claret as I am in possession of only lull me to sleep, when it might so much better keep me waking? Forbid it, fortune, and forbid it, love. This is a chamber, perhaps, of some bewitching female, and I may yet be happy. Ha! a light! the door opens. A boy! pox on him! [Retires.]

Enter JACINTHA, with a candle.

Jac. I have been listening at the door, and from their silence, I conclude they are peaceably gone to bed together.

Ran. A pretty boy, faith; he seems uneasy.

[Aside.]

Jac. [Sitting down.] What an unlucky night has this proved to me! every circumstance has fallen out unhappily.

Ran. He talks aloud. I'll listen. [Aside.]

Jac. But what most amazes me is, that Clarinda should betray me!

Ran. Clarinda! she must be a woman. Well, what of her? [Aside.]

Jac. My guardian else would never have suspected my disguise.

Ran. Disguise! Ha, it must be so! What eyes she has! what a dull rogue was I not to suspect this sooner! [Aside.]

Jac. Ha, I had forgot; the ladder is at the window still, and I will boldly venture by myself. [Rising briskly, she sees RANGER.] Ha! a man, and well dressed! Ha, Mrs. Strickland, are you then at last dishonest?

Ran. By all my wishes, she is a charming woman! lucky rascal! [Aside.]

Jac. But I will, if possible, conceal her shame, and stand the brunt of his impertinence.

Ran. What shall I say to her? No matter; any thing soft will do the business. [Aside.]

Jac. Who are you?

Ran. A man, young gentleman.

Jac. And what would you have?

Ran. A woman.

Jac. You are very free, Sir. Here are none for you.

Ran. Ay, but there is one, and a fair one too; the most charming creature nature ever set her hand to; and you are the dear little pilot that must direct me to her heart.

Jac. What mean you, Sir? It is an office I am not accustomed to.

Ran. You wont have far to go, however. I never make my errands tedious. It is to your own heart, dear Madam, I would have you whisper in my behalf. Nay, never start. Think you such beauty could ever be concealed from eyes so well acquainted with its charms?

Jac. What will become of me? If I cry out, Mrs. Strickland is undone. This is my last resort. [Aside.]

Ran. Pardon, dear lady, the boldness of this visit, which your guardian's care has forced me to. but I long have loved you, long doted on that beautiful face, and followed you from place to place, though perhaps unknown and unregarded.

Jac. Here's a special fellow. [Aside.]

Ran. Turn then an eye of pity on my sufferings; and by Heaven, one tender look from those piercing eyes, one touch of this soft hand—

[Takes her hand.]

Jac. Hold, Sir, no nearer.

Ran. Would more than repay whole years of pain.

Jac. Hear me; but keep your distance, or I raise the family.

Ran. Blessings on her tongue, only for prattling to me. [Aside.]

Jac. Oh, for a moment's courage, and I shall shame him from his purpose. [Aside.] If I were certain so much gallantry had been shown on my account only—

Ran. You wrong your beauty to think that any other could have power to draw me hither. By all the little loves that play about your lips, I swear—

Jac. You came to me, and me alone.

Ran. By all the thousand graces that inhabit there, you, and only you, have drawn me hither.

Jac. Well said—Could I but believe you—

Ran. By Heaven she comes! Ah, honest Ranger, I never knew thee fail. [Aside.]

Jac. Pray, Sir, where did you leave this hat?

Ran. That hat! that hat—'tis my hat—I dropped it in the next chamber as I was looking for yours.

Jac. How mean and despicable do you look now!

Ran. So, so! I am in a pretty pickle! [Aside.]

Jac. You know by this, that I am acquainted with every thing that has passed within; and how ill it agrees with what you have professed to me. Let me advise you, Sir, to be gone immediately: through that window you may easily get into the street. One scream of mine, the least noise at that door, will wake the house.

Ran. Say you so? [Aside.]

Jac. Believe me, Sir, an injured husband is not so easily appeased; and a suspected wife, that is jealous of her honour—

Ran. Is the devil, and so let's have no more of her. Look ye, Madam, [Getting between her and the door.] I have but one argument left, and that is a strong one. Look on me well. I am as handsome, a strong, well-made fellow as any about town; and since we are alone, as I take it, we have no occasion to be more private.

[Going to lay hold of her.]

Jac. I have a reputation, Sir, and will maintain it.

Ran. You have a bewitching pair of eyes.

Jac. Consider my virtue. [Struggling.]

Ran. Consider your beauty and my desires.

Jac. If I were a man, you dared not use me thus.

Ran. I should not have the same temptation.

Jac. Hear me, Sir, I will be heard. [Breaks from him.] There is a man who will make you repent this usage of me. Oh, Bellamy! where art thou now?

Ran. Bellamy!

Jac. Were he here, you durst not thus affront me.

Ran. His mistress, on my soul! [Aside.]—You can love, Madam; you can love, I find. Her tears affect me strangely. [Aside.]

Jac. I am not ashamed to own my passion for a man of virtue and honour. I love and glory in it.

Ran. Oh, brave! and you can write letters, you can. "I will not trust myself home with you this evening, because I know it is inconvenient."

Jac. Ha!

Ran. "Therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging; 'tis no matter how far off my guardian's. Yours, Jacintha."

Jac. The very words of my letter! I am amazed! [*Aside.*] Do you know Mr. Bellamy?

Ran. There is not a man on earth I have so great a value for: and he must have some value for me too, or he would never have shown me your pretty epistle; think of that, fair lady. The ladder is at the window; and so, Madam, I hope delivering you safe into his arms, will in some measure expiate the crime I have been guilty of to you.

Jac. Good Heaven! How fortunate is this!

Ran. I believe I make myself appear more wicked than I really am. For, damn me, if I do not feel more satisfaction in the thoughts of restoring you to my friend, than I could have pleasure in any favour your bounty could have bestowed. Let any other rake lay his hand upon his heart and say the same.

Jac. Your generosity transports me.

Ran. Let us lose no time then; the ladder's ready? Where was you to lodge?

Jac. At Mr. Meggot's.

Ran. At my friend Jacky's! better and better still.

Jac. Are you acquainted with him too?

Ran. Ay, ay; why, did I not tell you at first that I was one of your old acquaintance? I know all about you, you see; though the devil fetch me if ever I saw you before. Now, Madam, give me your hand.

Jac. And now, Sir, have with you.

Ran. Then thou art a girl of spirit. And though I long to hug you for trusting yourself with me, I will not beg a single kiss, till Bellamy himself shall give me leave. He must fight well that takes you from me. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Palazzo.*

Enter BELLAMY and FRANKLY.

Bel. Pshaw! what impertinent devil put it into your head to meddle with my affairs?

Frank. You know I went thither in pursuit of another.

Bel. I know nothing you had to do there at all.

Frank. I thought, Mr. Bellamy, you were a lover.

Bel. I am so; and therefore should be forgiven this sudden warmth.

Frank. And therefore should forgive the fond impertinence of a lover.

Bel. Jealousy, you know, is as natural an incident to love—

Frank. As curiosity. By one piece of silly curiosity I have gone nigh to ruin both myself and you; let not then your jealousy complete our misfortunes. I fear I have lost a mistress as well as you; then let us not quarrel. All may come right again.

Bel. It is impossible. She is gone, removed for ever from my sight: she is in the country by this time.

Frank. How did you lose her after we parted?

Bel. By too great confidence. When I got her to my chair, the chairmen were not to be found. And, safe as I thought in our disguise, I actually put her into the chair, when Mr. Strickland and his servants were in sight: which I had no sooner done, than they surrounded us, overpowered me, and carried her away.

Frank. Unfortunate indeed! Could you not make a second attempt?

Bel. I had designed it; but when I came to the door, I found the ladder removed; and hearing no noise, seeing no lights, nor being able to make any body answer, I concluded all attempts as impracticable as I now find them.—Ha! I see Lucetta coming. Then they may be still in town.

Enter LUCETTA.

Lucetta, welcome! what news of Jacintha?

Luc. News, Sir! you fright me out of my senses! Why, is she not with you?

Bel. What do you mean? With me! I have not seen her since I lost her last night.

Luc. Good Heaven! then she is undone for ever.

Frank. Why, what's the matter?

Bel. Speak out—I'm all amazement.

Luc. She is escaped, without any of us knowing how. Nobody missed her till morning. We all thought she went away with you. But Heaven knows now what may have happened.

Bel. Somebody must have accompanied her in her flight.

Luc. We know of nobody: we are all in confusion at home. My master swears revenge on you. My mistress says a stranger has her.

Bel. A stranger!

Luc. But Mrs. Clarinda—

Bel. Clarinda! Who is she?

Luc. The lady, Sir, who you saw at our house last night. [*To FRANKLY.*]

Frank. Ha! what of her?

Luc. She says, she is sure one Frankly is the man; she saw them together, and knows it to be true.

Frank. Damned fortune!

[*Aside.*]

Luc. Sure this is not Mr. Frankly.

Frank. Nothing will convince him now.

[*Aside.*]

Bel. [*Looking at FRANKLY.*] Ha! 'tis true!—I see it is true. [*Aside.*] Lucetta, run up to Buckle, and take him with you to search wherever you can. [*Puts her out.*] Now, Mr. Frankly, I have found you.—You have used me so ill, that you force me to forget you are my friend.

Frank. What do you mean?

Bel. Draw.

Frank. Are you mad? By Heavens I am innocent.

Bel. I have heard you, and will no longer be imposed on—Defend yourself.

Frank. Nay, if you are so hot, I draw to defend myself, as I would against a madman.

Enter RANGER.

Ran. What the devil, swords at noon-day! Have among you, faith! [*Parts them.*] What's here, Bellamy—Yes, 'gad, you are Bellamy, and you are Frankly; put up, put up, both of you—or else—I am a devilish fellow when once my sword is out.

Bel. We shall have a time—

Ran. [*Pushing BELLAMY one way.*] A time for what?

Frank. I shall always be as ready to defend my innocence as now.

Ran. [*Pushing FRANKLY the other way.*] Innocence! ay, to be sure—at your age—a mighty innocent fellow, no doubt. But what, in the name of common sense, is it that ails you both? are you mad? The last time I saw you, you were hugging and kissing; and now you are cutting one another's throats—I never knew any good come of one fellow beslaving another—But I shall put you into a better humour, I warrant you—Bellamy, Frankly, listen both of you—Such fortune—such a scheme—

Bel. Pr'ythee, leave fooling. What, art drunk?

Frank. He is always so, I think.

Ran. And who gave you the privilege of thinking? Drunk! no; I am not drunk. Topsy, perhaps, with my good fortune—merry, and in spirits—though I have not fire enough to run my friend through the body. Not drunk, though Jack Meggot and I have boxed it about—champaign was the word for two whole hours by Shrewsbury clock.

Bel. Jack Meggot! Why, I left him at one, going to bed.

Ran. That may be, but I made shift to rouse him and his family by four this morning. Ounds, I picked up a wench, and carried her to his house.

Bel. Ha!

Ran. Such a variety of adventures—nay, you shall hear. But, before I begin, Bellamy, you shall promise me half a dozen kisses beforehand: for the devil fetch me if that little jade, Jacintha, would give me one, though I pressed hard.

Bel. Who, Jacintha? press to kiss Jacintha?

Ran. Kiss her! ay, why not? is she not a woman, and made to be kissed?

Bel. Kiss her—I shall run distracted!

Ran. How could I help it, when I had her alone, you rogue, in her bedchamber, at midnight! if I had been to be sacrificed, I should have done it.

Bel. Bedchamber, at midnight! I can hold no longer—Draw!

Frank. Be easy, Bellamy.

Bel. He has been at some of his damned tricks with her.

Frank. Hear him out.

Ran. 'Sdeath, how could I know she was his mistress? But I tell this story most miserably. I should have told you first, I was in another lady's chamber. By the Lord, I got in at the window by a ladder of ropes.

Frank. Ha! another lady?

Ran. Another: and stole in upon her whilst she was undressing; beautiful as an angel, blooming and young.

Frank. What, in the same house?

Bel. What is this to Jacintha? Ease me of my pain.

Ran. Ay, ay, in the same house, on the same floor. The sweetest little angel—but I design to have another touch with her.

Frank. 'Sdeath! but you shall have a touch with me first.

Bel. Stay, Frankly.

Ran. Why, what strange madness has possessed you both, that nobody must kiss a pretty wench but yourselves?

Bel. What became of Jacintha?

Ran. Ounds! what have you done, that you must monopolize kissing?

Frank. Pr'ythee, honest Ranger, ease me of the pain I am in. Was her name Clarinda?

Bel. Speak in plain words, where Jacintha is, where to be found. Dear boy, tell me.

Ran. Ay, now it is honest Ranger; and, dear boy, tell me—and a minute ago, my throat was to be cut—I could find in my heart not to open my lips. But here comes Jack Meggot, who will let you into all the secret, though he designed to keep it from you, in half the time that I can, though I had ever so great a mind to tell it you.

Enter JACK MEGGOT.

J. Meg. So, save ye, save ye, lads! we have been frightened out of our wits for you. Not hearing of Mr. Bellamy, poor Jacintha is ready to sink for fear of any accident.

Bel. Is she at your house?

J. Meg. Why, did not you know that? We despatched Master Ranger to you three hours ago.

Ran. Ay, plague! but I had business of my own, so I could not come—Harkye, Frankly, is your girl maid, wife, or widow?

Frank. A maid, I hope.

Ran. The odds are against you, Charles—but mine is married, you rogue, and her husband jealous—The devil is in it, if I do not reap some reward for my last night's service.

Bel. He has certainly been at Mrs. Strickland herself. But, Frankly, I dare not look on you.

Frank. This one embrace cancels all thoughts of enmity. [*Embracing him.*]

Bel. Thou generous man!—but I must haste to ease Jacintha of her fears. [*Exit.*]

Frank. And I to make up matters with Clarinda. [*Exit.*]

Ran. And I to some kind wench or other, Jack. But where I shall find her, Heaven knows. And so, my service to your monkey.

J. Meg. Adieu, rattlepate.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Hall of Mr. STRICTLAND'S House.*

Enter MRS. STRICTLAND and CLARINDA.

Mrs. S. But why in such a hurry, my dear? stay till your servants can go along with you.

Cl. Oh, no matter; they'll follow with my things. It is but a little way off, and my chair will guard me. After my staying out so late last night, I am sure Mr. Strickland will think every minute an age, whilst I am in his house.

Mrs. S. I am as much amazed at his suspecting your innocence as my own; and every time I think of it, I blush at my present behaviour to you.

Cl. No ceremony, dear child.

Mrs. S. No, Clarinda, I am too well acquainted with your good humour. But I fear, in the eye of a malicious world, it may look like a confirmation of his suspicion.

Cl. My dear, if the world will speak ill of me, for the little innocent gayety which I think the peculiar happiness of my temper, I know no way to prevent it, and am only sorry the world is so ill-natured: but I shall not part with my mirth, I assure them, so long as I know it innocent. I wish, my dear, this may be the greatest uneasiness your husband's jealousy ever gives you.

Mrs. S. I hope he never again may have such an occasion as he had last night.

Cl. You are so unfashionable a wife.—Why

last night's accident would have made half the wives in London easy for life. Has not his jealousy discovered itself openly? And are not you innocent? There is nothing but your foolish temper that prevents his being absolutely in your power.

Mrs. S. Clarinda, that is too serious an affair to laugh at. Let me advise you; take care of Mr. Frankly, observe his temper well; and if he has the least taint of jealousy, cast him off, and never trust to keeping him in your power.

Cla. You will hear little more of Frankly, I believe. Here is Mr. Strictland.

Enter STRICTLAND and LUCETTA.

Strict. Lucetta says you want me, Madam.

Cla. I trouble you, Sir, only that I might return you thanks for the civilities I have received in your family, before I took my leave.

Strict. Keep them to yourself, dear Madam. As it is at my request that you leave my house, your thanks upon that occasion are not very desirable.

Cla. Oh, Sir, you need not fear. My thanks were only for your civilities. They will not overburden you. But I'll conform to your humour, Sir, and part with as little ceremony—

Strict. As we met.

Cla. The brute! [*Aside.*] My dear, good bye, we may meet again. [*To Mrs. STRICTLAND.*

Strict. If you dare trust me with your hand.

Cla. Lucetta, remember your instructions. Now, Sir, have with you.

[*STRICTLAND leads CLARINDA out.*

Mrs. S. Are her instructions cruel or kind, Lucetta? For I suppose they relate to Mr. Frankly.

Luc. Have you a mind to try if I can keep a secret as well as yourself, Madam? But I will show you I am fit to be trusted by keeping this, though it signifies nothing.

Mrs. S. This answer is not so civil, I think.

Luc. I beg pardon, Madam, I meant it not to offend.

Mrs. S. Pray let us have no more such. I neither desire nor want your assistance.

Re-enter STRICTLAND.

Strict. She is gone; I feel myself somewhat easier already. Since I have begun the day with gallantry, Madam, shall I conduct you up?

Mrs. S. There is something, Sir, which gives you secret uneasiness. I wish—

Strict. Perhaps so, Madam; and perhaps it may soon be no secret at all. [*Leads her out.*

Luc. Would I were once well settled with my young lady; for at present this is but an odd sort of a queer family. Last night's affair puzzles me. A hat there was that belonged to none of us, that's certain; Madam was in a fright, that is as certain; and I brought all off. Jacintha escaped, no one of us knows how. The good man's jealousy was yesterday groundless; yet, to-day, in my mind, he is very much in the right. Mighty odd, all this!—Somebody knocks. If this should be Clarinda's spark, I have an odd message for him too.

[*She opens the door.*

Enter FRANKLY.

Frank. So, my pretty handmaid, meeting with you gives me some hopes. May I speak with Clarinda?

Luc. Whom do you want, Sir?

Frank. Clarinda, child. The young lady I was admitted to yesterday.

Luc. Clarinda!—no such person lives here, I assure you.

Frank. Where then?

Luc. I don't know indeed, Sir.

Frank. Will you inquire within?

Luc. Nobody knows in this house, Sir, you will find.

Frank. What do you mean? She is a friend of Jacintha's, your lady. I will take my oath she was here last night; and you yourself spoke of her being here this morning—Not know!

Luc. No; none of us know. She went away of a sudden—no one of us can imagine whither.

Frank. Why, faith, child, thou hast a tolerable face, and has delivered this denial very handsomely; but let me tell you, your impertinence this morning had liked to have cost me my life; now therefore make me amends. I come from your young mistress; I come from Mr. Bellamy; I come with my purse full of gold, that persuasive rhetoric, to win you to let me see and speak to this Clarinda once again.

Luc. She is not here, Sir.

Frank. Direct me to her.

Luc. No, I can't do that neither.

Re-enter STRICTLAND, behind.

Strict. I heard a knocking at the door, and a man's voice—Ha! [*Aside.*

Frank. Deliver this letter to her.

Strict. By all my fears, a letter! [*Aside.*

Luc. I don't know but I may be tempted to do that.

Frank. Take it then—and with it this.

[*Kisses her and gives her money.*

Strict. Um! there are two bribes in a breath! What a jade she is! [*Aside.*

Luc. Ay, this gentleman understands reason. [*Aside.*

Frank. And be assured you oblige your mistress while you are serving me.

Strict. Her mistress!—Damned sex! and damned wife, thou art an epitome of that sex! [*Aside.*

Frank. And if you can procure me an answer your fee shall be enlarged. [*Exit.*

Luc. The next step is to get her to read this letter.

Strict. [*Snatches it.*] No noise—but stand silent there whilst I read this. [*Breaks it open, drops the case; reads.*

Madam—The gayety of a heart, happy as mine was yesterday, may, I hope, easily excuse the unseasonable visit I made your house last night—

Death and the devil! confusion! I shall run distracted. It is too much!—There was a man then to whom the hat belonged; and I was gulled, abused, cheated, imposed on by a chit, a child—Oh, woman, woman!—But I will be calm, search it to the bottom, and have a full revenge.

Luc. So, here's fine work! He'll make himself very ridiculous though. [*Aside.*

Strict. [*Reads.*] *I know my innocence will appear so manifestly, that I need only appeal to the lady who accompanied you at Bath;*

Your very humble servant, good innocent, fine, Madam Clarinda.

And I do not doubt but her good nature will not let you persist in injuring your obedient humble servant,

CHARLES FRANKLY.

Now who can say my jealousy lacked foundation, or my suspicion of fine Madam's innocent gayety was unjust?—Gayety! why ay, 'twas gayety brought him hither.—My wife may be false in gayety. What a number of things become fashionable under the notion of gayety.—What, you received this epistle in gayety too; and were to deliver it to my wife, I suppose, when the gay fit came next upon her?—Why, you impudent young strumpet, do you laugh at me?

Luc. I would, if I dared, laugh heartily. Be pleased, Sir, only to look at that piece of paper that lies there.

Strict. Ha!

Luc. I have not touched it, Sir. It is the case that letter came in, and the direction will inform you whom I was to deliver it to.

Strict. This is directed to Clarinda?

Luc. Oh, is it so? Now read it over again, and all your foolish doubts will vanish.

Strict. I have no doubts at all. I am satisfied that you, Jacintha, Clarinda, my wife, all are—

Luc. Lud! lud! you will make a body mad.

Strict. Hold your impertinent tongue.

Luc. You'll find the thing to be just as I say, Sir.

Strict. Be gone. [*Exit LUCETTA.*] They must be poor at the work, indeed, if they did not lend one another their names. 'Tis plain, 'tis evident, and I am miserable. But for my wife, she shall not stay one night longer in my house. Separation, shame, contempt, shall be her portion. I am determined in the thing; and when once it is over, I may perhaps be easy. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—The Street.

CLARINDA brought in a chair, followed by RANGER.

Ran. Harkye, chairman! damn your confounded trot. Go slower.

Cla. Here, stop.

Ran. By Heavens! the monsters hear reason and obey.

Cla. [*Letting down the window.*] What troublesome fellow was that?

1 Chair. Some rake, I warrant, that cannot carry himself home, and wants us to do it for him.

Cla. There—And pray do you take care I be not troubled with him. [*Goes in.*]

Ran. That's as much as to say now, pray follow me. Madam, you are a charming woman, and I will do it—

1 Chair. Stand off, Sir.

Ran. Pr'ythee, honest fellow—what—what writing is that? [*Endeavouring to get in.*]

2 Chair. You come not here.

Ran. Lodgings to be let: a pretty convenient inscription, and the sign of a good modest family. There may be lodgings for gentlemen as well as ladies. Harkye, rogues, I'll lay you all the silver I have in my pocket, there it is, I get in there in spite of your teeth, ye pimps. [*Throws down the money and goes in.*]

Cla. [*Within.*] Chair, chair, chair!

1 Chair. Who calls chair—What, have you let the gentleman in?

2 Chair. I'll tell you what, partner, he cer-

tainly slipped by whilst we were picking up the money. Come, take up. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—CLARINDA's Lodgings.

Enter CLARINDA, followed by MAID.

Maid. Bless me, Madam, you seem disordered; what's the matter?

Cla. Some impertinent fellow followed the chair, and I am afraid they let him in. [*A noise between RANGER and LANDLADY.*] I should certainly know that voice. My madcap cousin Ranger, as I live. I am sure he does not know me.—If I could but hide my face now, what sport I should have! A mask! a mask! Run and see if you can find a mask.

Maid. I believe there is one above.

Cla. Run, run, and fetch it. [*Exit MAID.*] Here he comes.

Enter RANGER and LANDLADY.

How unlucky this is! [*Turning from them.*]

Land. What's your business here, unmanly Sir?

Ran. Well, let's see these lodgings that are to be let. 'Gad, a very pretty neat tenement—But harkye, is it real and natural, all that, or only patched up and new painted this summer season, against the town fills?

Land. What does the saucy fellow mean with his double tenders here? Get you down—

Re-enter MAID, with a mask.

Maid. Here is a very dirty one.

[*Aside to CLARINDA.*]

Cla. No matter. [*Exit MAID.*] Now we shall see a little what he would be at. [*Aside.*]

Land. This is an honest house. For all your laced waistcoat, I'll have you thrown down neck and heels.

Ran. Pho! not in such a hurry, good old lady—A mask! nay, with all my heart, it saves a world of blushing. Have you ne'er a one for me. I am apt to be ashamed myself on these occasions.

Land. Get you down, I say—

Ran. Not if I guess right, old lady. Madam: [*To CLARINDA, who makes sign to the LANDLADY to retire.*] look ye there now! that a woman should live to your age, and know so little of the matter. Be gone. [*Exit LANDLADY.*] By her forwardness this should be a whore of quality. My boy, Ranger, thou art in luck to-day. She wont speak, I find—then I will. [*Aside.*] Delicate lodgings truly, Madam; and very neatly furnished—A very convenient room this, I must needs own, to entertain a mixed company. But, my dear charming creature, does not that door open to a more commodious apartment for the happiness of a private friend or so? The prettiest brass lock—Fast, um; that wont do. 'Sdeath, you are a beautiful woman, I am sure you are. Pr'ythee let me see your face. It is your interest, child—the longer you delay, the more I shall expect. Therefore, [*Takes her hand.*] my dear, soft, kind, new acquaintance, thus let me take your hand, and whilst you gently, with the other, let day-light in upon me, let me softly hold you to me, that with my longing lips I may receive the warmest, best impression. [*She unmask.*]—Clarinda!

Cla. Ha, ha! your servant, cousin Ranger.—Ha, ha, ha!

Ran. Oh, your humble servant, Madam. You

had like to have been beholden to your mask, cousin.—I must brazen it out. [*Aside.*]

Cla. Ha, ha, ha! You were not so happy in your disguise, Sir. The pretty stagger in your gait, that happy disposition of your wig, the genteel negligence of your whole person, and those pretty flowers of modish gallantry, made it impossible to mistake you, my sweet coz. Ha, ha!

Ran. Oh, I knew you too; but I fancied you had taken a particular liking to my person, and had a mind to sink the relation under that little piece of black velvet; and 'egad, you never find me behind-hand in a frolic. But since it is otherwise, my merry, good-humoured cousin, I am as heartily glad to see you in town, as I should be to meet any of my old bottle acquaintance.

Cla. And on my side I am as happy in meeting your worship, as I should be in a rencounter with e'er a petticoat in Christendom.

Ran. And if you have any occasion for a dangle gallant to Yaughall, Ranelagh, or even the poor neglected Park, you are so unlike the rest of your virtuous sisters of the petticoat, that I will venture myself with you.

Cla. Take care what you promise; for who knows but this face, you were pleased to say so many pretty things of before you saw it, may raise so many rivals among your kept mistresses and reps of quality—

Ran. Hold, hold! a truce with your satire, sweet coz; or, if scandal must be the topic of every virtuous woman's conversation, call for your tea-water, and let it be in its proper element. Come, your tea, your tea.

Cla. With all my heart. Who's there?

Re-enter MAID.

Get tea—[*Exit MAID.*] upon condition that you stay till it comes.

Ran. That is according as you behave, Madam.

Cla. Oh, Sir, I am very sensible of the favour.

Ran. Nay, you may, I assure you; for there is but one woman of virtue besides yourself I would stay with ten minutes (and I have not known her above these twelve hours;) the insipidity, or the rancour of their discourse, is insufferable—'Sdeath! I had rather take the air with my grandmother.

Cla. Ha, ha, ha! the ladies are highly obliged to you, I vow.

Ran. I tell you what; the lady I speak of was obliged to me, and the generous girl is ready to own it.

Cla. And pray when was it you did virtue this considerable service!

Ran. But this last night, the devil fetch me! A romantic whim of mine conveyed me into her chamber, where I found her, young and beautiful, alone, at midnight, dressed like a soft Adonis; her lovely hair all loose about her shoulders—

Cla. In boy's clothes! this is worth attending to.

Ran. 'Gad, I no more suspected her being a woman, than I did your being my cater-cousin.

Cla. How did you discover it at last?

Ran. Why, faith, she very modestly dropped me a hint of it herself.

Cla. Herself! If this should be Jacintha!

[*Aside.*]

Ran. Ay, 'fore 'gad, did she: which I imagined a good sign at midnight, ay, cousin! So I e'en invented a long story of a passion I had for her, though I had never seen her before—you know my old way—and said so many, such tender things—

Cla. As you said to me just now.

Ran. Pho! quite in another style, I assure you. It was midnight, and I was in a right cue.

Cla. Well, and what did she answer to all these protestations?

Ran. Why, instead of running into my arms at once, as I expected—

Cla. To be sure.

Ran. 'Gad, like a free-hearted, honest girl, she frankly told me she liked another better than she liked me; that I had something in my face that showed I was a gentleman, and she would e'en trust herself with me, if I would give her my word I would convey her to her spark.

Cla. Oh, brave! and how did you bear this?

Ran. Why curse me, if I am ever angry with a woman for not having a passion for me.

Cla. No?

Ran. Never. I only hate your sex's vain pretence of having no passion at all. 'Gad, I loved the good-natured girl for it, took her at her word, stole her out of the window, and this morning made a very honest fellow happy in the possession of her.

Cla. And her name is Jacintha?

Ran. Ha!

Cla. Your amours are no secrets, Sir. You see you might as well have told me all the whole of last night's adventure; for you find I know.

Ran. All! Why, what do you know?

Cla. Nay, nothing. I only know that a gentleman's hat cannot be dropped in a lady's chamber—

Ran. The devil!

Cla. But a husband is such an odd, impertinent, awkward creature, that he will be stumbling over it.

Ran. Here hath been fine work. [*Aside.*] But how, in the name of wonder, should you know all this?

Cla. By being in the same house.

Ran. In the same house?

Cla. Ay, in the same house, a witness of the confusion you have made.

Ran. Frankly's Clarinda, by all that's fortunate! It must be so! [*Aside.*]

Cla. And let me tell you, Sir, that even the dull, low-spirited diversions you ridicule in us tame creatures, are preferable to the romantic exploits that only wine can raise you to.

Ran. Yes, cousin.—But I'll be even with you. [*Aside.*]

Cla. If you reflect, cousin, you will find a great deal of wit in shocking a lady's modesty, disturbing her quiet, tainting her reputation, and ruining the peace of a whole family!

Ran. To be sure.

Cla. These are the high-metled pleasures of you men of spirit, that the insipidity of the virtuous can never arrive at. And can you in reality think your Burgundy and your Bacchus, your Venus and your loves, an excuse for all this? Fie, cousin, fie.

Ran. No, cousin.

Cla. What, dumb? I am glad you have modesty enough left not to go about to excuse yourself.

Ran. It is as you say; when we are sober, and reflect but ever so little on the follies we commit, we are ashamed and sorry; and yet the very next minute we run again into the same absurdities.

Cla. What! moralizing, cousin? ha, ha, ha.

Ran. What you know is not half, not a hundredth part of the mischief of my last night's frolic; and yet the very next petticoat I saw this morning, I must follow it, and be damned to me; though, for aught I know, poor Frankly's life may depend upon it.

Cla. Whose life, Sir?

Ran. And here do I stand prating to you now.

Cla. Pray, good cousin, explain yourself.

Ran. Good cousin! she has it. [*Aside.*] Why, whilst I was making off with the wench, Bellamy and he were quarrelling about her; and though Jacintha and I made all the haste we could, we did not get to them before—

Cla. Before what? I'm frightened out of my wits.

Ran. Not that Frankly cared three-halfpence for the girl.

Cla. But there was no mischief done, I hope?

Ran. Pho! a slight scratch; nothing at all, as the surgeon said: though he was but a queer-looking son of a bitch of a surgeon neither.

Cla. Good God! why, he should have the best that can be found in London.

Ran. Ay, indeed, so he should; that was what I was going for when I saw you. [*Sits down.*] They are all at Jack Meggot's, hard by, and you will keep me here.

Cla. I keep you here! For Heaven's sake, begone!

Ran. Your tea is a damned while a coming.

Cla. You shall have no tea now, I assure you.

Ran. Nay, one dish!

Cla. No, positively you shall not stay.

Ran. Your commands are absolute, Madam.

[*Going.*]

Cla. Then Frankly is true, and I only am to blame.

Ran. [*Returns.*] But I beg ten thousand pardons, cousin, that I should forget—

Cla. Forget what?

Ran. Forget to salute you.

Cla. Pshaw! how can you trifle at such a time as this?

Ran. A trifle! wrong not your beauty.

Cla. Lord, how teasing you are! There.

Ran. [*Kisses her.*] Poor thing, how uneasy she is! [*Aside.*] Nay, no ceremony; you shall not stir a step with me.

[*Exit.*]

Cla. I do not intend it. This is downright provoking.

[*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room in MR. STRICTLAND'S House.

MR. and MRS. STRICTLAND; *she weeping, he writing.*

Mrs. S. Heigh ho!

Strict. What can possibly be the occasion of that sigh, Madam? you have yourself agreed to a maintenance, and a maintenance no duchess need be ashamed of.

Mrs. S. But the extremities of provocation that drove me to that agreement—

Strict. Were the effect of your own follies. Why do you disturb me?

[*Writes.*]

Mrs. S. I would not willingly give you a moment's uneasiness; I but desire a fair and equal hearing; and if I satisfy you not in every point, then abandon me, discard me to the world, and its malicious tongues.

Strict. What was it you said? Damn this pen.

Mrs. S. I say, Mr. Strictland, I would only—

Strict. You would only—you would only repeat what you have been saying this hour, I am innocent; and when I showed you the letter I had taken from your maid, what was then your poor evasion, but that it was to Clarinda, and you were innocent.

Mrs. S. Heaven knows, I am innocent.

Strict. But I know your Clarinda, your woman of honour, is your blind, your cover, your— But why do I distract myself about a woman I have no longer any concerns with? Here, Madam, is your fate—a letter to your brother in the country.

Mrs. S. Sir—

Strict. I have told him what a sister he is to receive, and how to bid her welcome.

Mrs. S. Then my ruin is complete. My brother!

Strict. I must vindicate my own honour, else what will the world say?

Mrs. S. That brother was my only hope, my only ground of patience. In his retirement I hoped my name might have been safe, and slept, till by some happy means you might at length have known me innocent, and pitied me.

Strict. Retirement! pretty soul! no, no, that face was never made for retirement; it is another sort of retiring you are fittest for. Ha! hark! What's that? [*A knocking at the door.*] Two gentle taps—and why but two? was that the signal, Madam? Stir not, on your life!

Mrs. S. Give me resolution, Heaven, to bear this usage, and keep it secret from the world.

[*Aside.*]

Strict. I will have no signs, no items, no hem to tell him I am here. [*A knock.*] Ha, another tap! The gentleman is in haste, I find.

[*Opens the door.*]

Enter TESTER.

Tester! Why did you not come in, rascal? [*Beats him.*] All vexations meet to cross me.

Tes. Lard, Sir! what do you strike me for? my mistress ordered me never to come in where she was, without first knocking at the door.

Strict. Oh, cunning devil! *Tester* is too honest to be trusted.

Mrs. S. Unhappy man! will nothing deceive him?

Tes. Sir, here is a letter.

Strict. To my wife?

Tes. No, Sir, to you. The servant waits below.

Strict. Art sure it is a servant?

Tes. Sir! it is Mr. Buckle, Sir.

[*Stares.*]

Strict. I am mad; I know not what to say, or do, or think. But let's read—

[*Reads to himself.*]

Sir—We cannot bear to reflect that Mrs. Strictland may possibly be ruined in your esteem, and in the voice of the world, only by the confusion which our affairs have made in your family, without offering all within our power to clear the misunderstanding between you. If you will give

yourself the trouble but to step to Mr. Meggot's, where all parties will be, we doubt not but we can entirely satisfy your most flagrant suspicions, to the honour of Mrs. Strickland, and the quiet of your lives. JACINTHA. JOHN BELLAMY.

Hey! here is the whole gang witnessing for one another. They think I am an ass, and will be led by the nose to believe every thing. [*Aside.*] Call me a chair. [*Exit TESTER.*] Yes, I will go to this rendezvous of enemies—I will—and find out all her plots, her artifices, and contrivances: it will clear my conduct to her brother and all her friends. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Mrs. S. Gone so abruptly! What can that letter be about? no matter; there is no way left to make us easy but by my disgrace, and I must learn to suffer; time and innocence will teach me to bear it patiently.

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Mrs. Bellamy, Madam (for my young lady is married) begs you would follow Mr. Strickland to Mr. Meggot's. She makes no doubt but she shall be able to make you and my master easy.

Mrs. S. But how came she to know any thing of the matter?

Luc. I have been with them, Madam; I could not bear to see so good a lady so ill treated.

Mrs. S. I am indeed, Lucetta, ill treated; but I hope this day will be the last of it.

Luc. Madam Clarinda and Mr. Frankly will be there, and the young gentleman, Madam, who was with you in this room last night.

Mrs. S. Ha! if he is there, there may be hopes; and it is worth the trying.

Luc. Dear lady, let me call a chair.

Mrs. S. I'll go with you, I cannot be more wretched than I am. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in JACK MEGGOT'S House.

Enter FRANKLY, RANGER, BELLAMY, JACINTHA, and JACK MEGGOT.

Frank. Oh, Ranger, this is news indeed! your cousin, and a lady of such fortune?

Ran. I have done the business for you; I tell you she's your own. She loves you.

Frank. You make my heart dance with joy. Words are too faint to tell the joy I feel.

Ran. I have put that heart of hers into such a flutter, that I'll lay a hundred guineas, with the assistance which this lady has promised me, I fix her yours directly.

Jac. Ay, ay, Mr. Frankly, we have a design upon her which cannot fail. But you must obey orders.

Frank. Most willingly; but remember, dear lady, I have more than life at stake.

Jac. Away then into the next room; for she is this instant coming hither.

Frank. Hither! you surprise me more and more.

Jac. Here is a message from her, by which she desires leave to wait on me this afternoon.

Ran. Only for the chance of seeing you here, I assure ye.

Frank. Let me hug thee, though I know not how to believe it.

Ran. Pshaw! pr'ythee don't stifle me! It is a busy day, a very busy day.

J. Meg. Thou art the most unaccountable creature in life.

Ran. But the most lucky one, Jack, if I succeed for Frankly as I have for Bellamy, and my heart whispers me I shall. Come in, most noble Mr. Buckle: and what have you to propose?

Enter BUCKLE.

Buck. A lady, Madam, in a chair, says her name is Clarinda.

Jac. Desire her to walk up.

Bel. How could you let her wait? [*Exit BUCKLE.*] You must excuse him, Madam; Buckle is a true bachelor's servant, and knows no manners.

Jac. Away, away Mr. Frankly, and stay till I call you. A rap with my fan shall be the signal. [*Exit FRANKLY.*] We make very free with your house, Mr. Meggot.

J. Meg. Oh, you could not oblige me more.

Enter CLARINDA.

Cl. Dear Mrs. Bellamy, pity my confusion, I am to wish you joy and ask your pardon all in a breath. I know not what to say; I am quite ashamed of my last night's behaviour.

Jac. Come, come Clarinda, it is all well; all is over and forgot. Mr. Bellamy— [*Salute.*]

Cl. I wish you joy, Sir, with all my heart; and should have been very sorry if any folly of mine had prevented it.

Bel. Madam, I am obliged to you.

Cl. I see nothing of Mr. Frankly! my mind misgives me. [*Aside.*]

Ran. And so, you came hither purely out of friendship, good nature, and humility.

Cl. Purely.

Ran. To confess your offences, to beg pardon, and to make reparation.

Cl. Purely. Is this any thing so extraordinary?

J. Meg. The most so of any thing in life, I think.

Ran. A very whimsical business for so fine a lady, and an errand you seldom went on before, I fancy, my dear cousin.

Jac. Never, I dare swear, if I may judge by the awkward concern she shows in delivering it.

Cl. Concern! Lord, well I protest you are all exceeding pretty company! Being settled for life, Jacinth, gives an ease to the mind that brightens conversation strangely.

Jac. I am sorry, with all my heart, you are not in the same condition; for as you are, my dear, you are horribly chagrined.

Ran. But with a little of our help, Madam, the lady may recover, and be very good company.

Cl. Hum! what does he mean, Mr. Bellamy?

Bel. Ask him, Madam.

Cl. Indeed I shall not give myself the trouble.

Jac. Then you know what he means.

Cl. Something impertinent, I suppose, not worth explaining.

Jac. It is something you won't let him explain, I find.

Re-enter BUCKLE, and whispers JACK MEGGOT.

J. Meg. Very well. Desire him to walk into the parlour. Madam, the gentleman is below.

Jac. Then every one to your posts. You know your cues.

Ran. I warrant ye. [*Exeunt Gentlemen.*]

Cla. All gone! I am glad of it, for I want to speak to you.

Jac. And I, my dear Clarinda, have something which I do not know how to tell you: but it must be known sooner or later.

Cla. What 's the matter?

Jac. Poor Mr. Frankly—

Cla. You fright me out of my senses!

Jac. Has no wounds but what you can cure. Ha, ha, ha!

Cla. Pshaw! I am angry.

Jac. Pshaw! You are pleased; and will be more so, when I tell you this man, whom fortune has thrown in your way, is in rank and temper the man in the world who suits you best for a husband.

Cla. Husband! I say, husband indeed! where will this end? [*Aside.*]

Jac. His very soul is yours, and he only waits an opportunity of telling you so. He is in the next room. Shall I call him in?

Cla. My dear girl, hold!

Jac. How foolish is this coyness now, Clarinda! If the men were here indeed, something might be said—And so, Mr. Frankly—

Cla. How can you be so teasing?

Jac. Nay, I am in downright earnest; and to show how particular I have been in my inquiries, though I know you have a spirit above regarding the modish, paltry way of a Smithfield bargain—His fortune—

Cla. I don't care what his fortune is.

Jac. Don't you so; then you are further gone than I thought you were.

Cla. No, pshaw! Pr'ythee, I don't mean so neither.

Jac. I don't care what you mean; but you won't like him the worse, I hope, for having a fortune superior to your own. Now shall I call him in!

Cla. Pho, dear girl—Some other time.

Jac. [*Raps with her fan.*] That's the signal, and here he is. You shall not stir: I positively will leave you together. [*Exit.*]

Cla. I tremble all over.

Enter FRANKLY.

Frank. Pardon this freedom, Madam; but I hope our having so luckily met with a common friend in Mrs. Bellamy—

Cla. Sir!

Frank. Makes any further apology for my behaviour last night absolutely unnecessary.

Cla. So far, Mr. Frankly, that I think the apology should be rather on my side, for the impertinent bustle I made about her.

Frank. This behaviour gives me hopes, Madam: pardon the construction—but from the little bustle you made about the lady, may I not hope you was not quite indifferent about the gentleman?

Cla. Have a care of being too sanguine in your hopes: might not a love of power, or the satisfaction of showing that power, or the dear pleasure of abusing that power; might not these have been foundation enough for more than what I did?

Frank. Charming woman! with most of your sex, I grant, they might, but not with you. Whatever power your beauty gives, your good nature will allow you no other use of it than to oblige.

Cla. This is the height of compliment, Mr. Frankly.

Frank. Not in my opinion, I assure you, Madam; and I am now going to put it to the trial.

Cla. What is he going to say now? [*Aside.*]

Frank. What is it that ails me, that I cannot speak? Pshaw! he here!

Enter RANGER.

Interrupted! impertinent! [*Aside.*]

Ran. There is no sight so ridiculous as a pair of your true lovers. Here are you two now, bowing and cringing, and keeping a passion secret from one another, that is no secret to all the house beside; and if you don't make the matter up immediately, it will be all over the town within these two hours.

Cla. What do you mean?

Frank. Ranger—

Ran. Do you be quiet, can't ye? [*Apart to FRANKLY.*] But it is over, I suppose, cousin, and you have given him your consent?

Cla. Sir, the liberties you are pleased to take with me—

Ran. Oh! in your airs still, are you? Why then, Mr. Frankly, there is a certain letter of yours, Sir, to this lady—

Cla. A letter to me?

Ran. Ay! to you, Madam.

Frank. Ha! what of that letter?

Ran. It is only fallen into Mr. Strickland's hands, that is all; and he has read it.

Frank. Read it!

Ran. Ay, read it to all his family at home, and to all the company below; and if some stop be not put to it, it will be read in all the coffee-houses in town.

Frank. A stop! this sword shall put a stop to it, or I will perish in the attempt.

Ran. But will that sword put a stop to the talk of the town?—Only make it talk the faster, take my word for it.

Cla. This is all a trick.

Ran. A trick! is it so? you shall soon see that, my fine cousin. [*Exit.*]

Frank. It is but too true, I fear. There is such a letter, which I gave Lucetta. Can you forgive me? Was I much to blame, when I could neither see nor hear of you?

Cla. [*Tenderly.*] You give yourself, Mr. Frankly, a thousand more uneasinesses than you need about me.

Frank. If this uneasiness but convinces you how much I love you—Interrupted again!

Cla. This is downright malice. [*Aside.*]

Re-enter RANGER, followed by JACINTHA, STRICTLAND, BELLAMY, and JACK MEGGOT.

Ran. Enter, enter, gentlemen and lady. Now you shall see whether this is a trick or no.

Cla. Mr. Strickland here! What is all this?

Jac. Do not be uneasy, my dear; we will explain it to you.

Frank. I cannot bear this trifling, Ranger, when my heart is on the rack.

Ran. Come this way, then, and learn.

[*JACINTHA, CLARINDA, FRANKLY, and RANGER, retire. STRICTLAND, BELLAMY, and MEGGOT advance.*]

Strict. Why, I know not well what to say. This has a face. This letter may as well agree with Clarinda as with my wife, as you have told the story; and Lucetta explained it so; but she, for a sixpenny piece, would have construed it the other way.

J. Meg. But, Sir, if we produce this Mr. Frankly to you, and he owns himself the author of this letter—

Bel. And if Clarinda likewise be brought before your face to encourage his addresses, there can be no further room for doubt.

Strict. No. Let that appear, and I shall, I think I shall, be satisfied—But yet it cannot be—

Bel. Why not? Hear me, Sir.

[*They talk*; *JACIN. CLARIN. FRANKLY, and RAN. advance.*]

Jac. In short, Clarinda, unless the affair is made up directly, a separation, with all the obloquy on her side, must be the consequence.

Cla. Poor Mrs. Strictland! I pity her: but for him, he deserves all he feels, were it ten times what it is.

Jac. It is for her sake only, that we beg of you both to bear his impertinence.

Cla. With all my heart. You will do what you please with me.

Frank. Generous creature!

Strict. Ha! here she is, and with the very man I saw deliver the letter to Lucetta. I do begin to fear I have made myself a fool. Now for the proof. [*Aside.*] Here is a letter, Sir, which has given me great disturbance, and these gentlemen assure me it was wrote by you.

Frank. That letter, Sir, upon my honour, I left this morning with Lucetta, for this lady.

Strict. For that lady? and Frankly, the name at the bottom, is not feigned, but your real name?

Frank. Frankly is my name.

Strict. I see, I feel myself ridiculous. [*Aside.*]

Jac. Now, Mr. Strictland, I hope—

J. Meg. Ay, ay; a clear case.

Strict. I am satisfied, and will go this instant to Mrs. Strictland.

Ran. Why then the devil fetch me, if this would satisfy me.

Strict. What's that?

Ran. Nay, nothing; it is no affair of mine.

Bel. What do you mean, Ranger?

Strict. Ay, what do you mean? I will know before I stir.

Ran. With all my heart, Sir. Cannot you see that all this may be a concerted matter between them?

Frank. Ranger, you know I can resent.

Strict. Go on; I will defend you, let who will resent it.

Ran. Why then, Sir, I declare myself your friend: and were I as you, nothing but their immediate marriage should convince me.

Strict. Sir, you're right, and are my friend indeed. Give me your hand.

Ran. May be I to hear her say—I, Clarinda, take thee, Charles, I would not believe them till I saw them a-bed together. Now resent it as you will.

Strict. Ay, Sir, as you will; but nothing less shall convince me; and so, my fine lady, if you are in earnest—

Cla. Sure, Mr. Strictland—

Strict. Nay, no flouncing; you cannot escape.

Ran. Why, Frankly, has't no soul?

Frank. I pity her confusion.

Ran. Pity her confusion!—the man's a fool—Here, take her hand.

Frank. Thus, on my knees, then, let me ravish with your hand, your heart.

Cla. Ravish it you cannot; for it is with all my heart I give it you.

Strict. I am satisfied.

Cla. And so am I, now it is once over.

Ran. And so am I, my dainty cousin; and I wish you joy of a man your whole sex would go to cuffs for, if they knew him but half so well as I do—Ha! she here; this is more than I bargained for. [*Aside.*]

Enter JACINTHA, leading in MRS. STRICTLAND.

Strict. [*Embracing MRS. STRICTLAND.*] Madam, reproach me not with my folly, and you shall never hear of it again.

Mrs. S. Reproach you! No! if ever you hear the least reflection pass my lips, forsake me in that instant; or, what would yet be worse, suspect again.

Strict. It is enough. I am ashamed to talk to thee. This letter, which I wrote to your brother, thus I tear in pieces, and with it part for ever with my jealousy.

Mrs. S. This is a joy, indeed! as great as unexpected. Yet there is one thing wanting to make it lasting.

Ran. What the devil is coming now. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. S. Be assured, every other suspicion of me was as unjust as your last; though perhaps you had more foundation for your fears.

Ran. She wont tell, sure, for her own sake.

Mrs. S. All must be cleared before my heart will be at ease. [*Aside.*]

Ran. It looks plaguy like it, though! [*Aside.*]

Strict. What mean you? I am all attention.

Mrs. S. There was a man, as you suspected, in my chamber, last night.

Strict. Ha! take care, I shall relapse.

Mrs. S. That gentleman was he—

Ran. Here is a devil for you! [*Aside.*]

Mrs. S. Let him explain the rest.

Ran. A frolic, a mere frolic, on my life.

Strict. A frolic! Zounds! [*They interpose.*]

Ran. Nay, don't let us quarrel the very moment you declared yourself my friend. There was no harm done, I promise you. Nay, never frown. After I have told my story, any satisfaction you are pleased to ask, I shall be ready to give.

Strict. Be quick then, and ease me of my pain.

Ran. Why then, as I was strolling about last night, upon the look out, I must confess, chance, and chance only, conveyed me to your house, where I espied a ladder of ropes most invitingly fastened to the window.

Jac. Which ladder, I had fastened for my escape.

Strict. Proceed.

Ran. Up mounted I, and up I should have gone, if it had been in the garret; it's all one to Ranger. I opened one door, and then another, and to my great surprise the whole house was silent; at last, I stole into a room where this lady was undressing.

Strict. 'Sdeath and the devil! you did not dare sure—

Ran. I don't know whether I had dared, or no, if I had not heard the maid say something of her master's being jealous. Oh, damn me, thought I, then the work is half done to my hands.

Jac. Do you mind that, Mr. Strictland?

Strict. I do—I do, most feelingly.

Ran. The maid grew saucy, and most conveniently to my wishes was turned out of the room; and if you had not the best wife in the world—

Strict. Ounds, Sir, but what right have you—

Ran. What right, Sir? if you will be jealous of your wife without a cause; if you will be out at this time of night, when you might have been so much better employed at home; we young fellows think we have a right—

Strict. No joking, I beseech you; you know not what I feel.

Ran. Then seriously, I was mad, or drunk enough, call it which you will, to be very rude to this lady, for which I ask both her pardon and yours. I am an odd sort of a fellow, perhaps; but I am above telling you or any man a lie, damn me, if I am not.

Strict. I must, I cannot but believe you; and for the future, Madam, you shall find a heart ready to love and trust you. No tears, I beg; I cannot bear them.

Mrs. S. I cannot speak, and yet there is a favour, Sir—

Strict. I understand you; and, as a proof of the sincerity with which I speak, I beg it as a favour, of this lady in particular, [*To CLARINDA.*] and of all the company in general, to return to my house immediately, where every thing, Mr. Bellamy, shall be settled to your entire satisfaction. No thanks; I have not deserved them.

Ran. Why, this is honest; continue but in this humour, and faith, Sir, you may trust me to run about your house like a spaniel. I cannot sufficiently admire the whimsicalness of my good fortune, in being so instrumental to this general happiness. Bellamy, Frankly, I wish you joy with all my heart, though I had rather you should be married than I, for all that. Never did matrimony appear to me with a smile upon her face till this instant.

Sure joys for ever wait each happy pair,
When sense the man, and virtue crowns the
fair,
And kind compliance proves their mutual care.
[*Exeunt.*]

TOM THUMB THE GREAT:

A BURLESQUE TRAGEDY,

IN TWO ACTS

ALTERED, FROM FIELDING,

BY KANE O'HARA, Esq.

REMARKS.

THOUGH small in its subject, this "tragedy of tragedies" has engaged the attention of two dramatic writers ; its original parent, Henry Fielding, our celebrated novelist, brought it on the Haymarket stage, in the year 1730, when it met with great success. This burlesque may be considered almost the best that ever appeared. It is, also, a proper sequel to the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* ; as it embraces and satirises the absurdities of almost all the writers of tragedy from the period when that piece stops. The love-scenes, rage, marriage, battle, and catastrophe, are such forcible imitations of the rules observed by the tragic writers of that time, that the satire conveyed in them cannot escape the observation of any one conversant with the writers of the last century ;* and to those who do not comprehend every turn of its humour, it will always appear agreeable.

In Mr. O'Hara's alteration of this piece of true burlesque, he has certainly, allowing for its compression, preserved the points of the original, and presented an entertainment that maintains its credit undiminished on the stage

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Characters in Fielding's Original Piece, entitled, "The Tragedy of Tragedies ; or, the Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great ;" as performed at the Haymarket, 1730.

KING ARTHUR, a passionate sort of King, husband to Queen Dollalolla, of whom he stands a little in fear ; father to Huncamunca, whom he is very fond of ; and in love with Glumdalca, *Mr. Mullart.*
TOM THUMB THE GREAT, a little hero with a great soul, something violent in his temper, which is a little abated by his love for Huncamunca, *Young Verhuyck.*
GHOST OF GAFFER THUMB, a whimsical sort of Ghost, *Mr. Lacy.*
LORD GRIZZLE, extremely zealous for the liberty of the subject, very choleric in his temper, and in love with Huncamunca, *Mr. Jones.*
MERLIN, a Conjuror, and in some sort father to Tom Thumb, *Mr. Hallam.*
NOODLE, { Courtiers in place, and consequently of that party that is uppermost, ... } *Mr. Reynolds.*
DOODLE, { } *Mr. Wathan.*
FOODLE, a Courtier that is out of place, and consequently of that party that is undermost, *Mr. Ayres.*
BAILIFF, { Of the party of the plaintiff, } *Mr. Peterson.*
FOLLOWER, { } *Mr. Hicks.*
PARSON, of the side of the church, *Mr. Watson*
QUEEN DOLLALOLLA, wife to King Arthur, and mother to Huncamunca ; a woman entirely faultless, saving that she is a little given to drink ; a little too much a virago towards her husband, and in love with Tom Thumb, *Mrs. Mullart.*
THE PRINCESS HUNCAMUNCA, daughter to their Majesties King Arthur and Queen Dollalolla, of a very sweet, gentle, and amorous disposition, equally in love with Lord Grizzle and Tom Thumb, and desirous to be married to them both, *Mrs. Jones.*
GLUMDALCA, of the Giants, a captive Queen, beloved by the King, but in love with Tom Thumb, *Mrs. Dove.*
CLEORA, { Maids of Honour, in love with } *NOODLE.*
MUSTACHA, { } *DOODLE.*

Courtiers, Guards, Rebels, Drums, Trumpets, Thunder and Lightning.

SCENE.—The Court of King Arthur, and a Plain thereabouts.

* Fielding's original, with his notes by Scriblerus Secundus, the Preface, &c. form a fund of sterling satire on the criticisms of his cotemporaries, and on the works of former writers of tragedies.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HAYMARKET, 1810.

KING ARTHUR, *Mr. Dowton.*
TOM THUMB, *Master West.*
MERLIN, *Mr. Denman.*
LORD GRIZZLE, *Mr. Liston.*
NOODLE, *Mr. Taylor.*
DOODLE, *Mr. Grove.*
GHOST, *Mr. Denman.*

HAYMARKET, 1810

QUEEN DOLLALLOLLA, *Mrs. Liston.*
PRINCESS HUNCAMUNCA, *Mrs. Taylor.*
GLUMDALCA, *Miss Leserve.*
FRIZALETTA, *Miss Vining.*
PLUMANTE, *Mrs. Kendal.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Palace Yard.

Enter DOODLE on one side of the stage, and NOODLE on the other; after a long obeisance, they embrace.

DUET.

Dood. Sure such a day,
So renown'd, so victorious—
Such a day as this was never seen;
Courtiers so gay,
And the mob so uproarious—
Nature seems to wear a universal grin.

Nood. Arthur to Doll
Is grown bobbish and uxorious;
While both she and Huncamunca tittle, talking
tawdry;
Even Mr. Sol,
So tifted out, so glorious,
Glitters like a beau in a new birth-day embroidery.

Dood. Oh, 'tis a day
Of jubilee, cajollery;
A day we never saw before;
A-day of fun and drollery.

Nood. That you may say,
Their majesties may boast of it;
And since it never can come more,
'Tis fit they make the most of it.

Dood. Oh, 'tis a day, &c.

Nood. That you may say, &c.

Dood. Sure such a day, &c.

Nood. Courtiers so gay, &c.

Dood. Yes, Noodle, yes;—to-day the mighty
Thumb
Returns triumphant.—Captive giants swarm
Like bees behind his car. [*Flourish of trumpets.*]

Nood. These trumpets speak the king at levee
—I go.

Dood. And I also—to offer my petition.

Nood. Doodle, do. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Inside of the Palace.

*The KING and QUEEN seated on a throne.—
LORD GRIZZLE, Courtiers, and Attendants.—
DOODLE and NOODLE apart.*

King. Let no face but a face of joy be seen!
The man, who this day frowns, shall lose his head,
That he may have no face to frown withal—
Smile, Dollalolla! [*Kisses her.*]

Dood. [*Kneeling.*] Dread liege,
This petition—

King. [*Dashes it away.*] Petition me no peti-
tions, Sir, to-day;

To-day it is our pleasure—to be drunk,
And this our queen shall be as drunk as we.

Queen. Is't so? why then perdition catch the
failers!

Let's have a row, and get as drunk as tailors.

AIR.

What though I now am half seas o'er,
I scorn to balk this bout,
Of stiff rack-punch fetch bowls a score,
'Fore George, I'll see them out.

What though, &c.

But, Sir, your queen 'twould ill become,
T' indulge in vulgar sips;
No drop of brandy, gin, or rum,
Should pass these royal lips.

But, Sir, &c.

Chorus.—Rum ti iddity, row, row, row,
If we'd a good sup, we'd take it now.

King. Though rack, in punch, ten shillings
were a quart,
And rum and brandy be but half-a-crown,
Rather than quarrel, thou shalt have thy fill.

[*Flourish of drums and trumpets.*]

Nood. These martial sounds, my liege, an-
nounce the general.

King. Haste we to meet, and meetly to receive
him.

[*Rises from the throne; martial music.*]

*Enter TOM THUMB, Attendants, and GLUM-
DALCA, in chains.*

Welcome, thrice welcome, mighty Thomas
Thumb!

Thou tiny hero—pigmy giant queller!
What gratitude can thank away the debt
Thy valour puts upon us.

[*Takes him up and embraces him.*]

Queen. Oh! ye gods! [*Aside.*]

Tom. When I'm not thank'd at all I'm thank'd
enough—

I've done my duty, and I've done no more

[*Bows.*]

Queen. Was ever such a godlike creature seen?

King. Thy modesty's a flambeau to thy merit;
It shines itself, and shows thy merit too.
O Tommy, Tommy Thumb! what to thy prow-
ess do we owe!

Ask some reward—great as we can bestow.

Tom. I ask not kingdoms, I can conquer those;
I ask not money, money I've enough:

If this be called a debt, take my receipt in full:

I ask but this, to sun myself in Huncamunca's
eyes,

King. [*Aside.*] Prodigious bold request!

Queen. Be still, my soul!

King. [*After a pause.*] It is resolv'd.

The princess is thy own! [*To THUMB.*]

Tom. O happy Tommy! super-happy Thumb
Whisper, ye winds, that Huncamunca's mine!

The bloody bus'ness of grim war is o'er,
And beauty, heavenly beauty, crowns my toils.

AIR.

As when the chimney-sweeper
Has, all the live-long day,
Through darksome paths a creeper,
Pursued his sooty way:

At night, to wash in water
His hands and face he flies;
And, in his t'other tatter,
With his Brickdusta lies.

[*Exit*;—*flourish of Trumpets*.]

King. [*Looking fondly at GLUMDALCA*.] I feel
a sudden pain across my breast; [*Aside*.]
Nor know I whether it proceeds from love
Or the wind-cholic—but time will show.—Huge-

ous queen of hearts!
Sure thou wert form'd by all the gods in council;
Who, having made a lucky hit beyond their jour-

ney-work,
Cry'd out—"This is a woman!" [*taken*.]

Glum. Then were the gods confoundedly mis-
We are a giantess—I tell thee, Arthur,
We yesterday were both a queen and wife;
One hundred thousand giants own'd our sway;
Twenty whereof were wedded to ourself.

Queen. Oh, bless'd prerogative of giantism!

[*Aside*.]

King. Oh! vast queen!—Think our court
thine own; [*pay*,
Call for what'er thou lik'st—there's nought to
Nor art thou captive, but thy captive we.

[*Takes off her chains*.]

Queen. [*Aside*.] Ha! Arthur faithless!
This gag my rival, too, in dear Tom Thumb!

Revenge!—but I'll dissemble—
Madam, believe that with a woman's eye
I view your loss—take comfort—for, to-morrow
Our grenadiers shall be called out, then choose
As many husbands as you think you'll want.

Glum. Madam, I rest your much obliged and
very humble servant. [*Exit*.]

Queen. Though greater yet Tom's boasted
merit was,

He shall not have my daughter, that is pos.

[*Advancing to the KING*.]

King. Ha! say'st thou?

Queen. Yes, I say he sha'n't.

King. How, sha'n't!

Now by our royal self, we swear—I'll be damn'd,
but he shall.

AIR.—QUEEN.

Then tremble all, who weddings ever made,
And tremble more who did this match persuade;
For, like a worried eat, I'll spit, I'll squall,
I'll scratch, I'll tear the eyes out of ye all.

[*The KING throws his hat at the QUEEN*.]

[*Exeunt QUEEN and LADIES*.]

Dood. Her majesty, the queen, is in a passion.

King. She may be damn'd. Who cares? We
were indeed

A pretty king of clouts, were we to truckle
To all her maudlin humours.

AIR.—KING.

We kings, who are in our senses,
Mock our consorts violences;
Pishing at their moods and tenses,
Our own will we follow.

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If the husband, once gives way
To his wife's capricious sway,
For his breeches he next day
May go whoop and hollow. [*Exeunt*.]

SCENE II.—*Changes to the outside of the Palace*.

Enter LORD GRIZZLE.

Griz. Arthur wrongs me!
Cheats me of my Huncamunca!
Rouse thee, Grizzle! 'Sblood, I'll be a rebel.
Alas! What art thou, honour?
A Monmouth-street laced coat, gracing to-day
My back; to-morrow glittering on another's—
To arms! to arms!

Enter QUEEN, in a rage.

Queen. Teach me to scold, O Grizzle!

Griz. Scold, would my queen?—Say, ah!
wherefore!

Queen. Wherefore!

Faggots and fire—my daughter to Tom Thumb!

Griz. I'll mince the atom into countless pieces.

Queen. Oh! no; prevent the match, but hurt
not him—

Him!—thou!—thou kill the man

Who kill'd the giants?

Griz. Giants!—why, Madam, 'tis all flummery:
He made the giants first, and then he kill'd them.

Queen. How! hast thou seen no giants? Are
there not

Now in our yard ten thousand proper giants?

Griz. Madam, shall I tell you what I am going
to say? I do not positively know, but, as near as
I can guess, I cannot tell; though I firmly do be-
lieve there is not one.

Queen. Out from my sight, base Pickthank,
hie, begone!

By all my stars, thou enviest Tom Thumb.

Griz. Yes, yes, I go; but, Madam, know
(Since your majesty's so pert)

That a flood of Tommy's blood,
To allay this storm shall spirt.

[*Exeunt*.]

SCENE III.—*An Antechamber*.

The KING, on a Couch.

King. Methought

I heard a voice say, "Sleep no more!

Glumdalca exiles sleep—and therefore, Arthur
Can sleep no more.

The Ghost of GAFFER THUMB rises, with a blue
lantern on a long staff.

Ghost. Oh! Arthur! Arthur! Arthur!
Soon shalt thou sleep enough.

King. Ah! what art thou?

Ghost. The ghost of Gaffer Thumb.

King. A ghost!—Stand off!

I'll have thee laid in the Red Sea.

Ghost. Oh, Arthur! take heed.
My thread is spun—list, list, oh, list!

AIR.

Pale death is prowling,
Dire omens, scowling,
Doom thee to slaughter,
Thee, thy wife, and daughter.
Furies are growling,
With horrid groans:
Grizzle's rebellion,

What need I tell you on ?
 Or by a red cow,
 Tom Thumb devoured ?
 Hark ! the cock crowing. [*Cock crows.*
 I must be going,
 I can no more. [*Vanishes.*

King. No more ! and why no more, or why so much ?
 Better quite ignorant, than half instructed.
 By Jove, this bo-peep ghost makes game of us ;
 Therefore, Fate, keep your secret to yourself.

AIR.

Such a fine king as I don't fear your threats of a
 rush,
 Do show your sweet phiz again, and I'll quickly
 call up a blush,
 For I am up, up, up,
 But you are down, down, down,
 Do pop up your nob again,
 And 'egad I'll crack your crown.
 Who cares for you, Mr. Ghost ? or all that you
 can do ;
 I laugh at your stupid threats, and your cock-a-
 doodle do ; [*Cock crows.*
 For I am up, up, up,
 But you are down, down, down ;
 Draw your sword like a man,
 Or I'll box you for a crown.
 Rum ti iddity, &c. [*Scene closes.*

SCENE IV.—HUNCAMUNCA'S Dressing Room.

HUNCAMUNCA at her toilette, FRIZALETTA waiting.

Hunc. Give me some music,—see that it be sad.
 [*Band plays a strain.*
*Oh, Tommy Thumb ! why art thou Tommy
 Thumb ?*
Why had not mighty Bantam been thy father ?
Why not the king of Brentford, old or new ?
Friz. Madam, Lord Grizzle.

Enter LORD GRIZZLE.

Griz. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, Huncamunca ! Huncamunca, oh !

Hunc. This to my rank,—bold man !

Griz. Ah, beauteous princess !
 Love levels rank,—lords down to cellar bears,
 And bids the brawny porter walk up stairs.—
 Nought is for love too high, nor aught too low—
 Oh, Huncamunca ! Huncamunca, oh !

Hunc. My lord, in vain, a-suitoring you come,
 For I'm engaged this instant to Tom Thumb.

Griz. Play not the fool ! that less than baby
 shun,

Or you will ne'er be brought to bed of one.

Hunc. Am I thus fobb'd ?—then I my words
 recal.

Griz. Shall I to Doctors' Commons ?

Hunc. Do so, pray—

I now am in the mood, and cannot stay.

AIR.—GRIZZLE.

In hurry post haste for a license,
 In hurry ding dong I come back ;
 For that you sha'n't need bid me twice hence,
 I'll be there, and here, in a crack.
 Hey ting,
 My heart's on the wing,
 I now could leap over the moon,
 Let the chaplain

Set us grap'ling,
 And we'll stock a baby-house soon.
Hunc. Oh !
Griz. Ah !

[*Exit.*

Enter TOM THUMB.

Tom. Where is my Huncamunca ? where's
 my princess ?
 Where those bright eyes, the card-matches of
 Cupid,

That light up all with love my waxen soul ?

Hunc. Put out the light, nor waste thy little
 taper.

Tom. Put out the light ? impossible !
 As well Sir Solomon might put out his rush-light.

Hunc. I am to Lord Grizzle promis'd.

Tom. Promis'd !

Hunc. Too sure, 'tis enter'd in fate's journal.

Tom. Enter'd.

Zounds ! I'll tear out the leaf—I'll blot the page
 —I'll burn the book.

I tell thee, princess, had I been thy help-mate,
 We soon had peopled this whole realm with
 Thumbs.

Hunc. O fie ! I shudder at the gross idea !

Tom. Then go we to the king—let him decide,
 Whether you shall be Grizzle's or my bride.

[*Going out hand-in-hand, are met by
 GLUMDALCA.*

Glum. Stop, brandy-nose ! hopest thou the
 wight,

Who once hath worn my easy chains, will toil in
 thine ?

Hunc. Easy, no doubt, by twenty husbands
 worn.

Tom. In the balcony which o'erhangs the
 stage,

I've seen one wench two 'prentices engage :

This half-a-crown doth in his fingers hold,

That just lets peep a little bit of gold.

Miss, the half-guinea wisely doth purloin,

And scorns the bigger, and the baser, coin.

TRIO.

Glum. Oh ! the vixen pigmy brat,
 Of inches scarce half six ;
 To slight me for a chit like that,
 Ah ! Mr. Tom, are these your tricks ?

Hunc. Oh ! the coarse salacious trull,
 Who giant paramours twice ten
 To bed can pull,
 With hugs can lull,
 Yet still would gull
 Young gentlemen.

Tom. Little though I be,
 I scorn the sturdy strum ;
 Nor ever she,
 My dear from thee
 Shall debauch thy own Tom Thumb.

Glum. Oh ! the vixen, &c.

Hunc. Oh ! the coarse, &c.

Tom. Little though I be, &c. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Court of the Palace.

Enter NOODLE.

Nood. Sure, Nature means to unhinge the solid
 globe !

Chaos is come again—all's topsy-turvy.

AIR.

King Arthur in love ancle deep—speed the
 Glumdalca will soon be his punk-a; [plough,
 The Queen Dollallolla's as drunk as a sow,
 In bed with Tom Thumb, Huncamunca.

Enter LORD GRIZZLE, hastily.

Griz. If this be true, all women kind are
 damn'd.

Nood. If it be not, may I be damn'd myself.

Griz. Then, get out, patience! oh, I'm whirl-
 wind all;

Havoc, let loose the dogs of war, halloo! [Exit.

SCENE II.—A Chamber in the Palace.

Enter QUEEN.

Queen. Ah! wherefore from his Dollallolla's
 Doth Arthur steal? Why all alone, [arms
 And in the dark, leave her, whose feeble nerves
 He knows are harrow'd up with fears of spirits?

Enter KING.

King. We hop'd the fumes, sweet queen, of
 last night's punch,
 Had glued thy lovely eyes; but, ah! we find
 There is no power in drams to quiet wives.

Enter NOODLE.

Nood. Long life to both your majesties,—if life
 Be worth a fig—Lord Grizzle, at the head
 Of a rebellious rout, invests the palace;
 He swears—unless the princess straight
 Be yielded up, with Tom Thumb's pate,
 About your ears he will beat down the gate.

King. The devil he will!—but see the princess!

Enter HUNCAMUNCA.

Say, where's the mighty Thumb, our sword and
 buckler? [gods:

Though 'gainst us men and giants league with
 Yet Thumb alone is equal to more odds.

Hunc. About an hour and a half ago
 Tom sallied forth to meet the foe,
 And soon, who's who, he'll make them know.

King. Oh! oh!
 Come, Dollallolla: Huncamunca, come;
 Within, we'll wait in whole skins for Tom
 Thumb. [Exeunt

SCENE III.—A Plain.

Enter LORD GRIZZLE, NOODLE, and Rebels.
 [A March.]

Griz. Thus far with victory our arms are
 crown'd; [found
 For, though we have not fought, yet have we
 No enemy to fight withal.

[Drums and Trumpets.

Enter THUMB, DOODLE, and Soldiers.

Tom. Art thou the man, whom men fam'd
 Grizzle call?

Griz. Art thou the much more fam'd Tom
 Thumb the small?

Tom. The same.

Griz. The same.

Tom. His prowess now each prove.

Griz. For liberty I stand.

Tom. And I for love.

[A battle between the two armies; they
 fight off.

Enter GLUMDALCA, and meets GRIZZLE, while
 fighting THUMB.

Glum. Turn, coward, turn! nor from a wo-
 man fly!

Griz. Thou art unworthy of my arm.

Glum. Am I?

Have at thy heart then!

[Thrusts at, but misses him.

Griz. Rampant queen of sluts!

Now have at thine.

[Strikes.

Glum. [Falling.] You've run me through the
 guts.

Griz. Then there's an end of one. [Going.

[Is met by TOM THUMB, who runs him
 through.

Tom. An end of two,

Thou hast it.

[Exit.

Griz. Oh, Tom Thumb! [Falls.] thy soul
 beshrew!

I die—Ambition! the fates have made their tour,
 And the black cart is waiting at the door.

AIR.

My body is a bankrupt's shop,
 My cruel creditor, grim Death;
 Who puts to life's brisk trade a stop,
 And will be paid with my last breath.—
 Oh! Oh! Oh! [Dies.

Enter TOM THUMB and Attendants.

Tom. Bear off the carcasses; lop off his knob,
 'Twill witness to the king Tom Thumb's good
 job:

Rebellion 's dead, and now—I'll go to breakfast.

[Exit.

[Attendants lay hold of GRIZZLE.

Griz. Why dost thou call me from the peace-
 ful grave?

Attend. Sir, we came to bear your body off.

Griz. Then I'll bear it off myself. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—The Presence-chamber.

Enter KING, QUEEN, HUNCAMUNCA, DOODLE
 PLUMANTE, FRIZALETTA, and Attendants.

King. Open the prisons, set the wretched free
 And bid our treasurer disburse five guineas
 To pay their debts.—Let our arch necromancer,
 Sage Merlin, straight attend us:—we the while
 Will view the triumph of our son-in-law.

Hunc. Take note, Sir, that on this our wed-
 ding-day

Two victories hath my gallant husband won.

Enter NOODLE.

Nood. Oh, monstrous, dreadful, terrible! oh! oh!

King. What means the blockhead?

Nood. But to grace my tale with decent horror:
 Tom Thumb is no more!

A huge red cow, larger than the largest size, just
 now i'th open street,

Before my eyes, devour'd the great Tom Thumb.
 [A general groan.

King. Shut, shut again the prisons:

Let our treasurer

Not issue out three farthings. Hang all the cul
 And bid the schoolmasters whip all their little boys.

Nood. Her majesty the queen is in a swoon

Queen. Not so much in a swoon, but to have
 still

Strength to reward the messenger of ill.

[QUEEN KILLS NOODLE

Friz. My lover kill'd—
His death I thus revenge.

[Kills the QUEEN.]

Hunc. Kill my mamma!

O base assassin! there!

[Kills FRIZALETTA.]

Dood. For that, take this!

[Kills HUNCA.]

Plum. And thou, take that.

[Kills DOODLE.]

King. Die, murderess vile!

[Kills PLUM.]

Ah, Death makes a feast to-day,

And but reserves ourselves for his *bon bouche*.

So when the boy, whom nurse from danger guards,

Sends Jack for mustard with a pack of cards;

Kings, queens, and knaves, tip one another down,

Till the whole pack lie scatter'd and o'erthrown.

Thus all our pack upon the floor is cast,

And my sole boast is, that I will die the last.

[Stabs himself;—they all lie on the stage, dead.]

MERLIN rises.—Thunder and lightning.

Merlin. Blood, what a scene of slaughter's here!

But I'll soon shift it, never fear.

Gallants, behold! one touch of Merlin's magic,

Shall to gay comic change this dismal tragic.

[Waves his wand.]

Scene changes, and discovers the Cow.

First, at my word, thou horned cannibal,

Return again our England's Hannibal.

[Thunder.]

[THUMB is thrown out of the Cow's mouth, and starts fiercely.]

Next to you, king, queen, lords, and commons,

I issue my hell-bilking summons.

INCANTATION.

Arise, ye groupes of drunken sots!

Who deal out deaths, you know not why;

No more of porter pots, or plots,

Your senseless jealousy lay by.

Your souls cannot as yet be far

Upon their way to dreary night:

My power remands them.

[They all start up as MERLIN touches them.]

Enter GLUMDALCA and GRIZZLE.

Here ends jar,

Live, love, and all this will be right.

King. [To the QUEEN.] One kind buss, my
Dolly Queen;

When we two last parted,

We scarce hop'd to buss again;

My heart! lord, how it smarted!

QUEEN. [To the KING.] Dear King Atty, pitty,
patty,

Mine too went a fleeting;

Now we in a nipperkin

May toast this merry meeting.

Tom. [To HUNC.] Come, my Hunky, come, my
Love's in haste, don't stay him; [pet,

Deep we are in Hymen's debt,

And 'tis high time we pay him.

Hunc. [To TOM.] Have, dear Tommy,
Pity on me;

I am by shame restricted;

Yet I obey,

So take your way,

I must not contradict it.

Griz. [To GLUM.] Grandest Glum, in my behoof,
To love's law be pliant;

Me you'll find a man of proof,

Although not quite a giant.

Glum. [To GRIZ.] Indeed, Lord Griz,
Though for that phiz

Few amorous queens would choose you;

Yet thus bereft,

Not one chum left,

I think I can't refuse you.

Merlin. Now love and live, and live and love.

All. Sage Merlin's in the right on't;

Merlin. Each couple prove like hand in glove;

All. Agreed.

Queen. 'Fore George, we'll make a night on't.

All. Let discord cease,

Let all in peace

Go home and kiss their spouses;

Join hat and cap

In one loud clap,

And wish us crowded houses.

[Exeunt.]

PERCY:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY MRS. HANNAH MORE.

REMARKS.

THIS tragedy, in which Mrs. Hannah More is supposed to have been assisted by Garrick, was produced at Covent Garden Theatre, in 1778, with success; and revived, in 1818, at the same theatre.

The feuds of the rival houses of Percy and of Douglas have furnished materials for this melancholy tale, in which Mrs. More* has embodied many judicious sentiments and excellent passages, producing a forcible lesson to parental tyranny. The victim of her husband's unreasonable jealousy, *Elwina's* virtuous conflict is pathetic and interesting; while *Percy's* sufferings, and the vain regret of Earl *Raby*, excite and increase our sympathy.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PERCY, Earl of Northumberland,.....	<i>Mr. Lewis.</i>
EARL DOUGLAS,.....	<i>Mr. Wroughton.</i>
EARL RABY, Elwina's Father,.....	<i>Mr. Aickin.</i>
EDRIC, Friend to Douglas,.....	<i>Mr. Whitefield</i>
HARCOURT, Friend to Percy,.....	<i>Mr. Robson.</i>
SIR HUBERT, a Knight,.....	<i>Mr. Hull.</i>
ELWINA,.....	<i>Mrs. Barry.</i>
BIRTHA,.....	<i>Mrs. Jackson.</i>

Knights, Guards, Attendants, &c.

SCENE.—Raby Castle, in Durham.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Gothic Hall.

Enter EDRIC and BIRTHA.

Bir. What may this mean? Earl Douglas has enjoin'd thee
To meet him here in private?
Edr. Yes, my sister,
And this injunction I have oft receiv'd;
But when he comes, big with some painful secret,
He starts, looks wild, then drops ambiguous hints,
Frowns, hesitates, turns pale, and says 'twas nothing;
Then feigns to smile, and by his anxious care
To prove himself at ease, betrays his pain.
Bir. Since my short sojourn here, I've mark'd this earl,

And though the ties of blood unite us closely,
I shudder at his haughtiness of temper,
Which not his gentle wife, the bright Elwina,
Can charm to rest. Ill are their spirits pair'd;
His is the seat of frenzy, hers of softness,
His love is transport, hers is trembling duty;
Rage in his soul is as the whirlwind fierce,
While hers ne'er felt the power of that rude passion.
Edr. Perhaps the mighty soul of Douglas mourns,
Because inglorious love detains him here,
While our bold knights, beneath the Christian standard,
Press to the bulwarks of Jerusalem.
Bir. Though every various charm adorns Elwina,

* Of this estimable lady, a cotemporary writer says, "This lady has for many years flourished in the literary world, which she has richly adorned by a variety of labours, all possessing strong marks of excellence. In the cause of religion and society, her labours are original and indefatigable; and the industrious poor have been at once enlightened by her instructions, and supported by her bounty."
As a dramatic writer, Mrs. More is known by her "Search after Happiness," pastoral drama; "The Inflexible Captive,"—"Percy," and "Fatal Falsehood," tragedies; and by her "Sacred Dramas."

And though the noble Douglas dotes to madness,
Yet some dark mystery involves their fate:
The canker grief devours Elwina's bloom,
And on her brow meek resignation sits,
Hopeless, yet uncomplaining.

Edr. 'Tis most strange.

Bir. Once, not long since, she thought herself alone;

'Twas then the pent-up anguish burst its bounds;
With broken voice, clasp'd hands, and streaming eyes,

She call'd upon her father, call'd him cruel,
And said her duty claim'd far other recompense.

Edr. Perhaps the absence of the good Lord Raby,

Who, at her nuptials, quitted this fair castle,
Resigning it to her, may thus afflict her.
Hast thou e'er question'd her, good Birtha?

Bir. Often,

But hitherto in vain; and yet she shows me
The endearing kindness of a sister's love;
But if I speak to Douglas—

Edr. See! he comes.

It would offend him should he find you here.

Enter DOUGLAS.

Dou. How! Edric and his sister in close conference?

Do they not seem alarm'd at my approach?

And see, how suddenly they part! Now Edric,
[*Exit BIRTHA.*

Was this well done? or was it like a friend,
When I desir'd to meet thee here alone,
With all the warmth of trusting confidence,
'To lay my bosom naked to thy view,
And show thee all its weakness, was it well
'To call thy sister here, to let her witness
'Thy friend's infirmity?—perhaps to tell her—

Edr. My lord, I nothing know; I came to learn.

Dou. Nay then thou dost suspect there's something wrong?

Edr. If we were bred from infancy together,
If I partook in all thy youthful griefs,
And every joy thou knew'st was doubly mine,
Then tell me all the secret of thy soul:
Or have these few short months of separation,
The only absence we have ever known,
Have these so rent the bands of love asunder,
That Douglas should distrust his Edric's truth?

Dou. My friend, I know thee faithful as thou'rt brave,

And I will trust thee—but not now, good Edric.
'Tis past, 'tis gone, it is not worth the telling,
'Twas wrong to cherish what disturb'd my peace;
I'll think of it no more.

Edr. Transporting news!

I fear'd some hidden trouble vex'd your quiet.
In secret I have watch'd—

Dou. Ha! watch'd in secret?

A spy, employ'd, perhaps, to note my actions.
What have I said? Forgive me, thou art noble:
Yet do not press me to disclose my grief,
For when thou know'st it, I perhaps shall hate thee
As much, my Edric, as I hate myself
For my suspicions—I am ill at ease.

Edr. How will the fair Elwina grieve to hear it!

Dou. Hold, Edric, hold—thou hast touch'd the fatal string

That wakes me into madness. Hear me then,
But let the deadly secret be secured
With bars of adamant in thy close breast.
Think on the curse which waits on broken oaths;

A knight is bound by more than vulgar ties,
And perjury in thee were doubly damn'd.
Well then, the king of England—

Edr. Is expected

From distant Palestine.

Dou. Forbid it, Heaven!

For with him comes—

Edr. Ah! who?

Dou. Peace, peace,

For see Elwina's here. Retire, my Edric;

When next we meet, thou shalt know all. Fare-
well. [*Exit EDRIC.*

Now to conceal with care my bosom's anguish,
And let her beauty chase away my sorrows!
Yes, I would meet her with a face of smiles—
But 'twill not be.

Enter ELWINA.

Elw. Alas, 'tis ever thus!

Thus ever clouded is his angry brow. [*Aside.*

Dou. I were too bless'd, Elwina, could I hope
You met me here by choice, or that your bosom
Shar'd the warm transports mine must ever feel
At your approach.

Elw. My lord, if I intrude, [*giveness*
The cause which brings me claims at least for
I fear you are not well, and come, unbidden,
Except by faithful duty, to inquire,
If haply in my power, my little power
I have the means to minister relief
To your affliction?

Dou. What unwonted goodness!
O I were bless'd above the lot of man,
If tenderness, not duty, brought Elwina;
Cold, ceremonious, and unfeeling duty,
That wretched substitute for love: but know,
The heart demands a heart; nor will be paid
With less than what it gives. E'en now, Elwina,
The glistening tear stands trembling in your eyes,
Which cast their mournful sweetness on the
ground,

As if they fear'd to raise their beams to mine,
And read the language of reproachful love.

Elw. My lord, I hop'd the thousand daily proofs
Of my obedience—

Dou. Death to all my hopes! [*ence?*
Heart-rending word!—obedience! what's obedi-

'Tis fear, 'tis hate, 'tis terror, 'tis aversion,
'Tis the cold debt of ostentatious duty,
Paid with insulting caution, to remind me
How much you tremble to offend a tyrant
So terrible as Douglas.—O, Elwina—

While duty measures the regard it owes
With scrupulous precision and nice justice,
Love never reasons, but profusely gives,
Gives, like a thoughtless prodigal, its all,
And trembles then, lest it has done too little.

Elw. Indeed I'm most unhappy that my cares
And my solicitude to please, offend.

Dou. True tenderness is less solicitous,
Less prudent and more fond; the enamour'd heart
Conscious it loves, and bless'd in being lov'd,
Reposes on the object it adores,
And trusts the passion it inspires and feels. -
Thou hast not learn'd how terrible it is
To feed a hopeless flame.—But hear, Elwina,
Thou must obdurate, hear me.—

Elw. Say, my lord,
For your own lips shall vindicate my fame,
Since at the altar I became your wife,
Can malice charge me with an act, a word,
I ought to blush at? Have I not still liv'd

As open to the eye of observation,
As fearless innocence should ever live?
I call attesting angels to be witness,
If in my open deed, or secret thought,
My conduct, or my heart, they've aught discern'd
Which did not emulate their purity.

Dou. This vindication ere you were accus'd,
This warm defence, repelling all attacks
Ere they are made, and construing casual words
To formal accusations, trust me, Madam,
Shows rather an alarm'd and vigilant spirit,
For ever on the watch to guard its secret,
Than the sweet calm of fearless innocence.
Who talk'd of guilt? Who testified suspicion?

Elw. Learn, Sir, that virtue, while 'tis free from
blame,
Is modest, lowly, meek, and unassuming;
Not apt, like fearful vice, to shield its weakness
Beneath the studied pomp of boastful phrase
Which swells to hide the poverty it shelters;
But, when this virtue feels itself suspected,
Insulted, set at nought, its whiteness stain'd,
It then grows proud, forgets its humble worth,
And rates itself above its real value,

Dou. I did not mean to chide! but think, O
think,
What pangs must rend this fearful doting heart,
I'o see you sink impatient of the grave,
I'o feel, distracting thought! to feel you hate me!

Elw. What if the slender thread by which I
hold

'This poor precarious being soon must break,
Is it Elwina's crime, or Heaven's decree?
Yet I shall meet, I trust, the king of terrors,
Submissive and resign'd, without one pang,
One fond regret, at leaving this gay world.

Dou. Yes, Madam, there is one, one man ador'd,
For whom your sighs will heave, your tears will
flow,

For whom this hated world will still be dear,
For whom you still would live——

Elw. Hold, hold my lord,
What may this mean?

Dou. Ah! I have gone too far.
What have I said?—Your father, sure, your father,
The good Lord Raby, may at least expect
One tender sigh.

Elw. Alas, my lord! I thought
The precious incense of a daughter's sighs
Might rise to heaven, and not offend its ruler.

Dou. 'Tis true; yet Raby is no more belov'd
Since he bestow'd his daughter's hand on Douglas:
That was a crime the dutiful Elwina
Can never pardon; and believe me, Madam,
My love's so nice, so delicate my honour,
I am asham'd to owe my happiness
To ties which make you wretched. [*Exit DOUGLAS.*]

Elw. Ah! how's this?
Though I have ever found him fierce and rash,
Full of obscure surmises and dark hints,
Till now he never ventur'd to accuse me.
"Yet there is one, one man belov'd, ador'd,
For whom your tears will flow"—these were his
words—

And then the wretched subterfuge of Raby—
How poor th' evasion!—But my Birtha comes.

Enter BIRTHA.

Bir. Crossing the portico I met Lord Douglas,
Disorder'd were his looks, his eyes shot fire;
He call'd upon your name with such distraction
I fear'd some sudden evil had befallen you.

Elw. Not sudden: no; long has the storm
been gathering,
Which threatens speedily to burst in ruin
On this devoted head.

Bir. I ne'er beheld
Your gentle soul so ruffled, yet I've marked you,
W hile others thought you happiest of the happy,
Bless'd with whate'er the world calls great, or
good,

With all that nature, all that fortune gives,
I've mark'd you bending with a weight of sorrow.

Elw. O I will tell thee all! thou couldst not find
An hour, a moment in Elwina's life,
When her full heart so long'd to ease its burden,
And pour its sorrows in thy friendly bosom:
Hear then, with pity hear, my tale of wo,
And, O forgive, kind nature, filial piety,
If my presumptuous lips arraign a father!
Yes, Birtha, that belov'd, that cruel father,
Has doom'd me to a life of hopeless anguish,
To die of grief ere half my days are number'd;
Doom'd me to give my trembling hand to Douglas,
'Twas all I had to give—my heart was—Percy's.

Bir. What do I hear?

Elw. My misery, not my crime.
Long since the battle 'twixt the rival houses
Of Douglas and of Percy, for whose hate
This mighty globe's too small a theatre,
One summer's morn, my father chas'd the deer
On Cheviot Hills, Northumbria's fair domain.

Bir. On that fam'd spot where first the feuds
commenc'd

Between the earls?

Elw. The same. During the chace,
Some of my father's knights receiv'd an insult
From the Lord Percy's herdsman, churlish fo-
resters,

Unworthy of the gentle blood they serv'd.
My father, proud and jealous of his honour,
(Thou know'st the fiery temper of our barons,)
Swore that Northumberland had been concern'd
In this rude outrage, nor would hear of peace,
Or reconciliation, which the Percy offer'd;
But bade me hate, renounce, and banish him
O! 'twas a task too hard for all my duty:
I strove, and wept; I strove—but still I lov'd.

Bir. Indeed 'twas most unjust; but say what
follow'd? [*tale?*]

Elw. Why should I dwell on the disastrous
Forbid to see me, Percy soon embark'd
With our great king against the Saracen.
Soon as the jarring kingdoms were at peace,
Earl Douglas, whom till then I ne'er had seen,
Came to this castle; 'twas my hapless fate
To please him.—Birtha! thou can'st tell what
followed:

But who shall tell the agonies I felt?
My barbarous father forc'd me to dissolve
The tender vows himself had bid me form——
He dragg'd me trembling, dying, to the altar,
I sigh'd, I struggled, fainted, and complied.

Bir. Did Douglas know, a marriage had been
Propos'd 'twixt you and Percy? [*once*]

Elw. If he did,
He thought, like you, it was a match of policy,
Nor knew our love surpass'd our fathers' prudence.

Bir. Should he now find he was the instru-
ment

Of the Lord Raby's vengeance?

Elw. 'Twere most dreadful!
My father lock'd this motive in his breast,
And feign'd to have forgot the chace of Cheviot.

Some moons have now completed their slow course
Since my sad marriage.—Percy still is absent.

Bir. Nor will return before his sov'reign comes.

Elw. Talk not of his return! this coward heart
Can know no thought of peace but in his absence.
How, Douglas here again? some fresh alarm!

Enter DOUGLAS, agitated, with letters in his hand.

Dou. Madam, your pardon—

Elw. What disturbs my lord? [ease.]

Dou. Nothing.—Disturb! I ne'er was more at
These letters from your father give us notice
He will be here to-night:—He farther adds,
The king's each hour expected.

Elw. How? the king?
Said you, the king?

Dou. And 'tis Lord Raby's pleasure
That you among the foremost bid him welcome.
You must attend the court.

Elw. Must I, my lord?

Dou. Now to observe how she receives the
news! [Aside.]

Elw. I must not,—cannot.—By the tender love
You have so oft profess'd for poor Elwina,
Indulge this one request—O let me stay!

Dou. Enchanting sounds! she does not wish
to go— [Aside.]

Elw. The bustling world, the pomp which
waits on greatness,

Ill suits my humble, unambitious soul;—
Then leave me here, to tread the safer path
Of private life; here, where my peaceful course
Shall be as silent as the shades around me;
Nor shall one vagrant wish be e'er allow'd
To stray beyond the bounds of Raby Castle.

Dou. O music to my ears! [Aside.] Can you
resolve

To hide those wondrous beauties in the shade,
Which rival kings would cheaply buy with empire?
Can you renounce the pleasures of a court,
Whose roofs resound with minstrelsy and mirth?

Elw. My lord, retirement is a wife's best duty,
And virtue's safest station is retreat.

Dou. My soul's in transports! [Aside.] But
can you forego

What wins the soul of woman—admiration?
A world, where charms inferior far to yours
Only presume to shine when you are absent!
Will you not long to meet the public gaze?
Long to eclipse the fair, and charm the brave?

Elw. These are delights in which the mind
partakes not.

Dou. I'll try her farther. [Aside.]
[Takes her hand, and looks steadfastly at her
as he speaks.]

But reflect once more:

When you shall hear that England's gallant peers,
Fresh from the fields of war, and gay with glory,
All vain with conquest, and elate with fame,
When you shall hear these princely youths contend,
In many a tournament, for beauty's prize;
When you shall hear of revelry and masking,
Of mimic combats and of festive halls,
Of lances shiver'd in the cause of love,
Will you not then repent, then wish your fate,
Your happier fate, had till that hour reserv'd you
For some plumed conqueror?

Elw. My fate, my lord,
Is now bound up with yours.

Dou. Here let me kneel— [der;
Yes, I will kneel, and gaze, and weep, and won-
Thou paragon of goodness!—pardon, pardon.

[Kisses her hand.]

I am convinc'd—I can no longer doubt,
Nor talk, nor hear, nor reason, nor reflect.
—I must retire, and give a loose to joy.

[Exit DOUGLAS]

Bir. The king returns.

Elw. And with him Percy comes!

Bir. You needs must go.

Elw. Shall I solicit ruin,
And pull destruction on me ere its time?
I, who have held it criminal to name him?

I will not go—I disobey thee, Douglas,
But disobey thee to preserve thy honour. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Hall

Enter DOUGLAS, speaking.

See that the traitor instantly be seiz'd,
And strictly watch'd; let none have access to him.
—O jealousy, thou aggregate of woes!
Were there no hell, thy torments would create one
But yet she may be guiltless—may? she must.
How beautiful she look'd! pernicious beauty!
Yet innocent as bright seem'd the sweet blush
That mantled on her cheek. But not for me,
But not for me, those breathing roses blow!
And then she wept—What! can I bear her tears?
Well—let her weep—her tears are for another;
O did they fall for me, to dry their streams
I'd drain the choicest blood that feeds this heart,
Nor think the drops I shed were half so precious.
[He stands in a musing posture.]

Enter LORD RABY.

Raby. Sure I mistake—am I in Raby Castle?
Impossible; that was the seat of smiles;
And Cheerfulness and Joy were household gods.
I us'd to scatter pleasures when I came,
And every servant shar'd his lord's delight;
But now Suspicion and Distrust dwell here,
And Discontent maintains a sullen sway.
Where is the smile unfeign'd, the jovial welcome,
Which cheer'd the sad, beguil'd the pilgrim's pain,
And made Dependency forget its bonds?
Where is the ancient, hospitable hall,
Whose vaulted roof once rung with harmless mirth,
Where every passing stranger was a guest,
And every guest a friend? I fear me much,
If once our nobles scorn their rural seats,
Their rural greatness, and their vassals' love,
Freedom and English grandeur are no more.

Dou. [Advancing.] My lord, you are welcome.

Raby. Sir, I trust I am;

But yet methinks I shall not feel I'm welcome
Till my Elwina bless me with her smiles:
She was not wont with ling'ring step to meet me,
Or greet my coming with a cold embrace;
Now, I extend my longing arms in vain:
My child, my darling, does not come to fill them.
O they were happy days, when she would fly
To meet me from the camp, or from the chase,
And with her fondness overpay my toils!
How eager would her tender hands unbrace
The ponderous armour from my war-worn limbs,
And pluck the helmet which oppos'd her kiss!

Dou. O sweet delights, that never must be mine!

Raby. What do I hear?

Dou. Nothing; inquire no farther.

Raby. My lord, if you respect an old man's
peace,

If e'er you doted on my much-lov'd child,
As 'tis most sure you made me think you did,

Then, by the pangs which you may one day feel,
When you, like me, shall be a fond, fond father,
And tremble for the treasure of your age,
Tell me what this alarming silence means?
You sigh, you do not speak, nay more, you hear
not;

Your lab'ring soul turns inward on itself,
As there were nothing but your own sad thoughts
Deserv'd regard. Does my child live?

Dou. She does.

Raby. To bless her father!

Dou. And to curse her husband!

Raby. Ah! have a care, my lord, I'm not so
old—

Dou. Nor I so base, that I should tamely bear it;
Nor am I so mur'd to infamy,
That I can say, without a burning blush,
She lives to be my curse!

Raby. How's this?

Dou. I thought
The lily opening to the heaven's soft dews,
Was not so fragrant, and was not so chaste.

Raby. Has she prov'd otherwise? I'll not be-
lieve it.

Who has traduc'd my sweet, my innocent child?
Yet she's too good to 'scape calumnious tongues.
I know that Slander loves a lofty mark:
It saw her soar a flight above her fellows,
And hurl'd its arrow to her glorious height,
To reach her heart, and bring her to the ground.

Dou. Had the rash tongue of Slander so pre-
sum'd,

My vengeance had not been of that slow sort
To need a prompter; nor should any arm,
No, not a father's, dare dispute with mine,
The privilege to die in her defence.
None dares accuse Elwina, but—

Raby. But who?

Dou. But Douglas.

Raby. [*Puts his hand to his sword.*] You?—
O spare my age's weakness!

You do not know what 'tis to be a father;
You do not know, or you would pity me,
The thousand tender throbs, the nameless feel-
ings,

The dread to ask, and yet the wish to know,
When we adore and fear; but wherefore fear?
Does not the blood of Raby fill her veins?

Dou. Percy;—know'st thou that name?

Raby. How? What of Percy?

Dou. He loves Elwina, and, my curses on him!
He is belov'd again.

Raby. I'm on the rack!

Dou. Not the two Theban brothers bore each
other

Such deep, such deadly hate as I and Percy.

Raby. But tell me of my child.

Dou. [*Not minding him.*] As I and Percy!
When at the marriage rites, O rites accurs'd!
I seiz'd her trembling hand, she started back,
Cold horror thrill'd her veins, her tears flow'd fast.
Fool that I was, I thought 'twas maiden fear;
Dull, dotting ignorance: beneath those terrors,
Hatred for me and love for Percy lurk'd.

Raby. What proof of guilt is this?

Dou. E'er since our marriage,
Our days have still been cold and joyless all;
Painful restraint, and hatred ill disguis'd,
Her sole return for all my waste of fondness.
This very morn I told her 'twas your will
She should repair to court; with all those graces,
Which first subdued my soul, and still enslave it,

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She begg'd to stay behind in Raby Castle,
For courts and cities had no charms for her.
Curse my blind love! I was again ensnar'd,
And doted on the sweetness which deceiv'd me.
Just at the hour she thought I should be absent,
(For chance could ne'er have tim'd their guilt so
well,)

Arriv'd young Harcourt, one of Percy's knights,
Strictly enjoin'd to speak to none but her;
I seiz'd the miscreant: hitherto he's silent,
But tortures soon shall force him to confess

Raby. Percy is absent—They have never met.

Dou. At what a feeble hold you grasp for suc-
cour!

Will it content me that her person's pure?

No, if her alien heart dotes on another,
She is unchaste, were not that other Percy.
Let vulgar spirits basely wait for proof,
She loves another—'tis enough for Douglas.

Raby. Be patient.

Dou. Be a tame convenient husband,
And meanly wait for circumstantial guilt?

No—I am nice as the first Cæsar was,
And start at bare suspicion. [*Going.*]

Raby. [*Holding him.*] Douglas, hear me:
Thou hast nam'd a Roman husband; if she's
false,

I mean to prove myself a Roman father.

[*Exit DOUGLAS.*]

This marriage was my work, and thus I'm pun-
ish'd!

Enter ELWINA.

Elw. Where is my father? let me fly to meet
O let me clasp his venerable knees, [*him,*]
And die of joy in his belov'd embrace!

Raby. [*Avoiding her embrace.*] Elwina!

Elw. And is that all? so cold?

Raby. [*Sternly.*] Elwina!

Elw. Then I'm undone indeed! How stern
his looks!

I will not be repuls'd, I am your child,
The child of that dear mother you ador'd;
You shall not throw me off, I will grow here,
And, like the patriarch, wrestle for a blessing.

Raby. [*Holding her from him.*] Before I take
thee in these aged arms,

Press thee with transport to this beating heart.

And give a loose to all a parent's fondness,
Answer, and see thou answer me as truly

As if the dread inquiry came from Heaven,—

Does no interior sense of guilt confound thee?

Canst thou lay all thy naked soul before me?

Can thy unconscious eye encounter mine?

Canst thou endure the probe, and never shrink?

Can thy firm hand meet mine, and never tremble?

Art thou prepar'd to meet the rigid Judge?

Or to embrace the fond, the melting father?

Elw. Mysterious Heaven! to what am I re-
serv'd!

Raby. Should some rash man, regardless of
thy fame,

And in defiance of thy marriage vows,
Presume to plead a guilty passion for thee,
What wouldst thou do?

Elw. What honour bids me do.

Raby. Come to my arms! [*They embrace*]

Elw. My father!

Raby. Yes, Elwina,

Thou art my child—thy mother's perfect image

Elw. Forgive these tears of mingled joy and
doubt!

For why that question? who should seek to please
The desolate Elwina?

Raby. But if any
Should so presume, canst thou resolve to hate him,
Whate'er his name, whate'er his pride of blood,
Whate'er his former arrogant pretensions?

Elw. Ha!

Raby. Dost thou falter? Have a care, Elwina.

Elw. Sir, do not fear me: am I not your
daughter?

Raby. Thou hast a higher claim upon thy
Thou art Earl Douglas' wife.

Elw. [Weeps.] I am, indeed!

Raby. Unhappy Douglas!

Elw. Has he then complain'd?

Has he presum'd to sully my white fame?

Raby. He knows that Percy—

Elw. Was my destin'd husband;

By your own promise, by a father's promise,
And by a tie more strong, more sacred still,
Mine, by the fast firm bond of mutual love.

Raby. Now, by my fears, thy husband told me
truth.

Elw. If he has told thee, that thy only child
Was forc'd a helpless victim to the altar,
Torn from his arms who had her virgin heart,
And forc'd to make false vows to one she hated,
Then I confess that he has told the truth.

Raby. Her words are barbed arrows in my
heart.

But 'tis too late. [*Aside.*] Thou hast appointed
Harcourt

To see thee here by stealth in Douglas' absence?

Elw. No, by my life, nor knew I till this moment
That Harcourt was return'd. Was it for this
I taught my heart to struggle with its feelings?
Was it for this I bore my wrongs in silence?
When the fond ties of early love were broken,
Did my weak soul break out in fond complaints?
Did I reproach thee? Did I call thee cruel?
No—I endur'd it all; and wearied Heaven
To bless the father who destroy'd my peace.

Enter MESSENGER.

Mess. My lord, a knight, Sir Hubert as I think,
But newly landed from the holy wars,
Entreats admittance.

Raby. Let the warrior enter.

[*Exit MESSENGER.*]

All private interests sink at his approach;
All selfish cares be for a moment banish'd;
I've now no child, no kindred but my country.

Elw. Weak heart, be still, for what hast thou
to fear?

Enter SIR HUBERT.

Raby. Welcome, thou gallant knight! Sir Hu-
bert, welcome!

Welcome to Raby Castle!—In one word,
Is the king safe? Is Palestine subdu'd?

Sir H. The king is safe, and Palestine subdu'd.

Raby. Bless'd be the God of armies! Now, Sir
Hubert,

By all the saints, thou'rt a right noble knight.
O why was I too old for this crusade!
I think it would have made me young again,
Could I, like thee, have seen the hated crescent
Yield to the Christian cross.—How now, Elwina!
What! cold at news which might awake the dead?
If there's a drop in thy degenerate veins
That glows not now, thou art not Raby's daughter.
It is religion's cause, the cause of Heaven!

Elw. When policy assumes religion's name,
And wears the sanctimonious garb of faith
Only to colour fraud, and license murder
War then is tenfold guilt.

Raby. Blaspheming girl!

Elw. 'Tis not the crosier, nor the pontiff's robe
The saintly look, nor elevated eye,
Nor Palestine destroy'd, nor Jordan's banks
Deluged with blood of slaughter'd infidels;
No, nor the extinction of the eastern world,
Nor all the mad, pernicious, bigot rage
Of your crusades, can bribe that Power that sees
The motive with the act. O blind, to think
That cruel war can please the Prince of Peace!
He, who erects his altar in the heart,
Abhors the sacrifice of human blood,
And all the false devotion of that zeal
Which massacres the world he died to save.

Raby. O impious rage! If thou wouldst shun
my curse, [*Hubert,*
No more, I charge thee.—Tell me, good Sir
Say, have our arms achiev'd this glorious deed,
(I fear to ask,) without much Christian blood-shed?

Elw. Now, Heaven support me! [*Aside*

Sir H. My good lord of Raby,
Imperfect is the sum of human glory!
Would I could tell thee that the field was won,
Without the death of such illustrious knights
As make the high-flush'd cheek of victory pale.

Elw. Why should I tremble thus? [*Aside.*

Raby. Who have we lost? [*Grey.*

Sir H. The noble Clifford, Walsingham, and
Sir Harry Hastings, and the valiant Pembroke,
All men of choicest note.

Raby. O that my name
Had been enroll'd in such a list of heroes!
If I was too infirm to serve my country,
I might have prov'd my love by dying for her.

Elw. Were there no more?

Sir H. But few of noble blood.

But the brave youth who gain'd the palm of glory,
The flower of knighthood, and the plume of war,
Who bore his banner foremost in the field,
Yet conquer'd more by mercy than the sword,
Was Percy.

Elw. Then he lives! [*Aside.*

Raby. Did he? Did Percy?
O gallant boy, then I'm thy foe no more;
Who conquers for my country is my friend!
His fame shall add new glories to a house,
Where never maid was false, nor knight dis-
loyal. [*tears:*

Sir H. You do embalm him, lady, with your
They grace the grave of glory where he lies—
He died the death of honour.

Elw. Said'st thou—died?

Sir H. Beneath the towers of Solyma he fell.

Elw. Oh!

Sir H. Look to the lady.

[*ELWINA faints in her father's arms.*
Raby. Gentle knight, retire—

'Tis an infirmity of nature in her,
She ever mourns at any tale of blood;
She will be well anon—meantime, Sir Hubert,
You'll grace our castle with your friendly sojourn.

Sir H. I must return with speed—health to the
lady. [*Exit.*

Raby. Look up, Elwina. Should her husband
Yet she revives not. [*come!*

Enter DOUGLAS.

Dou. Ha—Elwina fainting!

My lord, I fear you have too harshly chid her.
Her gentle nature could not brook your sternness.
She wakes, she stirs, she feels returning life.
My love! [He takes her hand.]

Elw. O Percy!

Dou. [Starts.] Do my senses fail me?

Elw. My Percy, 'tis Elwina calls.

Dou. Hell, hell!

Raby. Retire awhile, my daughter.

Elw. Douglas here,

My father and my husband?—O for pity—

[Exit, casting a look of anguish on both.]

Dou. Now, now confess she well deserves my vengeance!

Before my face to call upon my foe!

Raby. Upon a foe who has no power to hurt Earl Percy's slain. [thee—]

Dou. I live again.—But hold—

Did she not weep? she did, and wept for Percy.
If she laments him, he's my rival still,
And not the grave can bury my resentment.

Raby. The truly brave are still the truly generous.
Now, Douglas, is the time to prove thee both.
If it be true that she did once love Percy,
Thou hast no more to fear, since he is dead.
Release young Harcourt, let him see Elwina,
'Twill serve a double purpose, 'twill at once
Prove Percy's death, and thy unchang'd affection.
Be gentle to my child, and win her heart
By confidence and unapproaching love.

Dou. By Heaven, thou counsel'st well! it shall be done.

Go set him free, and let him have admittance
To my Elwina's presence.

Raby. Farewell, Douglas.

Show thou believ'st her faithful, and she'll prove so. [Exit.]

Dou. Northumberland is dead—that thought is peace!

Her heart may yet be mine, transporting hope!
Percy was gentle, even a foe avows it,
And I'll be milder than a summer's breeze.
Yes, thou most lovely, most ador'd of women,
I'll copy every virtue, every grace,
Of my bless'd rival, happier even in death
To be thus lov'd, than living to be scorn'd. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Garden at Raby Castle, with a Bower.

Enter PERCY and SIR HUBERT.

Sir H. That Percy lives, and is return'd in safety,

More joys my soul than all the mighty conquests
That sun beheld, which rose on Syria's ruin.

Per. I've told thee, good Sir Hubert, by what wonder

I was preserv'd, though number'd with the slain.

Sir H. 'Twas strange, indeed!

Per. 'Twas Heaven's immediate work!

But let me now indulge a dearer joy,
Talk of a richer gift of Mercy's hand;
A gift so precious to my doting heart,
That life preserv'd is but a second blessing.
O Hubert, let my soul indulge its softness!
The hour, the spot, is sacred to Elwina.
This was her fav'rite walk; I well remember,
(For who forgets that loves as I have lov'd?)
'Twas in that very bower she gave this scarf,
Wrought by the hand of love! she bound it on,
And, smiling, cried, Whate'er befall us, Percy,

Be this the sacred pledge of faith between us.
I knelt, and swore, call'd every power to witness,
Not time, nor circumstance, should force it from me,
But I would lose my life and that together—
Here I repeat my vow.

Sir H. Is this the man

Beneath whose single arm a host was crush'd?
He, at whose name the Saracen turn'd pale?
And when he fell, victorious armies wept,
And mourn'd a conquest they had bought so dear?
How has he chang'd the trumpet's martial note,
And all the stirring clangour of the war,
For the soft melting of the lover's lute!
Why are thine eyes still bent upon the bower?

Per. O Hubert, Hubert, to a soul enamour'd,
There is a sort of local sympathy,
Which, when we view the scenes of early passion,
Paints the bright image of the object lov'd
In stronger colours than remoter scenes
Could ever paint it; realizes shade,
Dresses it up in all the charms it wore,
Talks to it nearer, frames its answers kinder,
Gives form to fancy, and embodies thought.

Sir H. I should not be believ'd in Percy's camp,
If I should tell them that their gallant leader,
The thunder of the war, the bold Northumberland,
Renouncing Mars, dissolv'd in amorous wishes,
Loiter'd in shades, and pined in rosy bowers,
To catch a transient gleam of two bright eyes.

Per. Enough of conquest, and enough of war!
Ambition's cloy'd—the heart resumes its rights.
When England's king, and England's good requir'd,

This arm not idly the keen falchion brandish'd:
Enough—for vaunting misbecomes a soldier.

I live, I am return'd—am near Elwina! [her;
Seest thou those turrets? Yes, that castle holds
But wherefore tell thee this? for thou hast seen her.
How look'd, what said she? Did she hear the tale
Of my imagin'd death without emotion?

Sir H. Percy, thou hast seen the musk-rose,
newly blown,
Disclose its bashful beauties to the sun,
Till an unfriendly, chilling storm descended,
Crush'd all its blushing glories in their prime,
Bow'd its fair head, and blasted all its sweetness;
So droop'd the maid beneath the cruel weight
Of my sad tale.

Per. So tender and so true!

Sir H. I left her fainting in her father's arms,
The dying flower yet hanging on the tree.
Even Raby melted at the news I brought,
And envy'd thee thy glory.

Per. Then I am bless'd!

His hate subdu'd, I've nothing more to fear.

Sir H. My embassy dispatch'd, I left the castle,
Nor spoke to any of Lord Raby's household,
For fear the king should chide the tardiness
Of my return. My joy to find you living
You have already heard.

Per. But where is Harcourt?

Ere this he should have seen her, told her all,
How I surviv'd, return'd—and how I love!
I tremble at the near approach of bliss,
And scarcely can sustain the joy which waits me.

Sir H. Grant, Heaven, the fair one prove but
half so true!

Per. O she is truth itself!

Sir H. She may be chang'd,
Spite of her tears, her fainting, and alarms.
I know the sex, know them as nature made 'em
Not such as lovers wish, and poets feign.

Per. To doubt her virtue were suspecting Heaven! 'twere little less than infidelity! [ven,
And yet I tremble. Why does terror shake
These firm-strung nerves? But 'twill be ever thus,
When fate prepares us more than mortal bliss,
And gives us only human strength to bear it.

Sir H. What beam of brightness breaks through
yonder gloom? [comes

Per. Hubert—she comes! by all my hopes, she
'Tis she—the blissful vision is Elwina! [me!
But ah! what mean those tears?—She weeps for
O transport!—go.—I'll listen unobserv'd,
And for a moment taste the precious joy,
The banquet of a tear which falls for love.

[*Exit* SIR HUBERT, PERCY goes into the
bower.

Enter ELWINA.

Shall I not weep? and have I then no cause?
If I could break the eternal bands of death,
And wrench the sceptre from his iron grasp;
If I could bid the yawning sepulchre
Restore to life its long committed dust;
If I could teach the slaughtering hand of war
To give me back my dear, my murder'd Percy,
Then I indeed might once more cease to weep.

[PERCY comes out of the bower.

Per. Then cease, for Percy lives.

Elw. Protect me, Heaven!

Per. O joy unspeakable! My life, my love!
End of my toils, and crown of all my cares!
Kind as consenting peace, as conquest bright,
Dearer than arms, and lovelier than renown!

Elw. It is his voice—it is, it is my Percy!
And dost thou live?

Per. I never liv'd till now.

Elw. And did my sighs, and did my sorrows
reach thee?

And art thou come at last to dry my tears?
How did'st thou 'scape the fury of the foe?

Per. Thy guardian genius hover'd o'er the field,
And turn'd the hostile spear from Percy's breast,
Lest thy fair image should be wounded there.
But Harcourt should have told thee all my fate,
How I surviv'd—

Elw. Alas! I have not seen him.

Oh! I have suffer'd much.

Per. Of that no more;

For every minute of our future lives
Shall be so bless'd, that we will learn to wonder
How we could ever think we were unhappy.

Elw. Percy—I cannot speak.

Per. Those tears how eloquent!

I would not change this motionless, mute joy,
For the sweet strains of angels: I look down
With pity on the rest of human kind,
However great may be their fame of happiness,
And think their niggard fate has given them
nothing,

Not giving thee; or, granting some small blessing,
Denies them my capacity to feel it.

Elw. Alas! what mean you?

Per. Can I speak my meaning? [it;

'Tis of such magnitude that words would wrong
But surely my Elwina's faithful bosom
Should beat in kind responses of delight,
And feel, but never question, what I mean.

Elw. Hold, hold, my heart, thou hast much
more to suffer!

Per. Let the slow form, and tedious ceremony,
Wait on the splendid victims of ambition.
Love stays for none of these. Thy father's soften'd,

He will forget the fatal Cheviot chase;
Raby is brave, and I have serv'd my country;
I would not boast, it was for thee I conquer'd;
Then come, my love.

Elw. O never, never, never!

Per. Am I awake? Is that Elwina's voice?

Elw. Percy, thou most ador'd, and most de-
If ever fortitude sustain'd thy soul, [ceiv'd!
When vulgar minds have sunk beneath the stroke,
Let thy imperial spirit now support thee.—
If thou canst be so wondrous merciful,
Do not, O do not curse me!—but thou wilt,
Thou must—for I have done a fearful deed,
A deed of wild despair, a deed of horror.

I am, I am—

Per. Speak, say, what art thou?

Elw. Married!

Per. Oh!

Elw. Percy, I think I begg'd thee not to curse
But now I do revoke the fond petition.

Speak! ease thy bursting soul; reproach, upbraid,
O'erwhelm me with thy wrongs—I'll bear it all.

Per. Open, thou earth, and hide me from her
sight!

Did'st thou not bid me curse thee?

Elw. Mercy! mercy!

Per. And have I 'scaped the Saracen's fell
Only to perish by Elwina's guilt? [sword
I would have bared my bosom to the foe,
I would have died, had I but known you wish'd it.

Elw. Percy, I lov'd thee most when most I
wrong'd thee;

Yes, by these tears I did.

Per. Married! just Heaven!

Married! to whom? Yet wherefore should I
know?

It cannot add fresh horrors to thy crime,
Or my destruction.

Elw. Oh! 'twill add to both.

How shall I tell? Prepare for something dreadful.
Hast thou not heard of—Douglas?

Per. Why, 'tis well!

Thou awful Power, why waste thy wrath on me?
Why arm omnipotence to crush a worm?
I could have fallen without this waste of ruin.
Married to Douglas! By my wrongs, I like it;
'Tis perfidy complete, 'tis finish'd falsehood,
'Tis adding fresh perdition to the sin,
And filling up the measure of offence!

Elw. Oh! 'twas my father's deed! he made his
child

An instrument of vengeance on thy head.

He wept and threaten'd, sooth'd me, and com-
manded.

Per. And you complied, most duteously com-
plied!

Elw. I could withstand his fury; but his tears,
Ah, they undid me! Percy dost thou know
The cruel tyranny of tenderness?

Hast thou e'er felt a father's warm embrace?
Hast thou e'er seen a father's flowing tears,
And known that thou could'st wipe those tears
away?

If thou hast felt, and hast resisted these,
Then thou may'st curse my weakness; but if not,
Thou canst not pity, for thou canst not judge.

Per. Let me not hear the music of thy voice,
Or I shall love thee still; I shall forget
Thy fatal marriage and my savage wrongs.

Elw. Dost thou not hate me, Percy?

Per. Hate thee? Yes,
As dying martyrs hate the righteous cause

Of that bless'd power for whom they bleed—I
hate thee.

[*They look at each other with silent agony.*]

Enter HARCOURT.

Har. Forgive, my lord, your faithful knight—

Per. Come, Harcourt,
Come, and behold the wretch who once was Percy.

Har. With grief I've learn'd the whole unhappy tale.

Earl Douglas, whose suspicion never sleeps—

Per. What, is the tyrant jealous?

Elw. Hear him, Percy.

Per. I will command my rage—Go on.

Har. Earl Douglas

Knew, by my arms and my accoutrements,

That I belong'd to you; he questioned much,

And much he menac'd me, but both alike

In vain; he then arrested and confin'd me. [it.

Per. Arrest my knight! The Scot shall answer

Elw. How came you now releas'd?

Har. Your noble father

Obtain'd my freedom, having learn'd from Hubert

The news of Percy's death. The good old lord,

Hearing the king's return, has left the castle

To do him homage.

[*To PERCY.*] Sir, you had best retire;

Your safety is endanger'd by your stay.

I fear should Douglas know—

Per. Should Douglas know!

Why what new magic's in the name of Douglas?

That it should strike Northumberland with fear?

Go, seek the haughty Scot, and tell him—no—

Conduct me to his presence.

Elw. Percy, hold;

Think not 'tis Douglas—'tis—

Per. I know it well—

Thou mean'st to tell me 'tis Elwina's husband;

But that inflames me to superior madness.

This happy husband, this triumphant Douglas,

Shall not insult my misery with his bliss.

I'll blast the golden promise of his joys.

Conduct me to him—nay, I will have way—

Come, let us seek this husband.

Elw. Percy, hear me.

When I was robb'd of all my peace of mind,

My cruel fortune left me still one blessing,

One solitary blessing, to console me;

It was my fame.—'Tis a rich jewel, Percy,

And I must keep it spotless, and unsoil'd:

But thou wouldst plunder what e'en Douglass spar'd,

And rob this single gem of all its brightness.

Per. Go—thou wast born to rule the fate of

Thou art my conqueror still. [Percy.

Elw. What noise is that?

[*HARCOURT goes to the side of the stage.*]

Per. Why art thou thus alarm'd?

Elw. Alas! I feel

The cowardice and terrors of the wicked,

Without their sense of guilt.

Har. My lord, 'tis Douglas.

Elw. Fly, Percy, and for ever!

Per. Fly from Douglas?

Elw. Then stay, barbarian, and at once destroy
My life and fame.

Per. That thought is death. I go:

My honour to thy dearer honour yields.

Elw. Yet, yet thou art not gone!

Per. Farewell, farewell! [*Exit PERCY.*]

Elw. I dare not meet the searching eye of
Douglas.

I must conceal my terrors.

DOUGLAS at the side with his sword drawn,
EDRIC holds him.

Dou. Give me way.

Edr. Thou shalt not enter. [no hell,

Dou. [*Struggling with EDRIC.*] If there were
It would defraud my vengeance of its edge,
And she should live.

[*Breaks from EDRIC and comes forward.*]

Cursed chance! he is not here.

Elw. [*Going.*] I dare not meet his fury.

Dou. See she flies

With every mark of guilt.—Go, search the bower,

[*Aside to EDRIC.*]

He shall not thus escape. Madam, return. [*Aloud.*]

Now, honest Douglas, learn of her to feign. [*Aside.*]

Alone, Elwina? who had just parted hence?

[*With affected composure.*]

Elw. My lord, 'twas Harcourt; sure you must
have met him. [else!

Dou. O exquisite dissembler! [*Aside.*] No one

Elw. My lord!

Dou. How I enjoy her criminal confusion!

[*Aside.*]

You tremble, Madam.

Elw. Wherefore should I tremble?

By your permission Harcourt was admitted;

'Twas no mysterious, secret introduction.

Dou. And yet you seem alarm'd.—If Harcourt's
presence

Thus agitates each nerve, makes every pulse

Thus wildly throb, and the warm tides of blood

Mount in quick rushing tumults to your cheek;

If friendship can excite such strong emotions,

What tremors had a lover's presence caus'd?

Elw. Ungenerous man!

Dou. I feast upon her terrors.

[*Aside*
The story of his death was well contriv'd; [*To her.*]

But it affects not me; I have a wife,

Compar'd with whom cold Dian was unchaste.

[*Takes her hand.*]

But mark me well—though it concerns not you—

If there's a sin more deeply black than others,

Distinguish'd from the list of common crimes,

A legion in itself, and doubly dear

To the dark prince of hell, it is—hypocrisy.

[*Throws her from him, and exits.*]

Elw. Yes, I will bear this fearful indignation!

Thou melting heart, be firm as adamant;

Ye shatter'd nerves, be strung with manly force.

That I may conquer all my sex's weakness,

Nor let this bleeding bosom lodge one thought,

Cherish one wish, or harbour one desire,

That angels may not hear, and Douglas know

[*Exit*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Hall.

Enter DOUGLAS, his sword drawn and bloody in
one hand, in the other a letter. HARCOURT
wounded.

Dou. Traitor, no more! this letter shows thy
office.

Twice hast thou robb'd me of my dear revenge.

I took thee for thy leader.—Thy base blood

Would stain the noble temper of my sword;

But as the pander to thy master's lust,

Thou justly fall'st by a wrong'd husband's hand.

Har. Thy wife is innocent.

Dou. Take him away.

Har. Percy, revenge my fall!

[*Guards bear HARCOURT in.*]

Dou. Now for the letter!
 He begs once more to see her.—So 'tis plain
 They have already met—but to the rest—
[Reads.] "In vain you wish me to restore the
 scarf;
 Dear pledge of love, while I have life I'll wear it,
 'Tis next my heart; no power shall force it thence;
 Whene'er you see it in another's hand,
 Conclude me dead."—My curses on them both!
 How tamely I peruse my shame! but thus,
 Thus let me tear the guilty characters
 Which register my infamy; and thus,
 Thus would I scatter to the winds of heaven
 The vile plotters of my foul dishonour.
[Tears the letter in the utmost agitation.]

Enter *EDRIC.*

Edr. My lord—
Dou. *[In the utmost fury, not seeing* *EDRIC.]*
 The scarf!
Edr. Lord Douglas.
Dou. *[Still not hearing him.]* Yes, the scarf!
Percy. I thank thee for the glorious thought!
 I'll cherish it; 'twill sweeten all my pangs,
 And add a higher relish to revenge!
Edr. My lord!
Dou. How! *Edric* here?
Edr. What new distress? *[shame,*
Dou. Dost thou expect I should recount my
 Dwell on each circumstance of my disgrace,
 And swell my infamy into a tale?
 Rage will not let me—But—my wife is false.
Edr. Art though convinc'd?
Dou. The chronicles of hell
 Cannot produce a falser.—But what news
 Of her cursed paramour?
Edr. He has escap'd.
Dou. Hast thou examin'd every avenue?
 Each spot? the grove? the bower, her favourite
Edr. I've search'd them all. *[haunt?*
Dou. He shall be yet pursued.
 Set guards at every gate.—Let none depart
 Or gain admittance here, without my knowledge.
Edr. What can their purpose be?
Dou. Is it not clear?
Harcourt has raised his arm against my life;
 He fail'd; the blow is now reserv'd for *Percy*;
 Then, with his sword fresh reeking from my heart,
 He'll revel with that wanton o'er my tomb;
 Nor will he bring her aught she'll hold so dear,
 As the curs'd hand with which he slew her husband.
 But he shall die! I'll drown my rage in blood,
 Which I'll offer as a rich libation
 On thy infernal altar, black revenge! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—The Garden.

Enter *ELWINA.*

Elw. Each avenue is so beset with guards,
 And lynx-ey'd Jealousy so broad awake,
 He cannot pass unseen. Protect him, Heaven!

Enter *BIRTHA.*

My *Birtha*, is he safe? has he escap'd? *[to him,*
Bir. I know not. I despatch'd young *Harcourt*
 To bid him quit the castle, as you order'd,
 Restore the scarf, and never see you more.
 But how the hard injunction was receiv'd,
 Or what has happen'd since, I'm yet to learn.
Elw. O when shall I be eas'd of all my cares,
 And in the quiet bosom of the grave
 Lay down this weary head!—I'm sick at heart!
 Should *Douglas* intercept his flight!

Bir. Be calm;
Douglas this very moment left the castle,
 With seeming peace.
Elw. Ah, then, indeed there's danger!
Birtha, whene'er Suspicion feigns to sleep,
 'Tis but to make its careless prey secure. *[thee,*
Bir. Should *Percy* once again entreat to see
 'Twere best admit him; from thy lips alone
 He will submit to hear his final doom
 Of everlasting exile.
Elw. *Birtha*, no;
 If honour would allow the wife of *Douglas*
 To meet his rival, yet I durst not do it.
Percy! too much this rebel heart is thine:
 Too deeply should I feel each pang I gave;
 I cannot hate—but I will banish—thee.
 Inexorable duty, O forgive,
 If I can do no more!
Bir. If he remains,
 As I suspect, within the castle walls,
 'Twere best I sought him out.
Elw. Then tell him, *Birtha*,
 But, Oh! with gentleness, with mercy, tell him,
 That we must never, never meet again.
 The purport of my tale must be severe,
 But let thy tenderness embalm the wound
 My virtue gives. O soften his despair;
 But say—we meet no more.

Enter *PERCY.*

Rash man, he's here!
[She attempts to go, he seizes her hand.]
Per. I will be heard; nay, fly not; I will speak;
 Lost as I am, I will not be denied
 The mournful consolation to complain.
Elw. *Percy*, I charge thee, leave me.
Per. Tyrant, no:
 I blush at my obedience, blush to think
 I left thee here alone, to brave the danger
 I now return to share.
Elw. That danger's past
Douglas was soon appeas'd; he nothing knows.
 Then leave me, I conjure thee, nor again
 Endanger my repose. Yet, ere thou goest,
 Restore the scarf.
Per. Unkind *Elwina*, never!
 'Tis all that's left me of my buried joys,
 All which reminds me that I once was happy.
 My letter told thee I would ne'er restore it.
Elw. Letter! what letter?
Per. That I sent by *Harcourt*.
Elw. Which I ne'er receiv'd. *Douglas* per-
 Who knows? *[haps—*
Bir. *Harcourt*, t'elude his watchfulness,
 Might prudently retire.
Elw. Grant Heaven it prove so!
[ELWINA going, PERCY holds her.]
Per. Hear me, *Elwina*; the most savage honour
 Forbids not that poor grace.
Elw. It bids me fly thee. *[part,*
Per. Then, ere thou goest, if we indeed must
 To soothe the horrors of eternal exile,
 Say but—thou pity'st me!
Elw. *[Weeps.]* O *Percy*—pity thee!
 Imperious honour;—Surely I may pity him.
 Yet, wherefore pity? no, I envy thee:
 For thou hast still the liberty to weep,
 In thee 'twill be no crime; thy tears are guiltless,
 For they infringe no duty, stain no honour,
 And blot no vow; but mine are criminal,
 Are drops of shame which wash the cheek of guilt,
 And every tear I shed dishonours *Douglas*.

Per. I swear my jealous love e'en grudges thee
Thy sad pre-eminence in wretchedness.

Elw. Rouse, rouse, my slumb'ring virtue!
Percy hear me.

Heaven, when it gives such high-wrought souls as
Still gives as great occasions to exert them.

If thou wast form'd so noble, great, and gen'rous,
'Twas to surmount the passions which enslave
The gross of human-kind.—Then think, O think,
She, whom thou once didst love, is now another's.

Per. Go on—and tell me that that other's
Douglas. [me:]

Elw. Whate'er his name, he claims respect from
His honour's in my keeping, and I hold
The trust so pure, its sanctity is hurt
E'en by thy presence.

Per. Thou again hast conquer'd.
Celestial virtue, like the angel spirit,
Whose flaming sword defended Paradise,
Stands guard on every charm.—Elwina, yes,
To triumph over Douglas, we'll be virtuous.

Elw. 'Tis not enough to be,—we must appear so:
Great souls disdain the shadow of offence,
Nor must their whiteness wear the stain of guilt.

Per. I shall retract—I dare not gaze upon thee;
My feeble virtue staggers, and again
The fiends of jealousy torment and haunt me.
They tear my heart-strings.—Oh!

Elw. No more;
But spare my injur'd honour the affront
To vindicate itself.

Per. But, love!

Elw. But, glory!

Per. Enough! a ray of thy sublimer spirit
Has warm'd my dying honour to a flame!
One effort and 'tis done. The world shall say,
When they shall speak of my disastrous love,
Percy deserv'd Elwina though he lost her.
Fond tears, blind me not yet! a little longer,
Let my sad eyes a little longer gaze,
And leave their last beams here.

Elw. [Turns from him.] I do not weep.

Per. Not weep? then why those eyes avoiding
mine? [cents?]
And why that broken voice? those trembling ac-
That sigh which rends my soul?

Elw. No more, no more. [once;]

Per. That pang decides it. Come—I'll die at
Thou Power supreme! take all the length of days,
And all the blessings kept in store for me,
And add to her account.—Yet turn once more,
One little look, one last, short glimpse of day,
And then a long dark night.—Hold, hold my heart,
O break not yet, while I behold her sweetness;
For after this dear, mournful, tender moment,
I shall have nothing more to do with life.

Elw. I do conjure thee, go.

Per. 'Tis terrible to nature!

With pangs like these the soul and body part!
And thus, but oh, with far less agony,
The poor departing wretch still grasps at being,
Thus clings to life, thus dreads the dark unknown,
Thus struggles to the last to keep his hold;
And when the dire convulsive groan of death
Dislodges the sad spirit—thus it stays,
And fondly hovers o'er the form it lov'd.
Once and no more—farewell, farewell!

Elw. For ever!

[They look at each other for some time, then
exit PERCY After a pause;

'Tis past—the conflict's past! retire, my Birtha,
I would address me to the throne of grace.

Bir. May Heaven restore that peace thy bosom
wants! [Exit BIRTHA]

Elw. [Kneels.] Look down, thou awful, heart
inspecting Judge,

Look down with mercy on thy erring creature,
And teach my soul the lowliness it needs!
And if some sad remains of human weakness
Should sometimes mingle with my best resolves,
O breathe thy spirit on this wayward heart,
And teach me to repent th' intruding sin
In it's first birth of thought!

[Noise within.] What noise is that?
The clash of swords! should Douglas be return'd!

Enter DOUGLAS and PERCY, fighting.

Dou. Yield, villain, yield.

Per. Not till this good right arm
Shall fail its master.

Dou. This to thy heart, then.

Per. Defend thy own.

[They fight; PERCY disarms DOUGLAS.]

Dou. Confusion, death, and hell!

Edr. [Without.] This way I heard the noise.

Enter EDRIC, and many Knights and Guards,
from every part of the stage.

Per. Cursed treachery!

But dearly will I sell my life.

Dou. Seize on him.

Per. I'm taken in the toils.

[PERCY is surrounded by Guards, who take
his sword.]

Dou. In the cursed snare

Thou laidst for me, traitor, thyself art caught.

Elw. He never sought thy life.

Dou. Adulteress, peace!

The villain Harcourt too—but he's at rest.

Per. Douglas, I'm in thy power; but do not
triumph, [me.]

Percy's betray'd, not conquer'd. Come, despatch
Elw. [To DOUGLAS.] O do not, do not kill him!

Per. Madam, forbear;

For by the glorious shades of my great fathers,
Their godlike spirit is not so extinct,
That I should owe my life to that vile Scot.
Though dangers close me round on every side,
And death besets me, I am Percy still.

Dou. Sorceress, I'll disappoint thee—he shall die,
Thy minion shall expire before thy face,
That I may feast my hatred with your pangs,
And make his dying groans, and thy fond tears,
A banquet for my vengeance.

Elw. Savage tyrant!

I would have fallen a silent sacrifice, [thee.
So thou had'st spar'd my fame—I never wrong'd

Per. She knew not of my coming;—I alone
Have been to blame—Spite of her interdiction,
I hither came. She's pure as spotless saints.

Elw. I will not be excus'd by Percy's crime;
So white my innocence, it does not ask
The shade of others' faults to set it off;
Nor shall he need to sully his fair fame
To throw a brighter lustre round my virtue.

Dou. Yet he can only die—but death for honour!
Ye powers of hell, who take malignant joy
In human bloodshed, give me some dire means,
Wild as my hate, and desperate as my wrongs.

Per. Enough of words. Thou know'st I hate
thee, Douglas;

'Tis steadfast, fix'd, hereditary hate,
As thine for me; our fathers did bequeath it
As part of our unalienable birthright,

Which nought but death can end.—Come, end it here.

Elw. [*Kneels.*] Hold, Douglas, hold!—not for myself I kneel,

I do not plead for Percy, but for thee:
Arm not thy hand against thy future peace,
Spare thy brave breast the tortures of remorse,—
Stain not a life of unpolluted honour,
For, oh! as surely as thou strik'st at Percy,
Thou wilt for ever stab the fame of Douglas.

Per. Finish the bloody work.

Dou. Then take thy wish.

Per. Why dost thou start?

[*PERCY bares his bosom. DOUGLAS advances to stab him, and discovers the scarf.*

Dou. Her scarf upon his breast!
The blasting sight converts me into stone;
Withers my powers like cowardice or age,
Curdles the blood within my shiv'ring veins,
And palsies my bold arm.

Per. [*Ironically to the Knights.*] Hear you, his friends!

Bear witness to the glorious, great exploit,
Record it in the annals of his race,
That Douglas, the renown'd—the valiant Douglas,
Fenc'd round with guards, and safe in his own castle,

Surpris'd a knight unarm'd, and bravely slew him.

Dou. [*Throwing away his dagger.*] 'Tis true
—I am the very stain of knighthood.

How is my glory dimm'd!

Elw. It blazes brighter!

Douglas was only brave—he now is generous!

Per. This action has restor'd thee to thy rank,
And makes thee worthy to contend with Percy.

Dou. Thy joy will be as short as 'tis insulting.
[*To ELWINA.*

And thou, imperious boy, restrain thy boasting.
Thou hast sav'd my honour, not remov'd my hate,
For my soul loathes thee for the obligation.
Give him his sword.

Per. Now thou'rt a noble foe,
And in the field of honour I will meet thee,
As knight encounter'ng knight.

Elw. Stay, Percy, stay,
Strike at the wretched cause of all, strike here,
Here sheathe thy thirsty sword, but spare my husband. [me,

Dou. Turn, Madam, and address those vows to
To spare the precious life of him you love.

Even now you triumph in the death of Douglas;
Now your loose fancy kindles at the thought,
And, wildly rioting in lawless hope,
Indulges the adultery of the mind.

But I'll defeat that wish.—Guards, bear her in.
Nay, do not struggle. [She is borne in.

Per. Let our deaths suffice,
And reverence virtue in that form inshrined.

Dou. Provoke my rage no farther.—I have kindled

The burning torch of never-dying vengeance
At love's expiring lamp.—But mark me, friends,
If Percy's happier genius should prevail,
And I should fall, give him safe conduct hence,
Be all observance paid him.—Go, I follow thee.
[*Aside to EDRIC.*

Within I've something for thy private ear.
Per. Now shall this mutual fury be appeas'd!

These eager hands shall soon be drench'd in slaughter!

Yes—like two famish'd vultures snuffing blood,
And panting to destroy, we'll rush to combat:

Yet I've the deepest, deadliest cause of hate,
I am but Percy, thou'rt—Elwina's husband.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ELWINA'S Apartment.

Elw. Thou who in judgment still remember'st mercy,

Look down upon my woes, preserve my husband!
Preserve my husband! Ah, I dare not ask it;
My very prayers may pull down ruin on me!
If Douglas should survive, what then becomes
Of—him—I dare not name? And if he conquers,
I've slain my husband. Agonizing state!
When I can neither hope, nor think, nor pray,
But guilt involves me. Sure to know the worst
Cannot exceed the torture of suspense,
When each event is big with equal horror.

[*Looks out.*
What, no one yet? This solitude is dreadful!
My horrors multiply!

Enter BIRTHA.

Thou messenger of wo!

Bir. Of wo, indeed!

Elw. How, is my husband dead?
Oh, speak!

Bir. Your husband lives.

Elw. Then farewell, Percy!

He was the tenderest, truest!—Bless him, Heaven,
With crowns of glory and immortal joys!

Bir. Still are you wrong; the combat is not over.
Stay, flowing tears, and give me leave to speak.

Elw. Thou sayest that Percy and my husband
Then why this sorrow? [live;

Bir. What a task is mine!

Elw. Thou talk'st as if I were a child in grief,
And scarce acquainted with calamity.
Speak out, unfold thy tale, whate'er it be,
For I am so familiar with affliction,
It cannot come in any shape will shock me.

Bir. How shall I speak? Thy husband—

Elw. What of Douglas?

Bir. When all was ready for the fatal combat,
He call'd his chosen knights, then drew his sword,
And on it made them swear a solemn oath,
Confirm'd by every rite religion bids,
That they would see perform'd his last request,
Be it whate'er it would. Alas! they swore.

Elw. What did the dreadful preparation mean?

Bir. Then to their hands he gave a poison'd cup,
Compounded of the deadliest herbs and drugs;
Take this, said he, it is a husband's legacy;
Percy may conquer—and—I have a wife!
If Douglas falls, Elwina must not live.

Elw. Spirit of Herod! Why, 'twas greatly thought!

'Twas worthy of the bosom which conceiv'd it!

Yet 'twas too merciful to be his own.
Yes, Douglas, yes, my husband, I'll obey thee,
And bless thy genius which has found the means
To reconcile thy vengeance with my peace,
The deadly means to make obedience pleasant.

Bir. O spare, for pity spare, my bleeding heart:
Inhuman to the last! Unnatural poison!

Elw. My gentle friend, what is there in a name?
The means are little where the end is kind.

If it disturb thee, do not call it poison;
Call it the sweet oblivion of my cares,
My balm of wo, my cordial of affliction,
The drop of mercy to my fainting soul,
My kind dismissal from a world of sorrow,

My cup of bliss, my passport to the skies.

Bir. Hark! what alarm is that?

Elw. The combat's over! [*BIRTHA goes out.*]

[*ELWINA stands in a fixed attitude, her hands clasped.*]

Now, gracious Heaven, sustain me in the trial,
And bow my spirit to thy great decrees!

Re-enter BIRTHA.

[*ELWINA looks steadfastly at her without speaking.*]

Bir. Douglas is fallen.

Elw. Bring me the poison.

Bir. Never.

[*approach!*]

Elw. Where are the knights? I summon you—

Draw near, ye awful ministers of fate,

Dire instruments of posthumous revenge!

Come—I am ready; but your tardy justice

Defrauds the injur'd dead.—Go, haste, my friend,

See that the castle be securely guarded,

Let every gate be barr'd—prevent his entrance.

Bir. Whose entrance?

Elw. His—the murderer of my husband.

Bir. He's single, we have hosts of friends.

Elw. No matter;

Who knows what love and madness may attempt?

But here I swear by all that binds the good,

Never to see him more.—Unhappy Douglas!

O if thy troubled spirit still is conscious

Of our past woes, look down, and hear me swear,

That when the legacy thy rage bequeath'd me

Works at my heart, and conquers struggling

Ev'n in that agony I'll still be faithful. [*nature,*

She who could never love, shall yet obey thee,

Weep thy hard fate, and die to prove her truth.

Bir. O unexampled virtue! [*A noise without.*]

Elw. Heard you nothing?

By all my fears the insulting conqueror comes.

O save me, shield me!

Enter DOUGLAS.

Heaven and earth, my husband!

Dou. Yes—

To blast thee with the sight of him thou hat'st,
Of him thou hast wrong'd, adulteress, 'tis thy
husband. [*mercy,*

Elw. [*Kneels.*] Bless'd be the fountain of eternal

This load of guilt is spar'd me! Douglas lives!

Perhaps both live! [*To BIRTHA.*] Could I be sure
of that,

The poison were superfluous, joy would kill me.

Dou. Be honest now, for once, and curse thy
stars;

Curse thy detested fate which brings thee back

A hated husband, when thy guilty soul

Revell'd in fond, imaginary joys

With my too happy rival: when thou flew'st,

To gratify impatient, boundless passion,

And join adulterous lust to bloody murder;

Then to reverse the scene! polluted woman!

Mine is the transport now, and thine the pang.

Elw. Whence sprung the false report that thou
had'st fall'n?

Dou. To give thy guilty breast a deeper wound,

To add a deadlier sting to disappointment,

I rais'd it—I contriv'd—I sent it thee. [*virtue.*

Elw. Thou seest me bold, but bold in conscious

—That my sad soul may not be stain'd with blood,

That I may spend my few short hours in peace,

And die in holy hope of Heaven's forgiveness,

Relieve the terrors of my lab'ring breast,

Say I am clear of murder—say he lives,

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Say but that little word, that Percy lives,
And Alps and oceans shall divide us ever,
As far as universal space can part us.

Dou. Canst thou renounce him?

Elw. Tell me that he lives,

And thou shalt be the ruler of my fate,
For ever hide me in a convent's gloom,
From cheerful day-light, and the haunts of men,
Where sad austerity, and ceaseless prayer
Shall share my uncomplaining day between them.

Dou. O, hypocrite! now, Vengeance, to thy
office.

I had forgot—Percy commends him to thee,
And by my hand—

Elw. How—by thy hand?

Dou. Has sent thee

This precious pledge of love.

[*He gives her PERCY's scarf.*

Elw. Then Percy's dead!

[*mine!*]

Dou. He is.—O great revenge, thou now art
See how convulsive sorrow rends her frame!

This, this is transport!—injur'd honour now

Receives its vast, its ample retribution.

She sheds no tears, her grief's too highly wrought;

'Tis speechless agony.—She must not faint—

She shall not 'scape her portion of the pain.

No! she shall feel the fulness of distress,

And wake to keen perception of her loss.

Bir. Monster! Barbarian! leave her to her
sorrows.

Elw. [*In a low broken voice.*] Douglas—think
not I faint, because thou seest

The pale and bloodless cheek of wan despair.

Fail me not yet, my spirits; thou cold heart,

Cherish thy freezing current one short moment,

And bear thy mighty load a little longer.

Dou. Percy, I must avow it, bravely fought,—

Died as a hero should;—but, as he fell,

(Hear it, fond wanton!) call'd upon thy name,

And his last guilty breath sigh'd out—*Elwina!*

Come—give a loose to rage, and feed thy soul

With wild complaints, and womanish upbraids.

Elw. [*In a low solemn voice.*] No.

The sorrow's weak that wastes itself in words,

Mine is substantial anguish—deep, not loud;

I do not rave—Resentment's the return

Of common souls for common injuries. [*sion;*

Light grief is proud of state, and courts compas-

But there's a dignity in cureless sorrow,

A sullen grandeur which disdains complaint;

Rage is for little wrongs—Despair is dumb.

[*Exeunt ELWINA and BIRTHA.*]

Dou. Why, this is well! her sense of 'wo is
strong!

[*her,*

The sharp, keen tooth of gnawing grief devours

Feeds on her heart, and pays me back my pangs

Since I must perish, 'twill be glorious ruin:

I fall not singly, but, like some proud tower,

I'll crush surrounding objects in the wreck,

And make the devastation wide and dreadful.

Enter RABY.

Raby. O whither shall a wretched father turn,

Where fly for comfort? Douglas, art thou here

I do not ask for comfort at thy hands.

I'd but one little casket, where I lodged

My precious hoard of wealth, and, like an idiot,

I gave my treasure to another's keeping,

Who threw away the gem, nor knew its value

But left the plunder'd owner quite a beggar.

Dou. What art thou come to see thy race dis-
honour'd?

And thy bright sun of glory set in blood?
I would have spar'd thy virtues, and thy age,
The knowledge of her infamy.

Raby. 'Tis false. [blood.
Had she been base, this sword had drank her

Dou. Ha! dost thou vindicate the wanton?

Raby. Wanton?
Thou hast defam'd a noble lady's honour—
My spotless child—in me behold her champion:
The strength of Hercules will nerve this arm,
When lifted in defence of innocence.
The daughter's virtue for the father's shield,
Will make old Raby still invincible.

[Offers to draw.

Dou. Forbear.

Raby. Thou dost disdain my feeble arm,
And scorn my age.

Dou. There will be blood enough;
Nor need thy wither'd veins, old lord, be drain'd,
To swell the copious stream.

Raby. Thou wilt not kill her?

Dou. Oh, 'tis a day of horror!

Enter EDRIC and BIRTHA.

Edr. Where is Douglas?
I come to save him from the deadliest crime
Revenge did ever meditate.

Dou. What meanest thou? [wife.

Edr. This instant fly, and save thy guiltless

Dou. Save that perfidious—

Edr. That much-injur'd woman.

Bir. Unfortunate indeed, but O most innocent!

Edr. In the last solemn article of death,
That truth-compelling state, when even bad men
Fear to speak falsely, Percy clear'd her fame.

Dou. I heard him.—'Twas the guilty fraud of
love.

The scarf, the scarf! that proof of mutual passion,
Given but this day to ratify their crimes!

Bir. What means my lord? This day? That
fatal scarf

Was given long since, a toy of childish friendship;
Long ere your marriage, ere you knew Elwina.

Raby. 'Tis I am guilty.

Dou. Ha!

Raby. I,—I alone.

Confusion, honour, pride, parental fondness,
Distract my soul,—Percy was not to blame,
He was—the destin'd husband of Elwina!
He lov'd her—was belov'd—and I approv'd.
The tale is long—I chang'd my purpose since,
Forbade their marriage—

Dou. And confirm'd my mis'ry!

Twice did they meet to-day—my wife and Percy.

Raby. I know it.

Dou. Ha! thou knew'st of my dishonour?

Thou wast a witness, an approving witness,
At least a tame one!

Raby. Percy came, 'tis true,
A constant, tender, but a guiltless lover!

Dou. I shall grow mad indeed; a guiltless lover!
Percy, the guiltless lover of my wife?

Raby. He knew not she was married.

Dou. How? is't possible? [cent;

Raby. Douglas, 'tis true; both, both were inno-
He of her marriage, she of his return. [vow'd

Bir. But now, when we believ'd thee dead, she
Never to see thy rival. Instantly,
Not in a state of momentary passion,
But with a martyr's dignity and calmness,
She bade me bring the poison

Dou. Had'st thou done it,

Despair had been my portion! Fly, good Birtha,
Find out the suffering saint—describe my peni-
tence,

And paint my vast extravagance of fondness,
Tell her I love as never mortal lov'd—
Tell her I know her virtues, and adore them—
Tell her I come, but dare not seek her presence,
Till she pronounce my pardon.

Bir. I obey.

[Exit BIRTHA.

Raby. My child is innocent! ye choirs of saints,
Catch the bless'd sounds—my child is innocent!

Dou. O I will kneel, and sue for her forgiveness,
And thou shalt help me plead the cause of love,
And thou shalt weep—she cannot sure refuse
A kneeling husband and a weeping father.
Thy venerable cheek is wet already.

Raby. Douglas! it is the dew of grateful joy!
My child is innocent! I now would die,
Lest fortune should grow weary of her kindness,
And grudge me this short transport.

Dou. Where, where is she?

My fond impatience brooks not her delay;
Quick, let me find her, hush her anxious soul,
And sooth her troubled spirit into peace.

Enter BIRTHA.

Bir. O horror, horror, horror!

Dou. Ah! what mean'st thou?

Bir. Elwina—

Dou. Speak—

Bir. Her grief wrought up to frenzy,
She has, in her delirium, swallow'd poison!

Raby. Frenzy and poison!

Dou. Both a husband's gift;

But thus I do her justice.

As DOUGLAS goes to stab himself, enter ELWINA
distracted, her hair dishevelled, PERCY'S scarf
in her hand.

Elw. [Goes up to DOUGLAS.] What, blood
again? We cannot kill him twice!

Soft, soft—no violence—he's dead already;—
I did it—Yes—I drown'd him with my tears;—
But hide the cruel deed! I'll scratch him out
A shallow grave, and lay the green sod on it;
Ay—and I'll bind the wild briar o'er the turf,
And plant a willow there, a weeping willow—

[She sits on the ground.

But look you tell not Douglas, he'll disturb him;
He'll pluck the willow up—and plant a thorn.
He will not let me sit upon his grave,
And sing all day, and weep and pray all night.

Raby. Dost thou not know me?

Elw. Yes—I do remember

You had a harmless lamb.

Raby. I had indeed!

[mate,

Elw. From all the flock you chose her out a
In sooth a fair one—you did bid her love it—

But while the shepherd slept the wolf devour'd it.
Raby. My heart will break. 'Tis too much,

too much!

Elw. [Smiling.] O 'twas a cordial draught—I
drank it all.

Raby. What means my child?

Dou. The poison! Oh the poison!

Thou dear wrong'd innocence—

Elw. Off—murderer, off!

Do not defile me with those crimson hands.

[Shows the scarf.

This is his winding sheet—I'll wrap him in it—
I wrought it for my love—there—now I've dress'd
him.

How brave he looks! my father will forgive him,

He dearly lov'd him once—but that is over.
 See where he comes—beware, my gallant Percy,
 Ah! come not here, this is the cave of death,
 And there's the dark, dark palace of Revenge!
 See the pale king sits on his blood-stain'd throne!
 He points to me—I come, I come, I come.

[*She faints, they run to her, DOUGLAS takes up his sword and stabs himself.*]

Dou. Thus, thus I follow thee.

Edr. Hold thy rash hand!

Dou. It is too late. No remedy but this
 Could medicine a disease so desperate.

Raby. Ah, she revives!

Dou. [*Raising himself.*] She lives! bear, bear
 me to her!

We shall be happy yet.

[*He struggles to get to her, but sinks down.*]

It will not be—

O for a last embrace—Alas! I faint—

She lives—Now death is terrible indeed—

Fair spirit, I lov'd thee—O—Elwina! [*Dies.*]

Elw. Where have I been? The damps of
 death are on me. [*thus!*]

Raby. Look up, my child! O do not leave me
 Pity the anguish of thy aged father.

Hast thou forgot me?

Elw. No—you are my father;

O you are kindly come to close my eyes,
 And take the kiss of death from my cold lips!

Raby. Do we meet thus?

Elw. We soon shall meet in peace.
 I've but a faint remembrance of the past—

But something tells me—O those painful struggles!
 Raise me a little—there—

[*She sees the body of DOUGLAS.*]

What sight is that?

[*der'd*]

A sword, and bloody? Ah! and Douglas mur-

Edr. Convinc'd too late of your unequal'd
 virtues, [*wrongs,*]

And wrung with deep compunction for your
 By his own hand the wretched Douglas fell.

Elw. This adds another, sharper pang to death.

O thou Eternal! take him to thy mercy,
 Nor let this sin be on his head, or mine!

Raby. I have undone you all—the crime is mine!
 O thou poor injur'd saint, forgive thy father,
 He kneels to his wrong'd child.

Elw. Now you are cruel,

Come near, my father, nearer—I would see you,

But mists and darkness cloud my failing sight.

O death! suspend thy rights for one short moment,

Till I have ta'en a father's last embrace—

A father's blessing.—Once—and now 'tis over.

Receive me to thy mercy, gracious Heaven!

[*She dies.*]

Raby. She's gone! for ever gone! cold, dead
 and cold.

Am I a father? Fathers love their children—

I murder mine! With impious pride I snatch'd

The bolt of vengeance from the hand of Heaven.

My punishment is great—but oh! 'tis just.

My soul submissive bows. A righteous God

Has made my crime become my chastisement.

[*Exeunt*]

THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY MRS. CROWLEY.

REMARKS.

This successful play first appeared at Covent Garden in 1780, and was particularly patronised by the royal family, who frequently commanded its representation.

The Biographia Dramatica says: "To speak of it as a first-rate performance would be doing injustice to the piece, as it possesses little originality either in plot, character, or situation; it however always gives pleasure in the exhibition." A late editor has observed, that the mind must have been gifted with various powers that could produce such a comedy as this, and such a poem as the Siege of Acre."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN, 1780.	DRURY LANE, 1815.
DORICOURT,	Mr. Lewis.	Mr. Elliston.
HARDY,	Mr. Quick.	Mr. Dowton.
SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD,	Mr. Wroughton.	Mr. Holland.
FLUTTER,	Mr. Lee Lewis.	Mr. Wrench.
SAVILLE,	Mr. Aickin.	Mr. Barnard.
VILLERS,	Mr. Whitfield.	
COURTALL,	Mr. Robson.	Mr. J. Wallack.
SILVERTONGUE,	Mr. W. Bates.	Mr. Hughes.
CROWQUILL,	Mr. Jones.	
FIRST GENTLEMAN,	Mr. Thompson.	Mr. Miller.
SECOND GENTLEMAN,	Mr. L'Estrange.	Mr. Wallack.
MOUNTEBANK,	Mr. Booth.	Mr. Ebsworth.
FRENCH SERVANT,	Mr. Wewitzer.	
LETITIA HARDY,	Miss Younge.	Miss Walstein.
MRS. RACKET,	Mrs. Matlocks.	Mrs. Harlowe.
LADY FRANCES TOUCHWOOD,	Mrs. Hartley.	Mrs. Orger.
MISS OGLE,	Mrs. Morton.	Miss Boyce.
KITTY WILLIS,	Miss Stewart.	Mrs. Scott.
LADY,	Mrs. Poussin.	

Masqueraders, Traders, Servants, &c

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Lincoln's-inn.

Enter SAVILLE, followed by a SERVANT, at the top of the Stage, looking round as if at a loss.

Sav. Lincoln's-inn!—Well, but where to find him, now I am in Lincoln's-inn? Where did he say his master was?

Serv. He only said in Lincoln's-inn, Sir.

Sav. That's pretty?—And your wisdom never inquired at whose chambers?

Serv. Sir, you spoke to the servant yourself.

Sav. If I was too impatient to ask questions, you ought to have taken directions, blockhead!

Enter COURTALL, singing.

Ha, Courtall!—Bid him keep the horses in motion, and then inquire at all the chambers round. [*Exit SERVANT.*] What the devil brings you to this part of the town? Have any of the long robes handsome wives, sisters, or chambermaids?

Court. Perhaps they have; but I came on a different errand: and had thy good fortune brought thee here half an hour sooner, I'd have given thee such a treat! ha, ha, ha!

Sav. I'm sorry I miss'd it. What was it?

Court. I was informed, a few days since, that my cousins Fallow were come to town, and desired earnestly to see me at their lodgings, in

Warwick-court, Holborn. Away drove I, painting them all the way as so many Hebes. They came from the farthest part of Northumberland; had never been in town, and in course were made up of rusticity, innocence, and beauty.

Sav. Well!

Court. After waiting thirty minutes, during which there was a violent bustle, in bounced five sallow damsels, four of them maypoles; the fifth, nature, by way of variety, had bent in the *Æsop* style.—But they all opened at once, like hounds, on a fresh scent,—Oh, cousin Courtall!—How do you do, cousin Courtall?—Lord, cousin, I am glad you are come! We want you to go with us to the Park, and the plays, and the opera, and Almack's, and all the fine places!—The devil, thought I, my dears, may attend you, for I'm sure I won't.—However, I heroically staid an hour with them, and discovered the virgins were all come to town with the hopes of leaving it wives—their heads full of knight-baronights, fops, and adventures.

Sav. Well, how did you get off?

Court. Oh, pleaded a million engagements.—However, conscience twitched me, so I breakfasted with them this morning, and afterwards squired them to the gardens here, as the most private place in town; and then took a sorrowful leave, complaining of my hard fortune, that obliged me to set off immediately for Dorsetshire.—Ha, ha, ha!

Sav. I congratulate your escape.—Courtall at Almack's, with five awkward, country cousins!—Ha, ha, ha!—Why, your existence, as a man of gallantry, could never have survived it.

Court. Death and fire! had they come to town, like the rustics of the last age, to see Paul's, the lions, and the waxwork—at their service; but the cousins of our days come up ladies—and, with the knowledge they glean from magazines and pocket-books, fine ladies—laugh at the bashfulness of their grandmothers, and boldly demand their *entrées* into the first circles.

Sav. Come, give me some news.

Court. Oh, enough for three gazettes!—The ladies are going to petition for a bill, that, during the war, every man may be allowed two wives.

Sav. 'Tis impossible they should succeed; for the majority of both houses know what it is to have one.

Court. But pr'ythee, Saville, how came you to town?

Sav. I came to meet my friend Doricourt, who, you know, is lately arrived from Rome.

Court. Arrived! yes, faith, and has cut us all out!—His carriage, his liveries, his dress, himself, are the rage of the day!—His first appearance set the whole town in a ferment, and his valet is besieged by levees of tailors, habit-makers, and other ministers of fashion, to gratify the impatience of their customers for becoming *a la mode de Doricourt*.—Nay, the beautiful lady Frolic, t'other night, with two sister countesses, insisted upon his waistcoat for muffs; and their snowy arms now bear it in triumph about town, to the heart-rending affliction of all our *beau garçons*.

Sav. Indeed! Well, those little gallantries will soon be over—he's on the point of marriage.

Court. Marriage! Doricourt on the point of marriage! 'tis the happiest tidings you could have given, next to his being hanged.—Who is the bride elect?

Sav. I never saw her; but 'tis Miss Hardy, the rich heiress.—The match was made by the parents, and the courtship began on their nurses' knees; master used to crow at miss, and miss used to chuckle at master.

Court. Oh, then by this time they care no more for each other, than I do for my country cousins.

Sav. I don't know that; they have never met since thus high; and so probably have some regard for each other.

Court. Never met!—Odd!

Sav. A whim of Mr. Hardy's; he thought his daughter's charms would make a more forcible impression, if her lover remained in ignorance of them till his return from the continent.

Enter SAVILLE'S SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Doricourt, Sir, has been at Counselor Pleadwell's, and gone about five minutes.

[*Exit.*]

Sav. Five minutes.—Zounds! I have been five minutes too late all my lifetime!—Good morning, Courtall.—I must pursue him. [*Going.*]

Court. Promise to dine with me to-day; I have some honest fellows.

[*Going off on the opposite side.*]

Sav. Can't promise—perhaps I may.—See there, there's a bevy of female Patagonians, coming down upon us.

Court. By the Lord, then, it must be my strapping cousins.—I dare not look behind me.—Run, man, run! [*Exeunt both on one side.*]

SCENE II.—An Apartment in DORICOURT'S House.

Enter DORICOURT.

Dor. [*To a servant behind.*] I shall be too late for St. James'; bid him come immediately.

Enter FRENCHMAN and SAVILLE.

French. Monsieur Saville.

[*Exit.*]

Dor. Most fortunate!—My dear Saville, let the warmth of this embrace speak the pleasure of my heart.

Sav. Well, this is some comfort, after the scurvy reception I met with in your hall.—I prepared my mind, as I came up stairs, for a *bon jour*, a grimace, and an adieu.

Dor. Why so?

Sav. Judging of the master from the rest of the family.—What the devil is the meaning of that flock of foreigners below, with their parchment faces, and snuffy whiskers?—What! can't an Englishman stand behind your carriage, buckle your shoe, or brush your coat?

Dor. Stale, my dear Saville, stale—Englishmen make the best soldiers, citizens, artizans, and philosophers, in the world, but the very worst footmen. I keep French fellows and Germans, as the Romans kept slaves; because their own countrymen had minds too enlarged and haughty to descend with a grace to the duties of such a station.

Sav. A good excuse for a bad practice.

Dor. On my honour, experience will convince you of its truth. A Frenchman neither hears, sees, nor breathes, but as his master directs; and his whole system of conduct is comprised in one short word—obedience! An Englishman reasons, forms opinions, cogitates, and disputes; he is the mere creature of your will: the other, a being conscious of equal importance in the universal

scale with yourself, and is therefore your judge, whilst he wears your livery, and decides on your actions with the freedom of a censor.

Sav. And this is in defence of a custom I have heard you execrate, together with all the adventitious manners imported by our travelled gentry.

Dor. Ay, but that was at eighteen; we are always very wise at eighteen. But consider this point: we go into Italy, where the sole business of the people is to study and improve the powers of music: we yield to the fascination, and grow enthusiasts in the charming science: we travel over France, and see the whole kingdom composing ornaments, and inventing fashions: we condescend to avail ourselves of their industry, and adopt their modes: we return to England, and find the nation intent on the most important objects: polity, commerce, war, with all the liberal arts, employ her sons; the latent sparks glow afresh within our bosoms; the sweet follies of the continent imperceptibly slide away, whilst senators, statesmen, patriots, and heroes, emerge from the virtù of Italy, and the frippery of France.

Sav. I may as well give it up—You had always the art of placing your faults in the best light; and I can't help loving you, faults and all: so to start a subject which must please you—When do you expect Miss Hardy?

Dor. Oh, the hour of expectation is past—She is arrived, and I this morning had the honour of an interview at Pleadwell's. The writings were ready: and, in obedience to the will of Mr. Hardy, we met to sign and seal.

Sav. Has the event answered? Did your heart leap or sink, when you beheld your mistress?

Dor. 'Faith, neither one nor t'other:—she's a fine girl, as far as mere flesh and blood goes.—But—

Sav. But what?

Dor. Why, she's only a fine girl; complexion, shape, and features—nothing more.

Sav. Is not that enough?

Dor. No—she should have spirit; fire! *L'air enjoué!* that something, that nothing, which every body feels, and which nobody can describe, in the restless charmers of Italy and France.

Sav. Thanks to the parsimony of my father, that kept me from travel! I would not have lost my relish for true unaffected English beauty, to have been quarrelled for by all the belles of Versailles and Florence.

Dor. Pho! thou hast no taste!—English beauty! 'tis insipidity: it wants the zest, it wants poignancy, Frank! Why, I have known a Frenchwoman, indebted to nature for no one thing but a pair of decent eyes, reckon in her suit as many counts, marquisses, and *petits maitres*, as would satisfy three dozen of our first rate toasts. I have known an Italian *marquizzina* make ten conquests in stepping from her carriage, and carry her slaves from one city to another, whose real intrinsic beauty would have yielded to half the little *grissettes* that pace your Mall on a Sunday.

Sav. And has Miss Hardy nothing of this?

Dor. If she has, she was pleased to keep it to herself. I was in the room half an hour before I could catch the colour of her eyes; and every attempt to draw her into conversation occasioned so cruel an embarrassment, that I was reduced to the necessity of news, French fleets, and Spanish captures, with her father.

Sav. So, Miss Hardy, with only beauty, mo-

desty, and merit, is doomed to the arms of a husband who will despise her.

Dor. You are unjust. Though she has not inspired me with very violent passion, my honour secures her felicity.

Sav. Come, come, Doricourt, you know very well, that when the honour of a husband is *locum-tenens* for his heart, his wife must be as indifferent as himself, if she is not unhappy.

Dor. Pho! never moralize without spectacles. But, as we are upon the tender subject, how did you bear Touchwood's carrying lady Frances?

Sav. You know I never looked up to her with hope; and Sir George is in every way worthy of her.

Dor. *A la mode Angloise*, a philosopher, even in love.

Sav. Come, I detain you. You seem dressed at all points, and of course have an engagement.

Dor. To St. James'. I dine at Hardy's, and accompany them to the masquerade in the evening—but breakfast with me to-morrow, and we'll talk of our old companions; for I swear to you, Saville, the air of the continent has not effaced one youthful prejudice or attachment.

Sav. With an exception to the case of ladies and servants.

Dor. True; there I plead guilty: but I have never yet found any man, whom I could cordially take to my heart and call friend, who was not born beneath a British sky, and whose heart and manners were not truly English.

[*Exeunt* DOR. and SAV.]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in MR. HARDY'S House.*

VILLERS seated on a Sofa, reading.

Enter FLUTTER.

Flut. Ha, Villers, have you seen Mrs. Rackett?—Miss Hardy, I find, is out.

Vil. I have not seen her yet. I have made a voyage to Lapland since I came. [*Flinging away the book.*] A lady at her toilet is as difficult to be moved as a quaker. [*Yawning.*] What events have happened in the world since yesterday? have you heard?

Flut. Oh, yes; I stopped at Tattersall's, as I came by, and there I found Lord James Jessamy, Sir William Wilding, and Mr. —. But now I think on't, you sha'n't know a syllable of the matter; for I have been informed you never believe above one half of what I say.

Vil. My dear fellow, somebody has imposed upon you most egregiously! Half! Why, I never believe one tenth part of what you say: that is, according to the plain and literal expression; but, as I understand you, your intelligence is amusing.

Flut. That's very hard now, very hard. I never related a falsity in my life, unless I stumbled at it by mistake; and if it were otherwise, your dull matter-of-fact people are infinitely obliged to those warm imaginations which soar into fiction to amuse you; for, positively, the common events of this little, dirty world, are not worth talking about, unless you embellish them!—Ha! here comes Mrs. Rackett: adieu to weeds, I see! All life!

Enter MRS. RACKETT.

Enter, Madam, in all your charms! Villers has been abusing your toilet, for keeping you so long;

but I think we are much obliged to it, and so are you.

Mrs. R. How so, pray? Good morning t'ye both. Here, here's a hand a-piece for you.

[*Kiss her hands.*]

Flut. How so! Because it hath given you so many beauties.

Mrs. R. Delightful compliment! What do you think of that, Villers?

Vil. That he and his compliments are alike—showy, but won't bear examining.—So you brought Miss Hardy to town last night?

Mrs. R. Yes, I should have brought her before, but I had a fall from my horse, that confined me a week—I suppose in her heart she wished me aanged a dozen times an hour.

Flut. Why?

Mrs. R. Had she not an expecting lover in town all the time? She meets him this morning at the lawyer's.—I hope she'll charm him; she's the sweetest girl in the world.

Vil. Vanity, like murder, will out.—You have convinced me you think yourself more charming.

Mrs. R. How can that be?

Vil. No woman ever praises another, unless she thinks herself superior in the very perfections she allows.

Flut. Nor no man ever rails at the sex, unless he is conscious he deserves their hatred.

Mrs. R. Thank ye, Flutter—I'll owe ye a bouquet for that. I am going to visit the new married Lady Frances Touchwood—Who knows her husband?

Flut. Every body.

Mrs. R. Is there not something odd in his character?

Vil. Nothing, but that he is passionately fond of his wife;—and so petulant is his love, that he opened the cage of a favourite bullfinch, and sent it to catch butterflies, because she rewarded its song with her kisses.

Mrs. R. Intolerable monster! Such a brute deserves—

Vil. Nay, nay, nay, nay, this is your sex now.—Give a woman but, one stroke of character, off she goes, like a ball from a racket; sees the whole man, marks him down for angel or a devil, and so exhibits him to her acquaintance.—This monster! this brute! is one of the worthiest fellows upon earth; sound sense, and a liberal mind; but dotes on his wife to such excess, that he quarrels with every thing she admires, and is jealous of her tippet and nosegay.

Mrs. R. Oh, less love for me, kind Cupid! I can see no difference between the torment of such an affection, and hatred.

Flut. Oh, pardon me, inconceivable difference, inconceivable; I see it as clearly as your bracelet. In the one case the husband would say, as Mr. Snapper said t'other day, Zounds! Madam, do you suppose that my table, and my house, and my pictures!—*Apropos, des Bottes*!—there was the divinest Plague of Athens sold yesterday at Langford's! the dead figures so natural; you would have sworn they had been alive. Lord Primrose bid five hundred—Six, said Lady Carmine—A thousand, said Ingot the nabob.—Down went the hammer.—*A rouleau* for your bargain, said Sir Jeremy Jingle. And what answer do you think Ingot made him?

Mrs. R. Why, took the offer.

Flut. Sir, I would oblige you, but I buy this

picture to place in the nursery: the children have already got Whittington and his cat! 'tis just his size, and they'll make good companions.

Mrs. R. Ha, ha, ha! Well, I protest that's just the way now—the nabobs and their wives outbid one at every sale, and the creatures have no more taste—

Vil. There again! You forget this story is told by Flutter, who always remembers every thing but the circumstances and the person he talks about;—'twas Ingot who offered a rouleau for the bargain, and Sir Jeremy Jingle who made the reply.

Flut. 'Egad, I believe you are right—Well, the story is as good one way as t'other, you know. Good morning. I am going to Mrs. Crotchet's concert, and in my way back shall make my bow at Sir George's. [*Going.*]

Vil. I'll venture every figure in your tailor's bill, you make some blunder there.

Flut. [*Turning back.*] Done! my tailor's bill has not been paid these two years; and I'll open my mouth with as much care as Mrs. Bridget Button, who wears cork plumpers in each cheek, and never hazards more than six words, for fear of showing them. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. R. 'Tis a good-natured, insignificant creature! let in every where, and cared for no where.—There's Miss Hardy returned from Lincoln's-inn: she seems rather chagrined.

Vil. Then I leave you to your communications.

Enter LETITIA, followed by her Maid.

Adieu! I am rejoiced to see you so well, Madam! but I must tear myself away.

Let. Don't vanish in a moment.

Vil. Oh, inhuman! you are two of the most dangerous women in town—Staying here to be cannonaded by four such eyes, is equal to a rencontre with Paul Jones, or a midnight march to Omoo!—They'll swallow the nonsense for the sake of the compliment. [*Aside; exit.*]

Let. [*Gives her cloak to her Maid.*] Order Du Quesne never more to come again; he shall positively dress my hair no more. [*Exit Maid.*] And this odious silk, how unbecoming it is!—I was bewitched to choose it. [*Throwing herself on a chair, and looking in a pocket glass; Mrs. RACKETT staring at her.*] Did you ever see such a fright as I am to-day?

Mrs. R. Yes, I have seen you look much worse.

Let. How can you be so provoking? If I do not look this morning worse than ever I looked in my life, I am naturally a fright.—You shall have it which way you will.

Mrs. R. Just as you please; but pray what is the meaning of all this?

Let. [*Rising.*] Men are all dissemblers, flatterers, deceivers! Have I not heard a thousand times of my air, my eyes, my shape—all made for victory! and to-day, when I bent my whole heart on one poor conquest, I have proved that all those imputed charms amount to nothing; for Doricourt saw them unmoved.—A husband of fifteen months could not have examined me with more cutting indifference.

Mrs. R. Then do you retain it like a wife of fifteen months, and be as indifferent as he.

Let. Ay, there's the sting! The blooming boy, who left his image in my young heart, is at four and twenty improved in every grace that

fixed him there. It is the same face that my memory and my dreams constantly painted to me; but its graces are finished, and every beauty heightened. How mortifying, to feel myself at the same moment his slave, and an object of perfect indifference to him!

Mrs. R. How are you certain that was the case? Did you expect him to kneel down before the lawyer, his clerks, and your father, to make oath of your beauty?

Let. No; but he should have looked as if a sudden ray had pierced him! he should have been breathless! speechless! for, oh! Caroline, all this was I!

Mrs. R. I am sorry you was such a fool. Can you expect a man, who has courted and been courted by half the fine women in Europe, to feel like a girl from a boarding-school? He is the prettiest fellow you have seen, and in course bewilders your imagination; but he has seen a million of pretty women, child, before he saw you; and his first feelings have been over long ago.

Let. Your railery distresses me; but I will touch his heart, or never be his wife.

Mrs. R. Absurd and romantic! If you have no reason to believe his heart pre-engaged, be satisfied; if he is a man of honour, you'll have nothing to complain of.

Let. Nothing to complain of? Heavens! shall I marry the man I adore with such an expectation as that?

Mrs. R. And when you have fretted yourself pale, my dear, you'll have mended your expectation greatly.

Let. [*Pausing.*] Yet I have one hope. If there is any power whose peculiar care is faithful love, that power I invoke to aid me.

Enter MR. HARDY.

Har. Well, now, wasn't I right? Ay, Letty! Ay, cousin Rackett! wasn't I right? I knew 't would be so. He was all agog to see her before he went abroad; and, if he had, he'd have thought no more of her face, may be, than his own.

Mrs. R. May be, not half so much.

Har. Ay, may be so—but I see into things; exactly as I foresaw, to-day, he fell desperately in love with the wench, he, he, he!

Let. Indeed, Sir! how did you perceive it?

Har. That's a pretty question! How do I perceive every thing? How did I foresee the fall of corn, and the rise of taxes? How did I know that if we quarrelled with America, Norway deals would be dearer? How did I foretel that a war would sink the funds? How did I forewarn parson Homily, that if he didn't some way or other contrive to get more votes than Rubric, he'd lose the lectureship? How did I—But what the devil makes you so dull, Letitia? I thought to have found you popping about, as brisk as the jacks of your harpsichord.

Let. Surely, Sir, it was a very serious occasion.

Har. Pho, pho! girls should never be grave before marriage. How did you feel, cousin, beforehand, ay?

Mrs. R. Feel! why, exceeding full of cares.

Har. Did you?

Mrs. R. I could not sleep for thinking of my coach, my liveries, and my chairmen; the taste of clothes I should be presented in, distracted me for a week; and whether I should be married in white or lilac, gave me the most cruel anxiety.

Let. And is it possible you felt no other care?

Har. And pray, of what sort may your cares be, Mrs. Letitia? I begin to foresee now that you have taken a dislike to Doricourt.

Let. Indeed, Sir, I have not.

Har. Then what's all this melancholy about? An't you a going to be married? and what's more, to a sensible man? and, what's more to a young girl, to a handsome man? And what's all this melancholy for, I say?

Mrs. R. Why because he is handsome and sensible, and because she's over head and ears in love with him; all which, it seems, your foreknowledge had not told you a word of.

Let. Fy, Caroline!

Har. Well, come, do you tell me what's the matter then? If you don't like him, hang the signing and sealing, he sha'n't have ye—and yet I can't say that neither; for you know that estate, that cost his father and me upwards of fourscore thousand pounds, must go all to him if you wont have him: if he wont have you, indeed, 'twill be all yours. All that's clear, engrossed upon parchment, and the poor dear man set his hand to it whilst he was dying.—Ah! said I, foresee you'll never live to see them come together; but their first son shall be christened Jeremiah, after you, that I promise you.—But come, I say, what is the matter? Don't you like him?

Let. I fear, Sir—if I must speak—I fear I was less agreeable in Mr. Doricourt's eyes, than he appeared in mine.

Har. There you are mistaken; for I asked him, and he told me he liked you vastly. Don't you think he must have taken a fancy to her?

Mrs. R. Why really I think so, as I was not by.

Let. My dear Sir, I am convinced he has not; but, if there is spirit or invention in woman, he shall.

Har. Right, girl; go to your toilet—

Let. It is not my toilet that can serve me: but a plan has struck me, if you will not oppose it, which flatters me with brilliant success.

Har. Oppose it! Not I, indeed! What is it?

Let. Why, Sir—it may seem a little paradoxical; but as he does not like me enough, I want him to like me still less, and will at our next interview endeavour to heighten his indifference into dislike.

Har. Who the devil could have foreseen that?

Mrs. R. Heaven and earth! Letitia, are you serious?

Let. As serious as the most important business of my life demands.

Mrs. R. Why endeavour to make him dislike you?

Let. Because 'tis much easier to convert a sentiment into its opposite, than to transform indifference into tender passion.

Mrs. R. That may be good philosophy, but I'm afraid you'll find it a bad maxim.

Let. I have the strongest confidence in it. I am inspired with unusual spirits, and on this hazard willingly stake my chance for happiness. I am impatient to begin my measures. [*Exit.*]

Har. Can you foresee the end of this, cousin?

Mrs. R. No, Sir; nothing less than your penetration can do that, I am sure; and I can't stay now to consider it. I am going to call on the Ogles, and then to Lady Frances Touchwood's, and then to an auction, and then—I don't know

where—but I shall be at home time enough to witness this extraordinary interview. Good bye.

[Exit.

Har. Well, 'tis an odd thing—I can't understand it—but I foresee Letty will have her way, and so I sha'n't give myself the trouble to dispute it.

[Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S House.

Enter DORICOURT and SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD.

Dor. Married, ha, ha, ha! you, whom I heard in Paris say such things of the sex, are in London a married man.

Sir G. The sex is still what it has ever been, since *la petite morale* banished substantial virtues; and rather than have given my name to one of your high bred, fashionable dames, I'd have crossed the line in a fire-ship, and married a Japanese.

Dor. Yet you have married an English beauty; yea, and a beauty born in high life.

Sir G. True; but she has a simplicity of heart and manners, that would have become the fair Hebrew damsels toasted by the patriarchs.

Dor. Ha, ha! Why, thou art a downright, matrimonial, Quixote. My life on't, she becomes as mere a town lady, in six months, as though she had been bred to the trade.

Sir G. Common—common—[*Contemptuously.*] No, Sir, Lady Frances despises high life so much from the ideas I have given her, that she'll live in it like a salamander in fire.

Dor. I'll send thee off to St. Evreux this night, drawn at full length, and coloured after nature.

Sir G. Tell him then, to add to the ridicule, that Touchwood glories in the name of husband; that he has found in one Englishwoman more beauty than Frenchmen ever saw, and more goodness than Frenchwomen can conceive.

Dor. Well—enough of description. Introduce me to this phoenix; I came on purpose.

Sir G. Introduce!—oh, ay, to be sure!—I believe Lady Frances is engaged just now—but another time.—How handsome the dog looks to-day!

[Aside.

Dor. Another time!—but I have no other time.—'Sdeath! this is the only hour I can command this fortnight.

Sir G. I am glad to hear it, with all my soul! [Aside.] So then you can't dine with us to-day? That's very unlucky.

Dor. Oh, yes—as to dinner—yes, I can, I believe, contrive to dine with you to-day.

Sir G. Pshaw! I didn't think on what I was saying; I meant supper.—You can't sup with us?

Dor. Why, supper will be rather more convenient than dinner. But you are fortunate—if you had asked me any other night, I could not have come.

Sir G. To-night!—'Gad, now I recollect, we are particularly engaged to-night. But to-morrow night—

Dor. Why, lookye, Sir George, 'tis very plain you have no inclination to let me see your wife at all; so here I sit. [Throws himself on a sofa.] There's my hat, and here are my legs.—Now I sha'n't stir till I have seen her; and I have no engagements; I'll breakfast, dine, and sup, with you, every day this week.

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Sir G. Was there ever such a provoking wretch! [Aside.] But to be plain with you, Doricourt, I and my house are at your service; but you are a damned agreeable fellow; and the women, I observe, always simper when you appear. For these reasons, I had rather, when Lady Frances and I are together, that you should forget that we are acquainted, farther than a nod, a smile, or a how d'ye?

Dor. Very well.

Sir G. It is not merely yourself, in *propria persona*, that I object to; but, if you are intimate here, you'll make my house still more the fashion than it is; and it is already so much so, that my doors are of no use to me. I married Lady Frances, to engross her to myself; yet, such is the blessed freedom of modern manners, that in spite of me, her eyes, thoughts, and conversation, are continually divided amongst all the flirts and coxcombs of fashion.

Dor. To be sure, I confess that kind of freedom is carried rather too far. 'Tis hard one can't have a jewel in one's cabinet, but the whole town must be gratified with its lustre.—He sha'n't preach me out of seeing his wife though.

Sir G. Well, now, that's reasonable. When you take time to reflect, Doricourt, I always observe you decide right; and therefore I ho e—

Enter GIBSON.

Gib. Sir, my lady desires—

Sir G. I am particularly engaged.

Dor. Oh, Lord, that shall be no excuse in the world. [Leaping from the sofa.] Lead the way, John.—I'll attend your lady.

[Exit, following GIBSON.

Sir G. What devil possessed me to talk about her! Here, Doricourt! [Running after him.] Doricourt!

Enter MRS. RACKETT and MISS OGLE, followed by a Servant.

Mrs. R. Acquaint your lady that Mrs. Rackett and Miss Ogle are here.

[Exit Servant.

Miss O. I shall hardly know Lady Frances, 'tis so long since I was in Shropshire.

Mrs. R. And I'll be sworn you never saw her out of Shropshire. Her father kept her locked up with his caterpillars and shells; and loved her beyond any thing but a blue butterfly and a petrified frog!

Miss O. Ha, ha, ha!—Well, 'twas a cheap way of breeding her: you know he was very poor, though a lord; and very high spirited, though a virtuoso. In town, her pantheons, operas, and robes *de cour*, would have swallowed his sea-weeds, moths, and monsters, in six weeks!—Sir George, I find, thinks his wife a most extraordinary creature: he has taught her to despise every thing like fashionable life, and boasts that example will have no effect on her.

Mrs. R. There's a great degree of impertinence in all that. I'll try to make her a fine lady, to humble him.

Miss O. That's just the thing I wish.

Enter LADY FRANCES TOUCHWOOD.

Lady F. I beg ten thousand pardons, my dear Mrs. Rackett—Miss Ogle, I rejoice to see you. I should have come to you sooner, but I was detained in conversation by Mr. Doricourt.

Mrs. R. Pray make no apology; I am quite

happy that we have your ladyship in town at last.—What stay do you make?

Lady F. A short one! Sir George talks with regret of the scenes we have left; and as the ceremony of presentation is over, will, I believe, soon return.

Miss O. Sure he can't be so cruel. Does your ladyship wish to return so soon?

Lady F. I have not the habit of consulting my own wishes; but I think, if they decide, we shall not return immediately. I have yet hardly formed an idea of London.

Mrs. R. I shall quarrel with your lord and master, if he dares to think of depriving us of you so soon. How do you dispose of yourself to-day?

Lady F. Sir George is going with me this morning to the mercer's, to choose a silk; and then—

Mrs. R. Choose a silk for you! Ha, ha, ha! Sir George chooses your laces too, I hope; your gloves, and your pincushions!

Lady F. Madam!

Mrs. R. I am glad to see you blush, my dear Lady Frances. These are strange homespun ways! If you do these things, pray keep them secret. Lord bless us! If the town should know your husband chooses your gowns!

Miss O. You are very young, my lady, and have been brought up in solitude. The maxims you learned among wood nymphs, in Shropshire, wont pass current here, I assure you.

Mrs. R. Why, my dear creature, you look quite frightened.—Come, you shall go with us to an exhibition and an auction.—Afterwards, we'll take a turn in the Park, and then drive to Kensington; so we shall be at home by four to dress; and in the evening I'll attend you to Lady Brilliant's masquerade.

Lady F. I shall be very happy to be of your party, if Sir George has no engagements.

Mrs. R. What! do you stand so low in your own opinion, that you dare not trust yourself without Sir George? If you choose to play Darby and Joan, my dear, you should have staid in the country;—'tis an exhibition not calculated for London, I assure you.

Miss O. What, I suppose, my lady, you and Sir George will be seen pacing it comfortably round the canal, arm in arm, and then go lovingly into the same carriage; dine *tete-a-tete*, spend the evening at piquet, and so go soberly to bed at eleven!—Such a snug plan may do for an attorney and his wife; but, for Lady Frances Touchwood, 'tis as unsuitable as linsey-woolsey, or a black bonnet at the opera.

Lady F. These are rather new doctrines to me!—But, my dear Mrs. Rackett, you and Miss Ogle must judge of these things better than I can. As you observe, I am but young, and may have caught absurd opinions.—Here is Sir George!

Re-enter SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD.

Sir G. 'Sdeath, another room full! [*Aside.*]

Lady F. My love! Mrs. Rackett and Miss Ogle.

Mrs. R. 'Give you joy, Sir George—We came to rob you of Lady Frances for a few hours.

Sir G. A few hours.

Lady F. Oh, yes! I am going to an exhibition, and an auction, and the Park, and Kensington, and a thousand places!—It is quite ridiculous,

I find, for married people to be always together. We shall be laughed at!

Sir G. I am astonished!—Mrs. Rackett, what does the dear creature mean?

Mrs. R. Mean, Sir George!—What she says I imagine.

Miss O. Why, you know, Sir, as Lady Frances had the misfortune to be bred entirely in the country, she cannot be supposed to be versed in fashionable life.

Sir G. No; Heaven forbid she should!—If she had, Madam, she would never have been my wife.

Mrs. R. Are you serious?

Sir G. Perfectly so.—I should never have had the courage to have married a well-bred fine lady.

Miss O. Pray, Sir, what do you take a fine lady to be, that you express such fear of her?

[*Sneeringly.*]

Sir G. A being easily described, Madam, as she is seen every where but in her own house. She sleeps at home, but she lives all over the town. In her mind, every sentiment gives place to the lust of conquest, and the vanity of being particular. The feelings of wife and mother are lost in the whirl of dissipation. If she continues virtuous, 'tis by chance—and if she preserves her husband from ruin, 'tis by her dexterity at the card table!—Such a woman I take to be a perfect fine lady.

Mrs. R. And you I take to be a slanderous cynic of two and thirty.—Twenty years hence, one might have forgiven such a libel!—Now, Sir, hear my definition of a fine lady:—she is a creature for whom nature has done much, and education more; she has taste, elegance, spirit, understanding. In her manner she is free, in her morals nice. Her behaviour is undistiguishingly polite to her husband and all mankind;—her sentiments are for their hours of retirement. In a word, a fine lady is the life of conversation, the spirit of society, the joy of the public!—Pleasure follows wherever she appears, and the kindest wishes attend her slumbers.—Make haste, then, my dear Lady Frances, commence fine lady, and force your husband to acknowledge the justness of my picture.

Lady F. I am sure 'tis a delightful one. How can you dislike it, Sir George? You painted fashionable life in colours so disgusting, that I thought I hated it; but, on a nearer view, it seems charming. I have hitherto lived in obscurity; 'tis time that I should be a woman of the world. I long to begin;—my heart pants with expectation and delight!

Mrs. R. Come, then, let us begin directly. I am impatient to introduce you to that society which you were born to ornament and charm.

Lady F. Adieu, my love!—We shall meet again at dinner. [*Going.*]

Sir G. Sure, I am in a dream—Fanny!

Lady F. [*Returning.*] Sir George.

Sir G. Will you go without me?

Mrs. R. Will you go without me!—Ha, ha, ha! what a pathetic address! Why, sure you would not always be seen side by side, like two beans upon a stalk. Are you afraid to trust Lady Frances with me, Sir?

Sir G. Heaven and earth! with whom can a man trust his wife, in the present state of society? Formerly there were distinctions of character amongst ye; every class of females had its particular description! grandmothers were pious, aunts

discreet, old maids censorious! but now, aunts, grandmothers, girls, and maiden gentlewomen, are all the same creature;—a wrinkle more or less is the sole difference between ye.

Mrs. R. That maiden gentlewomen have lost their censoriousness is surely not in your catalogue of grievances.

Sir G. Indeed it is—and ranked amongst the most serious grievances.—Things went well, Madam, when the tongues of three or four old virgins kept all the wives and daughters of a parish in awe. They were the dragons that guarded the Hesperian fruit; and I wonder they have not been obliged by act of parliament to resume their function.

Mrs. R. Ha, ha, ha! and pensioned, I suppose, for making strict inquiries into the lives and conversations of their neighbours.

Sir G. With all my heart, and empowered to oblige every woman to conform her conduct to her real situation. You, for instance, are a widow; your air should be sedate, your dress grave, your deportment matronly, and in all things an example to the young women growing up about you!—Instead of which, you are dressed for conquest, think of nothing but ensnaring hearts; are coquette, a wit, and a fine lady.

Mrs. R. Bear witness to what he says! A coquette, a wit, and a fine lady! Who would have expected an eulogy from such an ill-natured mortal!—Valour to a soldier, wisdom to a judge, or glory to a prince, is not more than such a character to a woman.

Miss O. Sir George, I see, languishes for the charming society of a century and a half ago; when a grave squire, and a still graver dame, surrounded by a sober family, formed a stiff group, in a mouldy old house, in the corner of a park.

Mrs. R. Delightful serenity! Undisturbed by any noise but the cawing of rooks, and the quarterly rumbling of an old family coach on a state visit; with the happy intervention of a friendly call from the parish apothecary, or a curate's wife.

Sir G. And what is the society of which you boast?—a mere chaos, in which all distinction of rank is lost in a ridiculous affectation of ease. In the same select party, you will often find the wife of a bishop and a sharper, of an earl and a fiddler. In short, 'tis one universal masquerade, all disguised in the same habits and manners.

Enter GIBSON.

Gib. Mr. Flutter.

[Exit.]

Sir G. Here comes an illustration. Now I defy you to tell, from his appearance, whether Flutter is a privy councillor or a mercer, a lawyer or a grocer's prentice.

Enter FLUTTER.

Flut. Oh, just which you please, Sir George; so you don't make me a lord mayor. Ah, Mrs. Rackett!—Lady Frances, your most obedient; you look—now hang me, if that's not provoking!—had your gown been of another colour, I should have said the prettiest thing you ever heard in your life.

Miss O. Pray, give it us.

Flut. I was yesterday at Mrs. Bloomer's. She was dressed all in green; no other colour to be seen but that of her face and bosom. "So," says

I, "My dear Mrs. Bloomer! you look like a carnation just bursting from its pod."

Sir G. Wasn't that pretty? And what said her husband?

Flut. Her husband! why, her husband laughed, and said, a cucumber would have been a better simile.

Sir G. But there are husbands, Sir, who would rather have corrected, than amended your comparison; I, for instance, should consider a man's complimenting my wife as an impertinence.

Flut. Why, what harm can there be in compliments? Sure they are not infectious; and if they were, you, Sir George, of all people breathing, have reason to be satisfied about your lady's attachment? every body talks of it: that little bird there, that she killed out of jealousy, the most extraordinary instance of affection that ever was given.

Lady F. I kill a bird through jealousy! heavens! Mr. Flutter, how can you impute such a cruelty to me?

Sir G. I could have forgiven you if you had.

Flut. Oh! what a blundering fool! No, no—now I remember—'twas your bird, Lady Frances—that's it, your bullfinch, which Sir George, in one of the refinements of his passion, sent into the wide world to seek its fortune.—He took it for a knight in disguise.

Lady F. Is it possible? Oh, Sir George, could I have imagined it was you who deprived me of a creature I was so fond of?

Sir G. Mr. Flutter, you are one of those busy, idle, meddling people, who, from mere vacuity of mind, are the most dangerous inmates in a family. You have neither feelings nor opinions of your own; but like a glass in a tavern, bear about those of every blockhead who gives you his;—and, because you mean no harm, think yourselves excused, though broken friendships, discords, and murders, are the consequences of your indiscretions.

Flut. [*Taking out his tablets.*] Vacuity of mind?—What was next? I'll write down this sermon: 'tis the first I have heard since my grandmother's funeral.

Miss O. Come, Lady Frances, you see what a cruel creature your loving husband can be; so let us leave him.

Sir G. Madam, Lady Frances shall not go.

Lady F. Shall not, Sir George?—This is the first time such an expression— [*Weeping.*]

Sir G. My love! my life!

Lady F. Don't imagine I'll be treated like a child; denied what I wish, and then pacified with sweet words.

Miss O. [*Apart.*] The bullfinch! that's an excellent subject; never let it down.

Lady F. I see plainly you would deprive me of every pleasure, as well as of my sweet bird—out of pure love!—Barbarous man!

Sir G. 'Tis well, Madam;—your resentment of that circumstance proves to me, what I did not before suspect, that you are deficient both in tenderness and understanding.—Tremble to think the hour approaches, in which you would give worlds for such a proof of my love. Go, Madam, give yourself to the public; abandon your heart to dissipation, and see if, in the scenes of gayety and folly that await you, you can find a recompense for the lost affection of a doting husband. [*Exit*

Flut. Lord, what a fine thing it is to have the gift of speech! I suppose Sir George practises at Coachmakers'-hall, or the Black-horse in Bond-street.

Lady F. He is really angry; I cannot go.

Mrs. R. Not go! foolish creature! you are arrived at the moment which, sometime or other, was sure to happen, and every thing depends on the use you make of it.

Miss O. Come, Lady Frances don't hesitate; the minutes are precious.

Lady F. I could find in my heart!—and yet I won't give up neither.—If I should in this instance, he'll expect it for ever.

[*Exit with Mrs. RACKETT.*]

Miss O. Now you act like a woman of spirit.

[*Exit.*]

Flut. A fair tug, by Jupiter—between duty and pleasure!—Pleasure boats, and off we go, *Io triumph!*

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—An Auction Room: *Busts, Pictures, &c.*

SILVERTONGUE discovered, with Company, Puffers, &c.

1 *Lady.* Hey-day, Mr. Silvertongue! what, nobody here?

Sil. Oh, my lady, we shall have company enough in a trice; if your carriage is seen at my door, no other will pass it, I am sure.

1 *Lady.* Familiar monster! [*Aside.*] That's a beautiful Diana, Mr. Silvertongue; but, in the name of wonder, how came Actæon to be placed on the top of a house?

Sil. That's a David and Bathsheba, Ma'am.

1 *Lady.* Oh, I crave their pardon!—I remember the names, but know nothing of the story.

Enter more Company.

1 *Gent.* Was not that Lady Frances Touchwood, coming up with Mrs. Rackett?

2 *Gent.* I think so; yes, it is, faith—Let us go nearer.

Enter LADY FRANCES TOUCHWOOD, MRS. RACKETT, and MISS OGLE.

3 *Gent.* Any thing worth notice to-day?

Sil. Yes, Sir, this is to be the first lot:—the model of a city, in wax.

2 *Gent.* The model of a city. What city?

Sil. That I have not been able to discover; but call it Rome, Pekin, or London, 'tis still a city; you'll find in it the same jarring interests, the same passions, the same virtues, and the same vices, whatever the name.

Lady F. I wish Sir George was here.—This man follows me about, and stares at me in such a way, that I am quite uneasy.

[*LADY FRANCES and MISS OGLE come forward, followed by COURTALL.*]

Miss O. He has travelled, and is heir to an immense estate; so he is impertinent, by parent.

Court. You are very cruel, ladies. Miss Ogle—you will not let me speak to you. As to this little scornful beauty, she has frowned me dead fifty times.

Lady F. Sir—I am a married woman.

[*Confused.*]

Court. A married woman! a good hint. [*Aside.*] 'Twould be a shame if such a charming

woman was not married. But I see you are a Daphne just come from your sheep and your meadows, your crook and your waterfalls. Pray now who is the happy Damon, to whom you have vowed eternal truth and constancy?

Miss O. 'Tis Lady Frances Touchwood, Mr. Courtall, to whom you are speaking.

Court. Lady Frances! By Heaven, that's Saville's old flame. [*Aside.*] I beg your ladyship's pardon. I ought to have believed, that such beauty could belong only to your name—a name I have long been enamoured of; because I knew it to be that of the finest woman in the world.

[*Mrs. RACKETT comes forward.*]

Lady F. [*Apart.*] My dear Mrs. Rackett, I am so frightened! Here's a man making love to me, though he knows I am married.

Mrs. R. Oh, the sooner for that, my dear; don't mind him.—Was you at the Cassino last night, Mr. Courtall?

Court. I looked in.—'Twas impossible to stay. Nobody there but antiques. You'll be at Lady Brilliant's to night, doubtless.

Mrs. R. Yes, I go with Lady Frances.

Lady F. Bless me! I did not know this gentleman was acquainted with Mrs. Rackett—I behaved so rude to him.

[*To Miss OGLE.*]

Mrs. R. Come, Ma'am; [*Looking at her Watch.*] 'tis past one. I protest, if we don't fly to Kensington, we sha'n't find a soul there.

Lady F. Wont this gentleman go with us?

Court. [*Looking surprised.*] To be sure; you make me happy, Madam, beyond description.

Mrs. R. Oh, never mind him—he'll follow.

[*Exeunt LADY FRANCES, MRS. RACKETT, and MISS OGLE.*]

Court. Lady Touchwood, with a vengeance! But 'tis always so; your reserved ladies are like ice, 'egad!—no sooner begin to soften than they melt!

[*Following.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—MR. HARDY'S.

Enter LETITIA and MRS. RACKETT.

Mrs. R. Come, prepare, prepare; your lover is coming.

Let. My lover! confess now that my absence at dinner was a severe mortification to him.

Mrs. R. I can't absolutely swear it spoiled his appetite; he ate as if he was hungry, and drank his wine as though he liked it.

Let. What was the apology?

Mrs. R. That you were ill;—but I gave him a hint that your extreme bashfulness could not support his eye.

Let. If I comprehend him, awkwardness and bashfulness are the last faults he can pardon in a woman; so expect to see me transformed into the veriest malkin.

Mrs. R. You persevere then?

Let. Certainly. I know the design is a rash one, and the event important;—it either makes Doricourt mine by all the tenderest ties of passion, or deprives me of him for ever; and never to be his wife will afflict me less than to be his wife, and not be beloved.

Mrs. R. So you wont trust to the good old maxim,—Marry first, and love will follow?

Let. As readily as I would venture my last guinea, that good fortune might follow. The

woman that has not touched the heart of a man, before he leads her to the altar, has scarcely a chance to charm it, when possession and security turn their powerful arms against her.—But here he comes—I'll disappear for a moment.—Don't spare me. [Exit.]

Enter DORICOURT, not seeing MRS. RACKETT.

Dor. So! [Looking at a picture.] This is my mistress, I presume.—*Ma foi!* the painter has hit her off.—The downcast eye—the blushing cheek—timid—apprehensive—bashful—A tear and a prayer-book would have made her *La Bella Magdalena*—

Give me a woman, in whose touching mien
A mind, a soul, a polish'd art, is seen;
Whose motion speaks, whose poignant air can
move;

Such are the darts, to wound with endless love.

Mrs. R. Is that an *improptu*?

[Touching him on the shoulder with her fan.

Dor. [Starting.] Madam!—Finely caught!
[Aside.]—Not absolutely—it struck me during
the desert, as a motto for your picture.

Mrs. R. Gallantly turned!—I perceive, however, Miss Hardy's charms have made no violent impression on you.—And who can wonder?—the poor girl's defects are so obvious.

Dor. Defects!

Mrs. R. Merely those of education.—Her father's indulgence ruined her.—*Mauvaise honte*, conceit, and ignorance, all unite in the lady you are to marry.

Dor. Marry! I marry such a woman!—Your picture, I hope, is overcharged.—I marry *mauvaise honte*, pertness, and ignorance!

Mrs. R. Thank your stars, that ugliness and ill temper are not added to the list.—You must think her handsome.

Dor. Half her personal beauty would content me;—but could the Medicean Venus be animated for me, and endowed with a vulgar soul, I should become the statue, and my heart transformed to marble.

Mrs. R. Bless us!—We are in a hopeful way, then!

Dor. There must be some envy in this. I see she is a coquette—[Aside.]—Ha, ha, ha! and you imagine I am persuaded of the truth of your character? ha, ha, ha! Miss Hardy, I have been assured, Madam, is elegant and accomplished—but one must allow for a lady's painting.

Mrs. R. I'll be even with him for that. [Aside.] Ha, ha, ha! and so you have found me out!—Well, I protest, I meant no harm; 'twas only to increase the *eclat* of her appearance, that I threw a veil over her charms.—Here comes the lady:—her elegance and accomplishments will announce themselves.

Enter LETITIA, running.

Let. La, cousin, do you know that our John.—Oh, dear heart!—I didn't see you, Sir.

[Hanging down her head, and dropping behind Mrs. R.

Mrs. R. Fy, Letitia.—Mr. Doricourt thinks you a woman of elegant manners. Stand forward and confirm his opinion.

Let. No, no; keep before me.—He's my sweetheart; and 'tis impudent to look one's sweetheart in the face you know.

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Mrs. R. You'll allow in future for a lady's painting, Sir.—Ha, ha, ha!

Dor. I am astonished!

Let. Well, hang it, I'll take heart.—Why, he is but a man, you know, cousin—and I'll let him see, I wasn't born in a wood to be scared by an owl. [Half apart; advances, and looks at him through her fingers.] He, he, he! [Goes up to him, and makes a very stiff, formal courtesy; he bows.] You have been a great traveller, Sir, I hear. Then I wish you'd tell us about the fine sights you saw when you went over sea.—I have read in a book, that there are some countries, where the men and women are all horses.—Did you see any of them?

Mrs. R. Mr. Doricourt is not prepared, my dear, for these inquiries—he is reflecting on the importance of the question—and will answer you—when he can.

Let. When he can! Why, he's as slow in speech as aunt Margery when she's reading Thomas Aquinas—and stands gaping like mumchance.

Mrs. R. Have a little discretion.

Let. Hold your tongue!—Sure I may say what I please before I am married, if I can't afterwards.—D'y'e think a body does not know how to talk to a sweetheart?—He is not the first I have had.

Dor. Indeed!

Let. Oh, lud, he speaks!—Why, if you must know—there was the curate at home.—When papa was a hunting, he used to come a suitoring, and make speeches to me out of books.—Nobody knows what a mort of fine things he used to say to me—and call me Venis, and Jubah, and Dinah.

Dor. And pray, fair lady, how did you answer him?

Let. Why, I used to say, "Look you, Mr. Curate, don't think to come over me with your flimflams, for a better man than ever trod in your shoes is coming over sea to marry me."—But, 'fags, I begin to think I was out.—Parson Dobbins was the sprightfuller man of the two.

Dor. Surely this cannot be Miss Hardy?

Let. Laws, why don't you know me?—You saw me to-day—but I was daunted before my father, and the lawyer, and all them; and did not care to speak out—so, may be, you thought I couldn't—but I can talk as fast as any body, when I know folks a little.—And now I have shown my parts, I hope you'll like me better.

Enter HARDY.

Har. I foresee this wont do.—Mr. Doricourt, may be, you take my daughter for a fool, but you are mistaken—she's as sensible a girl as any in England.

Dor. I am convinced she has a very uncommon understanding, Sir—I did not think he had been such an ass!

[Aside.] Let. My father will undo the whole. [Aside.]—Laws, papa, how can you think he can take me for a fool;—when every body knows, I beat the 'pothecary at conundrums, last Christmas-time?—And didn't I make a string of names, all in riddles, for the Lady's Diary?—There was a little river and a great house—That was Newcastle.—There what a lamb says, and three letters—that was ba, and k-e-r, ker, baker—There was—

Har. Don't stand ba-a-ing there—you'll make me mad in a moment—I tell you, Sir, that, for all that, she's dev'lish sensible.

Dor. Sir, I give all possible credit to your assertions.

Let. Laws, papa, do come along. If you stand watching, how can my sweetheart break his mind, and tell me how he admires me!

Dor. That would be difficult, indeed, Madam.

Har. I tell you, Letty, I'll have no more of this.—I see well enough—

Let. Laws, don't snub me before my husband—that is to be.—You'll teach him to snub me too—and, I believe, by his looks, he'd like to begin now. So let us go—cousin, you may tell the gentleman what a genius I have—how I can cut watch-papers, and work catgut—make quadrille baskets with pins, and take profiles in shade—ay, as well as the lady at No. 62, South Moulton-street, Grosvenor-square.

[*Exeunt HAR. and LET.*]

Mrs. R. What think you of my painting now?

Dor. Oh, mere water colours, Madam—the lady has caricatured your picture.

Mrs. R. And how does she strike you on the whole?

Dor. Like a good design; spoiled by the incapacity of the artist. Her faults are evidently the result of her father's weak indulgence. I observed an expression in her eye, that seemed to satirize the folly of her lips.

Mrs. R. But at her age, when education is fixed, and manner becomes nature, hopes of improvement—

Dor. Would be absurd.—Besides, I can't turn school-master.—Doricourt's wife must be capable of improvement—but it must be, because she's got beyond it.

Mrs. R. I am pleased your misfortune sits no heavier.

Dor. Your pardon, Madam—so mercurial was the hour in which I was born, that misfortunes always go plump to the bottom of my heart, like a pebble in water, and leave the surface unruffled. I shall certainly set off for Bath, or the other world, to-night—but whether I shall use a chaise, with four swift coursers, or go off in a tangent—from the aperture of a pistol, deserves consideration—so I make my adieus. [*Going.*]

Mrs. R. Oh, but I entreat you, postpone your journey till to-morrow—determine on which you will—you must be this night at the masquerade.

Dor. Masquerade!

Mrs. R. Why not?—If you are resolved to visit the other world, you may as well take one night's pleasure first in this, you know.

Dor. Faith, that's very true;—ladies are the best philosophers after all. Expect me at the masquerade. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. R. He's a charming fellow. I think Letitia sha'n't have him. [*Going.*]

Enter HARDY.

Har. What's he gone?

Mrs. R. Yes; and I am glad he is. You would have ruined us! Now, I beg, Mr. Hardy, you wont interfere in this business; it is a little out of your way. [*Exit.*]

Har. Hang me, if I dont, though—I foresce very clearly what will be the end of it, if I leave you to yourselves; so I'll e'en follow him to the

masquerade, and tell him all about it. Let me see—what shall my dress be—A great mogul? No—A grenadier? No—no—that, I foresee, would make a laugh. Hang me, if I don't send to my favourite little Quick, and borrow his Jew Isaac's dress. I know the dog likes a glass of good wine; so I'll give him a bottle of my forty-eight, and he shall teach me. Ay, that's it.—I'll be cunning little Isaac. If they complain of my want of wit, I'll tell them, the cursed Duenna wears the breeches, and has spoiled my parts. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—COURTALL'S.

Enter COURTALL, SAVILLE, and three GENTLEMEN, from an Apartment in the back Scene. The last three tipsy.

Court. You sha'n't go yet.—Another catch and another bottle.

1 *Gent.* May I be a bottle, and an empty bottle, if you catch me at that!—Why, I am going to the masquerade; Jack—, you know who I mean, is to meet me, and we are to have a leap at the new lustre.

2 *Gent.* And I am going to—a pilgrim—[*Hicksups.*—Am not I in a pretty pickle for a pilgrim?—And Tony, here—he is going in the disguise—in the disguise—of a gentleman!

1 *Gent.* We are all very disguised—so bid them draw up—D'ye hear?

[*Exeunt the three GENTLEMEN.*]

Sav. Thy skull, Courtall, is a lady's thimble:—no, an egg-shell.

Court. Nay, then you are gone too: you never aspire to similes, but in your cups.

Sav. No, no; I am steady enough—but the fumes of the wine pass directly through thy egg-shell, and leave thy brain as cool as—Hey! I am quite sober; my similes fail me.

Court. Then we'll sit down here, and have one sober bottle.

Enter DICK.

Bring a bottle and glasses. [*Exit DICK.*]

Sav. I'll not swallow another drop; no, though the juice should be the true Falernian.

Court. By the bright eyes of her you love, you shall drink her health.

Re-enter DICK, with bottle and glasses.

Sav. Ah! [*Sitting down.*] Her I loved is gone—[*Sighing.*]—She's married!

[*Exit DICK.*]

Court. Then bless your stars you are not her husband! I would be husband to no woman in Europe, who was not dev'lish rich, and dev'lish ugly.

Sav. Wherefore ugly?

Court. Because she could not have the conscience to exact those attentions that a pretty wife expects; or, if she should, her resentments would be perfectly easy to me, nobody would undertake to revenge her cause.

Sav. Thou art a most licentious fellow!

Court. I should hate my own wife, that's certain; but I have a warm heart for those of other people; and so here's to the prettiest wife in England—Lady Frances Touchwood.

Sav. Lady Frances Touchwood! I rise to drink her. [*Drinks.*] How the devil came Lady

Frances in your head? I never knew you give a woman of chastity before.

Court. That's odd, for you have heard me give half the women of fashion in England.—But, pray now, what do you take a woman of chastity to be?

Sav. Such a woman as lady Frances Touchwood, Sir.

Court. Oh, you are grave, Sir; I remember you was an adorer of hers.—Why didn't you marry her?

Sav. I had not the arrogance to look so high.—Had my fortune been worthy of her, she should not have been ignorant of my admiration.

Court. Precious fellow! What, I suppose you would not dare tell now that you admire her?

Sav. No, nor you.

Court. By the Lord, I have told her so.

Sav. Have? Impossible!

Court. Ha, ha, ha!—Is it so?

Sav. How did she receive the declaration?

Court. Why, in the old way; blushed, and frowned, and said she was married.

Sav. What amazing things thou art capable of! I could more easily have taken the pope by the beard, than profaned her ears with such a declaration.

Court. I shall meet her at Lady Brilliant's to-night, where I shall repeat it; and I'd lay my life, under a mask, she'll hear it all without blush or frown.

Sav. [*Rising.*] 'Tis false, Sir!—She wont.

Court. She will! [*Rising.*] Nay, I'll venture to lay a round sum that I prevail on her to go out with me—only to taste the fresh air, I mean.

Sav. Preposterous vanity! From this moment I suspect that half the victories you have boasted are as false and slanderous as your pretended influence with Lady Frances.

Court. Pretended!—How should such a fellow as you now, who never soared beyond a cherry-cheeked daughter of a ploughman in Norfolk, judge of the influence of a man of my figure and habits? I could show thee a list, in which there are names to shake thy faith in the whole sex; and, to that list I have no doubt of adding the name of lady—

Sav. Hold, Sir! My ears cannot bear the profanation;—you cannot—dare not approach her! For your soul you dare not mention love to her! Her look would freeze the word, whilst it hovered on thy licentious lips.

Court. Whu! whu! Well, we shall see—this evening, by Jupiter, the trial shall be made. If I fail—I fail.

Sav. I think thou dar'st not! But my life, my honour, on her purity. [*Exit.*]

Court. Hot-headed fool! But since he has brought it to this point, by gad I'll try what can be done with her ladyship. [*Musing—rings.*] She's frost-work, and the prejudices of education yet strong; ergo, passionate professions will only inflame her pride, and put her on her guard. For other arts then!

Enter DICK.

Dick, do you know any of the servants at Sir George Touchwood's?

Dick. Yes, Sir; I know the groom, and one of the housemaids; for the matter o'that, she's my own cousin; and it was my mother that helped her to the place.

Court. Do you know Lady Frances' maid?

Dick. I can't say as how I know she.

Court. Do you know Sir George's valet?

Dick. No, Sir; but Sally is very thick with Mr. Gibson, Sir George's gentleman.

Court. Then go there directly, and employ Sally to discover whether her master goes to Lady Brilliant's this evening; and, if he does, the name of the shop that sold his habit.

Dick. Yes, Sir.

Court. Be exact in your intelligence, and come to me at Boodle's. [*Exit DICK.*] If I cannot otherwise succeed, I'll beguile her as Jove did Alcmena, in the shape of her husband. The possession of so fine a woman—the triumph over Saville, are each a sufficient motive; and, united, they shall be resistless. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—The Street.

Enter SAVILLE.

Sav. The air has recovered me! what have I been doing! perhaps my petulance may be the cause of her ruin, whose honour I asserted: his vanity is piqued; and, where women are concerned, Courtall can be a villain.

Enter DICK; bows, and passes hastily.

Ha! that's his servant!—Dick!

Dick. [*Returning.*] Sir!

Sav. Where are you going, Dick?

Dick. Going! I am going, Sir; where my master sent me.

Sav. Well answered—but I have a particular reason for my inquiry, and you must tell me.

Dick. Why then, Sir, I am going to call upon a cousin of mine, that lives at Sir George Touchwood's.

Sav. Very well.—There, [*Gives him money.*] you must make your cousin drink my health.—What are you going about?

Dick. Why, Sir, I believe 'tis no harm, or elseways I am sure I would not blab—I am only going to ax if Sir George goes to the masquerade to-night, and what dress he wears?

Sav. Enough! now, Dick, if you will call at my lodgings in your way back, and acquaint me with your cousin's intelligence, I'll double the trifle I have given you.

Dick. Bless your honour, I'll call—never fear. [*Exit.*]

Sav. Surely the occasion may justify the means;—'tis doubly my duty to be Lady Frances' protector. Courtall, I see, is planning an artful scheme; but Saville shall outplot him. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S House.

Enter SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD and VILLERS.

Vil. For shame, Sir George! you have left Lady Frances in tears.—How can you afflict her?

Sir G. 'Tis I that am afflicted;—my dream of happiness is over—Lady Frances and I are disunited.

Vil. The devil! why, you have been in town but ten days: she can have made no acquaintance for a commons affair yet.

Sir G. Pho! 'tis our minds that are disunited: she no longer places her whole delight in me; she has yielded herself up to the world!

Vil. Yielded herself up to the world! wny did

you not bring her to town in a cage? then she might have taken a peep at the world!—But, after all, what has the world done? a twelvemonth since you was the gayest fellow in it:—if any body asked who dresses best?—Sir George Touchwood.—Who is the most gallant man? Sir George Touchwood.—Who is the most wedded to amusement and dissipation? Sir George Touchwood. And now Sir George is metamorphosed into a sour censor; and talks of fashionable life with as much bitterness as the old crabbed fellow in Rome.

Sir G. The moment I became possessed of such a jewel as Lady Frances, every thing wore a different complexion; that society in which I lived with so much *eclat*, became the object of my terror; and I think of the manners of polite life as I do of the atmosphere of a pest-house.—My wife is already infected; she was set upon this morning by maids, widows, and bachelors, who carried her off in triumph, in spite of my displeasure.

Vil. Ay, to be sure; there would have been no triumph in the case, if you had not opposed it:—but I have heard the whole story from Mrs. Rackett; and I assure you, Lady Frances didn't enjoy the morning at all;—she wished for you fifty times.

Sir G. Indeed! Are you sure of that?

Vil. Perfectly sure.

Sir G. I wish I had known it:—my uneasiness at dinner was occasioned by very different ideas.

Vil. Here then she comes, to receive your apology; but if she is true woman, her displeasure will rise in proportion to your contrition;—and till you grow careless about her pardon she won't grant it:—however, I'll leave you.—Matrimonial duets are seldom set in the style I like. [*Exit.*]

Enter LADY FRANCES.

Sir G. The sweet sorrow that glitters in these eyes I cannot bear. [*Embracing her.*] Look cheerfully, you rogue.

Lady F. I cannot look otherwise, if you are pleased with me.

Sir G. Well, Fanny, to-day you made your *entrée* in the fashionable world; tell me honestly the impressions you received.

Lady F. Indeed, Sir George, I was so hurried from place to place, that I had not time to find out what my impressions were.

Sir G. That's the very spirit of the life you have chosen.

Lady F. Every body about me seemed happy—but every body seemed in a hurry to be happy somewhere else.

Sir G. And you like this?

Lady F. One must like what the rest of the world likes.

Sir G. Pernicious maxim!

Lady F. But, my dear Sir George, you have not promised to go with me to the masquerade.

Sir G. 'Twould be a shocking indecorum to be seen together, you know.

Lady F. Oh, no; I asked Mrs. Rackett, and she told me we might be seen together at the masquerade without being laughed at.

Sir G. Really!

Lady F. Indeed, to tell you the truth, I could wish it was the fashion for married people to be inseparable: for I have more heart-felt satisfaction in fifteen minutes, with you at my side, than

fifteen days of amusement could give me without you.

Sir G. My sweet creature!—How that confession charms me!—Let us begin the fashion.

Lady F. O, impossible! we should not gain a single proselyte; and you can't conceive what spiteful things would be said of us.—At Kensington to-day a lady met us, whom we saw at court when we were presented; she lifted up her hands in amazement!—Bless me! said she to her companion, here's Lady Frances, without Sir Hurlo Thumbo!—My dear Mrs. Rackett, consider what an important charge you have! For Heaven's sake take her home again, or some enchanter on a flying dragon will descend and carry her off.—Oh, said another, I dare say Lady Frances has a clue at her heel, like the peerless Rosamond:—her tender swain would never have trusted her so far without such a precaution.

Sir G. Heaven and earth!—How shall innocence preserve its lustre amidst manners so corrupt.

Enter GIBSON.

Gib. Your honour talked, I thought, something about going to the masquerade?

Sir G. Well.

Gib. Hasn't your honour?—I thought your honour had forgot to order a dress.

Lady F. Well considered, Gibson.—Come, will you be Jew, Turk, or heretic; a Chinese emperor, or a ballad-singer; a rake, or a watchman?

Sir G. Oh, neither, my love; I can't take the trouble to support a character.

Lady F. You'll wear a domino then:—I saw a pink domino trimmed with blue, at the shop where I bought my habit.—Would you like it?

Sir G. Any thing, any thing.

Lady F. Then go about it directly, Gibson.—A pink domino, trimmed with blue.—Come, you have not seen my dress yet,—it is most beautiful; I long to have it on. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Masquerade.

A party dancing cotillions: variety of characters, &c.

Enter MOUNTBANK.

Mount. Who'll buy my nostrums? who'll buy my nostrums? Here's a powder for projectors—'twill rectify the fumes of an empty stomach, dissipate their airy castles, and make them dream of beef and pudding.

Enter FOLLY, with cap and bells, on a hobby-horse.

Mask. Hey Tom Fool, what business have you here?

Folly. What, Sir, affront a prince in his own dominions?

Music.—*Enter HARDY, in the dress of Isaac Mendoza.*

Har. Why, isn't it a shame to see so many stout, well-built, young fellows, masquerading and cutting *courantas*, here at home—instead of making the French cut capers to the tune of our cannon—or sweating the Spaniards with an English *fandango*? I foresee the end of all this.

Mask. Why, thou little testy Israelite! back to Duke's-place, and preach your tribe into a subscription for the good of the land on whose milk and honey ye fatten.—Where are your Joshuas and your Gideons, ay? What! all dwindled into stock-brokers, pedlars, and rag-men?

Har. No, not all. Some of us turn Christians, and by degrees grow into all the privileges of Englishmen! In the second generation we are patriots, rebels, courtiers, and husbands.

[*Points to his forehead.*
2 Mask. What, my little Isaac!—How the devil came you here? Where's your old Margaret?

Har. Oh, I have got rid of her.

2 Mask. How?

Har. Why, I persuaded a young Irishman that she was a blooming, plump beauty of eighteen; so they made an elopement, ha, ha, ha! and she is now the toast of Tipperary. Ha! there's cousin Rackett and her party; they sha'n't know me.

[*Puts on his mask.*

Enter MRS. RACKETT, LADY FRANCES TOUCHWOOD, SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD, and FLUTTER.

Mrs. R. Look at this dumpling Jew; he must be a Levite by his figure. You have surely practised the flesh-hook a long time, friend, to have raised that goodly presence.

Har. About as long, my brisk widow, as you have been angling for a second husband; but my hook has been better baited than yours. You have only caught gudgeons, I see.

[*Pointing to FLUTTER.*

Flut. Oh! this is one of the geniuses they hire to entertain the company with their accidental sallies.—Let me look at your commonplace book, friend. I want a few good things.

Har. I'd oblige you, with all my heart; but you'll spoil them in repeating—or if you should not, they'll give you no reputation—for nobody will believe they are your own.

Sir G. He knows you, Flutter;—the little gentleman fancies himself a wit, I see.

Har. There's no depending on what you see—the eyes of the jealous are not to be trusted.—Look to your lady.

Flut. He knows you, Sir George.

Sir G. What, am I the town talk?

Har. I can neither see Doricourt nor Letty.—I must find them out. [*Aside; exit.*

Mrs. R. Well, Lady Frances, is not all this charming? Could you have conceived such a brilliant assemblage of objects?

Lady F. Delightful! The days of enchantment are restored; the columns glow with sapphires and rubies; the emperors and fairies, beauties and dwarfs, meet me at every step!

Sir G. How lively are first impressions on sensible minds! In four hours, rapidity and languor will take place of that exquisite sense of joy which flutters your little heart.

Mrs. R. What an inhuman creature! Fate has not allowed us these sensations above ten times in our lives; and would you have us shorten them by anticipation?

Flut. O Lord! your wise men are the greatest fools upon earth;—they reason about their enjoyments, and analyze their pleasures, whilst the essence escapes. Look, Lady Frances! D'ye see that figure strutting in the dress of an em-

peror? His father retails oranges in Botolph-lane. That gipsy is a maid of honour, and that rag-man a physician.

Lady F. Why, you know every body!

Flut. Oh, every creature. A mask is nothing at all to me. I can give you the history of half the people here. In the next apartment there's a whole family, who, to my knowledge, have lived on water-cresses this month, to make a figure here to-night!—but, to make up for that, they'll cram their pockets with cold ducks and chickens, for a carnival to-morrow.

Lady F. Oh, I should like to see this provident family.

Flut. Honour me with your arm.

[*Exeunt FLUTTER and LADY FRANCES.*

Mrs. R. Come, Sir George, you shall be my beau.—We'll make the tour of the rooms, and meet them. Oh! your pardon, you must follow Lady Frances; or the wit and fine parts of Mr. Flutter may drive you out of her head. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*

Sir G. I was going to follow her, and now I dare not. How can I be such a fool as to be governed by the fear of that ridicule which I despise.

[*Exit.*

Music.—Enter DORICOURT, meeting a Mask.

Dor. Ha! my lord—I thought you had been engaged at Westminster on this important night.

Mask. So I am—I slipped out as soon as Lord Trope got upon his legs; I can *badiner* here an hour or two, and be back again before he is down.—There's a fine figure! I'll address her.

Enter LETITIA.

Charity, fair lady! Charity for a poor pilgrim.

Let. Charity! If you mean my prayers, Heaven grant thee wit, pilgrim.

Mask. That blessing would do from a devotee: from you I ask other charities;—such charities as beauty should bestow—soft looks—sweet words—and kind wishes.

Let. Alas! I am bankrupt of these, and forced to turn beggar myself.—There he is!—how shall I catch his attention? [*Aside.*

Mask. Will you grant me no favour?

Let. Yes, one.—I'll make you my partner—not for life, but through the soft mazes of a minuet.—Dare you dance?

Dor. Some spirit in that.

Mask. That, lady, is against my vow; but there is a man of the world.

Dor. Do you know her, my lord?

Mask. No. Such a woman as that, would formerly have been known in any disguise; but beauty is now common.—Venus seems to have given her cestus to the whole sex. [*A Minuet.*

Dor. [*During the Minuet.*] She dances divinely! [*When ended.*] Somebody must know her? Let us inquire who she is. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SAVILLE and KITTY WILLIS, habited like LADY FRANCES.

Sav. I have seen Courtall in Sir George's habit, though he endeavoured to keep himself concealed. Go, and seat yourself in the tea-room, and on no account discover your face;—remember too, Kitty, that the woman you are to personate is a woman of virtue.

Kitty. I am afraid I shall find that a difficult character; indeed I believe it is seldom kept up through a whole masquerade.

Sav. Of that you can be no judge.—Follow my directions, and you shall be rewarded.

[*Exit KITTY.*]

Enter DORICOURT.

Dor. Ha! Seville! Did you see a lady dance just now?

Sav. No.

Dor. Very odd. Nobody knows her.

Sav. Where is Miss Hardy?

Dor. Cutting watch-papers and making conundrums, I suppose.

Sav. What do you mean?

Dor. Faith, I hardly know. She's not here, however, Mrs. Rackett tells me.—I asked no further.

Sav. Your indifference seems increased.

Dor. 'Tis advanced thirty-two degrees towards hatred.

Sav. You are jesting?

Dor. Then it must be with a very ill grace, my dear Saville; for I never felt so seriously: do you know the creature's almost an idiot?

Sav. What!

Dor. An idiot. What the devil shall I do with her? 'Egad! I think I'll feign myself mad—and then Hardy will propose to cancel the engagements.

Sav. An excellent expedient! I must leave you; you are mysterious, and I can't stay to unravel you. I came here to watch over innocence and beauty.

Dor. The guardian of innocence and beauty at three and twenty! Is there not a cloven foot under that black gown, Saville?

Sav. No, faith. Courtall is here on a most detestable design. I found means to get a knowledge of the lady's dress, and have brought a girl to personate her, whose reputation cannot be hurt. You shall know the result to-morrow. Adieu.

[*Exit.*]

Dor. [*Musing.*] Yes, I think that will do. I'll feign myself mad, fee the doctor to pronounce me incurable, and when the parchments are destroyed—

[*Musing.*]

Enter LETITIA.

Let. You have chosen an odd situation for study. Fashion and taste preside in this spot. They throw their spells around you:—ten thousand delights spring up at their command; and you, a stoic—a being without senses, are wrapt in reflection.

Dor. And you, the most charming being in the world, awaken me to admiration. Did you come from the stars?

Let. Yes, and I shall re-ascend in a moment.

Dor. Pray show me your face before you go.

Let. Beware of imprudent curiosity; it lost Paradise.

Dor. Eve's curiosity was raised by the devil—'tis an angel tempts mine.—So your allusion is not in point.

Let. But why would you see my face?

Dor. To fall in love with it.

Let. And what then?

Dor. Why then; ay, curse it! there's the rub!

[*Aside.*]

Let. Your mistress will be angry;—but perhaps you have no mistress?

Dor. Yes, yes, and a sweet one it is!

Let. What! is she old?

Dor. No.

Let. Ugly?

Dor. No.

Let. What then?

Dor. Pho! don't talk about her; but show me your face.

Let. My vanity forbids it—'twould frighten you.

Dor. Impossible! your shape is graceful, your air bewitching, your bosom transparent, and your chin would tempt me to kiss it, if I did not see a pouting, red lip above it, that demands—

Let. You grow too free.

Dor. Show me your face then—only half a glance.

Let. Not for worlds!

Dor. What! you will have a little gentle force.

[*Attempts to seize her mask.*]

Let. I am gone for ever!

[*Exit.*]

Dor. 'Tis false—I'll follow to the end.

[*Exit.*]

Music; re-enter FLUTTER, LADY F. TOUCHWOOD, and SAVILLE.

Lady F. How can you be thus interested for a stranger?

Sav. Goodness will have interest; its home is heaven: on earth 'tis but a wanderer. Imprudent lady! why have you left the side of your protector? where is your husband.

Flut. Why, what's that to him?

Lady F. Surely it can't be merely his habit;—there's something in him that awes me.

Flut. Pho! 'tis only his gray beard. I know him; he keeps a lottery-office in Cornhill.

Sav. My province as an enchanter lays open every secret to me, lady! there are dangers abroad—Beware!

[*Exit.*]

Lady F. 'Tis very odd; his manner has made me tremble. Let us seek Sir George.

Flut. He's coming towards us.

Enter COURTALL, habited like SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD.

Court. There she is! If I can but disengage her from that fool, Flutter—crown me, ye schemers, with immortal wreaths!

Lady F. O, my dear Sir George: I rejoice to meet you—an old conjurer has been frightening me with his prophecies.—Where's Mrs. Rackett?

Court. In the dancing-room. I promised to send you to her, Mr. Flutter.

Flut. Ah! she wants me to dance. With all my heart.

[*Exit.*]

Lady F. Why do you keep on your mask?—'tis too warm.

Court. 'Tis very warm; I want air; let us go.

Lady F. You seem quite agitated.—Shan't we bid our company adieu?

Court. No, no—there's no time for forms. I'll just give directions to the carriage, and be with you in a moment. [*Going, steps back.*] Put on your mask; I have a particular reason for it.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter SAVILLE, with KITTY.

Sav. Now, Kitty, you know your lesson. Lady Frances, [*Takes off his mask.*] let me lead you to your husband.

Lady F. Heavens! Is Mr. Saville the conjurer? Sir George is just stepped to the door, to give directions. We are going home immediately.

Sav. No, madam, you are deceived: Sir George is this way.

Lady F. This is astonishing!

Sav. Be not alarmed: you have escaped a snare, and shall be in safety in a moment.

[*Exit SAVILLE and LADY FRANCES.*]

Re-enter COURTALL, and seizes KITTY's hand.

Court. Now.

Kitty. 'Tis pity to go so soon.

Court. Perhaps I may bring you back, my angel—but go now you must.

[*Exeunt COURTALL and KITTY.*]

Re-enter DORICOURT and LETITIA.

Dor. By heavens! I never was charmed till now. English beauty—French vivacity—wit—elegance.—Your name, my angel! tell me your name, though you persist in concealing your face.

Let. My name has a spell in it.

Dor. I thought so; it must be charming.

Let. But, if revealed, the charm is broke.

Dor. I'll answer for its force.

Let. Suppose it Harriot, or Charlotte, or Maria, or—

Dor. Hang Harriot, and Charlotte, and Maria—the name your father gave ye!

Let. That can't be worth knowing; 'tis so transient a thing.

Dor. How transient?

Let. Heaven forbid my name should be lasting till I am married.

Dor. Married! the chains of matrimony are too heavy and vulgar for such a spirit as yours. The flowery wreaths of Cupid are the only bands you should wear.

Let. They are the lightest, I believe: but 'tis possible to wear those of marriage gracefully. Throw them loosely round, and twist them in a true-lover's knot for the bosom.

Dor. An angel! But what will you be when a wife?

Let. A woman.—If my husband should prove a churl, a fool, or a tyrant, I'd break his heart, ruin his fortune, clope with the first pretty fellow that asked me—and return the contempt of the world with scorn, whilst my feelings preyed upon my life.

Dor. Amazing! [*Aside.*] What if you loved him, and he were worthy of your love?

Let. Why, then I'd be any thing—and all!—grave, gay, capricious—the soul of whim, the spirit of variety—live with him in the eye of fashion, or in the shade of retirement—change my country, my sex—feast with him in an Esquimaux hut, or a Persian pavilion—join him in the victorious war-dance on the borders of Lake Ontario, or sleep to the soft breathings of the flute in the cinnamon groves of Ceylon—dig with him in the mines of Golconda, or enter the dangerous precincts of the Mogul's seraglio—cheat him of his wishes, and overturn his empire, to restore the husband of my heart to the blessings of liberty and love.

Dor. Delightful wildness! oh, to catch thee, and hold thee for ever in this little cage!

[*Attempting to clasp her.*]

Let. Hold, Sir. Though Cupid must give the bait that tempts me to the snare, 'tis Hymen must spread the net to catch me.

Dor. 'Tis in vain to assume airs of coldness.—Fate has ordained you mine.

Let. How do you know?

Dor. I feel it here. I never met with a woman so perfectly to my taste; and I won't believe it formed you so, on purpose to tantalize me.

Let. This moment is worth a whole existence!

[*Aside.*]
Dor. Come, show me your face, and rivet my chains.

Let. To-morrow you shall be satisfied.

Dor. To-morrow, and not to-night?

Let. No.

Dor. Where then shall I wait on you to-morrow?—Where see you?

Let. You shall see me in an hour when you least expect me.

Dor. Why all this mystery?

Let. I like to be mysterious. At present be content to know that I am a woman of family and fortune.

Dor. Let me see you to your carriage.

Let. As you value knowing me, stir not a step. If I am followed, you never see me more. Adieu.

[*Exit.*]

Enter HARDY.

Har. Adieu! then I'm come in at the fag end!

[*Aside.*]
Dor. Barbarous creature! she's gone! what, and is this really serious?—Am I in love?—Pho! it can't be.

Enter FLUTTER.

O Flutter, do you know that charming creature?
Flut. What charming creature? I passed a thousand.

Dor. She went out that door as you entered.

Flut. Oh, yes;—I know her very well.

Dor. Do you, my dear fellow, who is she?

Flut. She's kept by Lord George Jennett.

Har. Impudent scoundrel!—I foresee I shall cut his throat!

[*Aside.*]

Dor. Kept!

Flut. Yes; Colonel Gorget had her first;—then Mr. Loveill;—then—I forget exactly how many; and at last she's Lord George's.

[*Talks to other Masks.*]

Dor. I'll murder Gorget, poison Lord George, and shoot myself.

Har. Now's the time, I see to clear up the whole. Mr. Doricourt!—I say—Flutter was mistaken; I know who you are in love with.

Dor. A strange rencontre! Who?

Har. My Letty.

Dor. Oh! I understand your rebuke;—'tis too soon, Sir, to assume the father-in-law.

Har. Zounds! what do you mean by that? I tell you that the lady you admire is Letitia Hardy.

Dor. I am glad you are so well satisfied with the state of my heart.—I wish I was!

[*Exit.*]

Har. Stop a moment.—Stop, I say! what, you wont? very well—if I don't play you a trick for this, may I never be a grandfather! I'll plot with Letty now, and not against her; ay, hang me if I don't! There's something in my head, that shall tingle in his heart. He shall have a lecture upon impatience, that I foresee he'll be the better for as long as he lives.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter SAVILLE, with Gentlemen.

Sav. Flutter, come with us; we're going to raise a laugh at Courtall's.

Flut. With all my heart. Live to live, was my father's motto. Live to laugh, is mine.

[*Music; exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—At COURTALL'S.

Enter KITTY and COURTALL.

Kitty. Where have you brought me, Sir George? This is not our home!

Court. 'Tis my home, beautiful Lady Frances! [*Kneels, and takes off his mask.*] Oh, forgive the ardency of my passion, which has compelled me to deceive you!

Kitty. Mr. Courtall! what will become of me?

Court. Oh, say but that you pardon the wretch who adores you. Did you but know the agonizing tortures of my heart, since I had the felicity of conversing with you this morning—or the despair that now—

Kitty. Oh, I am undone! [*Knock.*]

Court. Zounds! my dear Lady Frances! I am not at home! Rascal! do you hear? Let nobody in; I am not at home!

Serv. [*Without.*] Sir, I told the gentlemen so.

Court. Eternal curses! they are coming up. Step into this room, adorable creature! one moment; I'll throw them out of the window, if they stay there. [*Exit KITTY.*]

Enter SAVILLE, FLUTTER, and GENTLEMEN.

Flut. O, gemini! beg the petticoat's pardon. Just saw a corner of it.

1 Gent. No wonder admittance was so difficult. I thought you took us for bailiffs.

Court. Upon my soul, I am devilish glad to see you; but you perceive how I am circumstanced. Excuse me at this moment.

2 Gent. Tell us who 'tis then.

Court. Oh, fy!

Flut. We wont blab.

Court. I can't, upon honour. Thus far—She's a woman of the first character and rank. Saville, [*Taking him aside.*] have I influence, or have I not?

Sav. Why, sure, you do not insinuate—

Court. No, not insinuate, but swear, that she's now in my bed-chamber; by gad, I don't deceive you. There's generalship, you rogue! such an humble, distant, sighing fellow as thou art, at the end of a six months siege, would have boasted of a kiss from her glove. I only give the signal, and—pop!—she's in my arms!

Sav. What Lady Fran—

Court. Hush! You shall see her name to-morrow morning in red letters at the end of my list. Gentlemen, you must excuse me now. Come and drink chocolate at twelve, but—

Sav. Ay, let us go, out of respect to the lady: 'tis a person of rank.

Flut. Is it? Then I'll have a peep at her.

[*Runs to the door in the back scene.*]

Court. This is too much.

[*Trying to prevent him.*]

1 Gent. By Jupiter, we'll all have a peep.

Court. Gentlemen, consider, for Heaven's sake—a lady of quality. What will be the consequences?

Flut. The consequences! Why, you'll have your throat cut, that's all, but I'll write your eiegy. So now for the door! [*Part open the door, whilst the rest hold COURTALL.*] I beg your ladyship's pardon, whoever you are. [*Leads her out.*] Emerge from darkness, like the glorious

sun, and bless the wond'ring circle with your charms. [*Takes off her mask*]

Sav. Kitty Willis! ha, ha, ha!

Omes. Kitty Willis! ha, ha, ha! Kitty Willis! Why, what a fellow you are, Courtall, to attempt imposing on your friends in this manner. A lady of quality! an earl's daughter! Your ladyship's most obedient—Ha, ha, ha!

Sav. Courtall, have you influence, or have you not?

Flut. The man's moon-struck.

Court. Hell and ten thousand furies seize you all together!

Kitty. What, me too, Mr. Courtall? me, whom you have knelt to, prayed to, and adored?

Flut. That's right, Kitty; give him a little more.

Court. Disappointed and laughed at!

Sav. Laughed at, and despised. I have fulfilled my design, which was to expose your villany, and laugh at your presumption. Adieu, Sir; remember how you again boast of your influence with women of rank; and when you next want amusement, dare not to look up to the virtuous and to the noble for a companion.

[*Exit, leading KITTY.*]

Flut. And, Courtall, before you carry a lady into your bed-chamber again, look under her mask; d'ye hear? [*Exit.*]

Court. There's no bearing this! I'll set off for Paris directly. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—HARDY'S House.

Enter HARDY and VILLERS.

Vil. Whimsical enough! Dying for her, and hates her! Believes her a fool, and a woman of brilliant understanding!

Har. As true as you are alive; but when I went up to him, last night, at the Pantheon, out of downright good nature, to explain things—my gentleman whips round upon his heel, and snapped me as short as if I had been a beggar woman with six children, and he overseer of the parish.

Vil. Here comes the wonder-worker.

Enter LETITIA.

Here comes the enchantress, who can go to masquerades, and sing, and dance, and talk a man out of his wits! But pray, have we morning masquerades?

Let. Oh, no; but I am so enamoured of this all-conquering habit, that I could not resist putting it on the moment I had breakfasted. I shall wear it on the day I am married, and then lay it by in spices, like the miraculous robes of St. Bridget.

Vil. That's as most brides do. The charms that helped to catch the husband are generally laid by, one after another, till the lady grows a downright wife, and then runs crying to her mother, because she has transformed her lover into a downright husband.

Har. Listen to me. I han't slept to-night, for thinking of plots to plague Doricourt—and they drove one another out of my head so quick, that I was as giddy as a goose, and could make nothing of them: I wish to goodness you could contrive something.

Vil. Contrive to plague him! Nothing so

easy. Don't undeceive him, Madam, till he is your husband. Marry him while he possesses the sentiments you laboured to give him of Miss Hardy; and when you are his wife—

Let. Oh, Heavens! I see the whole—that's the very thing. My dear Mr. Villers, you are the divinest man!

Vil. Don't make love to me, hussy.

Enter MRS. RACKETT.

Mrs. R. No, pray don't; for I design to have Villers myself in about six years. There's an oddity in him that pleases me. He holds women in contempt; and I should like to have an opportunity of breaking his heart for that.

Vil. And when I am heartily tired of life, I know no woman whom I would with more pleasure make my executioner.

Har. It cannot be; I foresee it will be impossible to bring it about. You know the wedding wasn't to take place this week, or more—and Letty will never be able to play the fool so long.

Vil. The knot shall be tied to-night. I have it all here; [*Pointing to his forehead.*] the license is ready. Feign yourself ill; send for Doricourt, and tell him you can't go out of the world in peace, except you see the ceremony performed.

Har. I feign myself ill! I could as soon feign myself a Roman ambassador. I was never ill in my life, but with the tooth-ache—when Letty's mother was a-breeding I had all the qualms.

Vil. Oh, I have no fears for you. But what says Miss Hardy? Are you willing to make the irrevocable vow before night?

Let. Oh, Heavens!—I—I—'Tis so exceeding sudden, that really—

Mrs. R. That really she is frightened out of her wits, lest it should be impossible to bring matters about. But I have taken the scheme into my protection, and you shall be Mrs. Doricourt before night. Come, [*To HARDY.*] to bed directly: your room shall be crammed with vials, and all the apparatus of death—then, heigh presto! for Doricourt.

Vil. You go and put off your conquering dress, [*To LETITIA.*] and get all your awkward airs ready. And you practise a few groans. [*To HARDY.*] And you, if possible, an air of gravity. [*To MRS. RACKETT.*] I'll answer for the plot.

Let. Married in jest! 'Tis an odd idea! Well, I'll venture it.

[*Ereunt LETITIA and MRS. RACKETT.*]

Vil. Ay, I'll be sworn! [*Looks at his watch.*] 'Tis past three. The budget's to be opened this morning, I'll just step down to the house. Will you go?

Har. What! with a mortal sickness?

Vil. What a blockhead! I believe if half of us were to stay away with mortal sicknesses, it would be for the health of the nation. Good morning. I'll call and feel your pulse as I come back. [*Exit.*]

Har. You won't find them over brisk, I fancy. I foresee some ill happening from this making believe to die before one's time. But hang it—a hem! I am a stout man yet; only fifty-six—What's that? In the last yearly bills there were three lived to above a hundred. Fifty-six! Fiddle-de-dee! I am not afraid, not I. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—DORICOURT'S Lodgings.

DORICOURT, in his robe de chambre; *enter* SAVILLE.

Sav. Undressed so late?

Dor. I didn't go to bed till late—'twas late before I slept—late when I rose. Do you know Lord George Jennett?

Sav. Yes.

Dor. Has he a mistress?

Sav. Yes.

Dor. What sort of a creature is she?

Sav. Why, she spends him three thousand a year with the ease of a duchess, and entertains his friends with the grace of a Ninon. *Ergo*, she is handsome, spirited, and clever. [*DORICOURT walks about disordered.*] In the name of caprice, what ails you?

Dor. You have hit it—*Elle est mon caprice*. The mistress of Lord George Jennett is my caprice. Oh, insufferable!

Sav. What, you saw her at the masquerade?

Dor. Saw her, loved her, died for her—without knowing her. And now, the curse is, I can't hate her.

Sav. Ridiculous enough! All this distress about a kept woman, whom any man may have, I dare swear, in a fortnight. They've been jarring some time.

Dor. Have her! The sentiment I have conceived for the witch is so unaccountable, that, in that line, I cannot bear her idea. Was she a woman of honour, for a wife, I could adore her—but I really believe, if she should send me an assignation, I should hate her.

Sav. Hey-day! this sounds like love. What becomes of poor Miss Hardy?

Dor. Her name has given me an ague! dear Saville, how shall I contrive to make old Hardy cancel the engagements? the moiety of the estate, which he will forfeit, shall be his the next moment by deed of gift.

Sav. Let me see—Can't you get it insinuated that you are a devilish wild fellow; that you are an infidel, and attached to wenching, gaming, and so forth?

Dor. Ay, such a character might have done some good two centuries back. But who the devil can it frighten now?—I believe it must be the mad scheme at last.—There, will that do for a grin!

Sav. Ridiculous!—But how are you certain that the woman who has so bewildered you belongs to Lord George?

Dor. Flutter told me so.

Sav. Then fifty to one against the intelligence.

Dor. It must be so. There was a mystery in her manner, for which nothing else can account. [*A violent rap.*] Who can this be?

Sav. [*Looks out.*] The proverb is your answer—'tis Flutter himself. Tip him a scene of the madman, and see how it takes.

Dor. I will—a good way to send it about town. Shall it be of the melancholy kind, or the raving?

Sav. Rant!—Rant!—Here he comes.

Dor. Talk not to me; who can pull comets by the beard, and overset an island!

Enter FLUTTER.

There! this is he!—this is he who hath sent my poor soul, without coat or breeches, to be tossed about in ether like a duck feather! villain, give me my soul again!

Flut. Upon my soul, I haven't got it.

[*Frightened.*
Sav. Oh, Mr. Flutter, what a melancholy sight!—I little thought to have seen my poor friend reduced to this.

Flut. Mercy defend me! what, is he mad?

Sav. You see how it is. A cursed Italian lady—Jealousy—gave him a drug; and every full of the moon—

Dor. Moon! who dares talk of the moon? the patroness of genius—the rectifier of wits—the—Oh! here she is!—I feel her—she tugs at my brain—she has it—she has it—Oh! [*Exit.*

Flut. Well, this is dreadful! exceeding dreadful, I protest. Have you had Munro?

Sav. Not yet. The worthy Miss Hardy—what a misfortune!

Flut. Ay, very true.—Do they know it?

Sav. Oh, no; the paroxysm seized him but this morning.

Flut. Adieu; I can't stay.

[*Going in great haste.*
Sav. But you must stay, [*Holding him.*] and assist me—perhaps he'll return again in a moment; and when he is in this way, his strength is prodigious.

Flut. Can't, indeed—can't, upon my soul.

[*Going.*
Sav. Flutter—Don't make a mistake now—remember 'tis Doricourt that's mad.

Flut. Yes—you mad.

Sav. No, no; Doricourt.

Flut. 'Egad, I'll say you are both mad, and then I can't mistake. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S House.

Enter SIR GEORGE and LADY FRANCES TOUCHWOOD.

Sir G. The bird is escaped—Courtall is gone to France.

Lady F. Heaven and earth! have you been to seek him?

Sir G. Seek him! Ay.

Lady F. How did you get his name? I should never have told it you.

Sir G. I learned it in the first coffee-house I entered.—Every body is full of the story.

Lady F. Thank Heaven he's gone!—But I have a story for you—The Hardy family are forming a plot upon your friend Doricourt, and we are expected in the evening to assist.

Sir G. With all my heart, my angel; but I can't stay to hear it unfolded. They told me Mr. Saville would be at home in half an hour, and I am impatient to see him. The adventure of last night—

Lady F. Think of it only with gratitude. The danger I was in has overset a new system of conduct, that perhaps I was too much inclined to adopt. But henceforward, my dear Sir George, you shall be my constant companion and protector. And when they ridicule the unfashionable monsters, the felicity of our hearts will make their satire pointless.

Sir G. Charming angel! You almost reconcile me to Courtall. Hark! here's company: [*Stepping to the door.*] 'tis your livery widow—

—I'll step down the back stairs to escape her. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. RACKETT.

Mrs. R. Oh, Lady Frances! I am shocked to death.—Have you received a card from us?

Lady F. Yes; within these twenty minutes.

Mrs. R. Ay, 'tis of no consequence.—'Tis all over—Doricourt's mad.

Lady F. Mad!

Mrs. R. My poor Letitia!—Just as we were enjoying ourselves with the prospect of a scheme that was planned for their mutual happiness, in came Flutter, breathless with the intelligence:—I flew here to know if you had heard it.

Lady F. No, indeed—and I hope it is one of Mr. Flutter's dreams.

Enter SAVILLE.

Apropos; now we shall be informed. Mr. Saville, I rejoice to see you, though Sir George will be disappointed: he's gone to your lodging.

Sav. I should have been happy to have prevented Sir George. I hope your ladyship's adventure last night did not disturb your dreams?

Lady F. Not at all; for I never slept a moment. My escape, and the importance of my obligations to you, employed my thoughts. But we have just had shocking intelligence—Is it true that Doricourt is mad?

Sav. So, the business is done. [*Aside*] Madam, I am sorry to say that I have just been a melancholy witness of his ravings; he was in the height of a paroxysm.

Mrs. R. Oh, there can be no doubt of it! Flutter told us the whole history. Some Italian princess gave him a drug, in a box of sweetmeats, sent to him by her own page; and it renders him lunatic every month. Poor Miss Hardy! I never felt so much on any occasion in my life.

Sav. To soften your concern, I will inform you, Madam, that Miss Hardy is less to be pitied than you imagine.

Mrs. R. Why so, Sir?

Sav. 'Tis rather a delicate subject—but he did not love Miss Hardy.

Mrs. R. He did love Miss Hardy, Sir, and would have been the happiest of men.

Sav. Pardon me, Madam; his heart was not only free from that lady's chains, but absolutely captivated by another.

Mrs. R. No, Sir—no. It was Miss Hardy who captivated him. She met him last night at the masquerade, and charmed him in disguise. He professed the most violent passion for her: and a plan was laid this evening, to cheat him into happiness.

Sav. Ha, ha, ha!—Upon my soul, I must beg your pardon! I have not eaten of the Italian princess' box of sweetmeats, sent by her own page; and yet I am as mad as Doricourt, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. R. So it appears. What can all this mean?

Sav. Why, Madam, he is at present in his perfect senses; but he'll lose them in ten minutes through joy. The madness was only a feint to avoid marrying Miss Hardy, ha, ha, ha!—I'll carry him the intelligence directly. [*Going.*

Mrs. R. Not for worlds. I owe him revenge now for what he has made us suffer. You must promise not to divulge a syllable I have told you; and when Doricourt is summoned to Mr. Hardy's, prevail on him to come—madness and all.

Lady F. Pray do. I should like to see him showing off, now I am in the secret.

Sav. You must be obeyed, though 'tis inhuman to conceal his nappiness.

Mrs. R. I am going home; so I'll set you down at his lodgings, and acquaint you, by the way, with our whole scheme. *Allons!*

Sav. I attend you. [*Leading her out.*]

Mrs. R. You won't fail us?

[*Exeunt SAVILLE and MRS. RACKETT.*]

Lady F. Depend on us. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—DORICOURT'S Lodgings.

DORICOURT seated, reading.

Dor. [*Flings away the book.*] What effect can the morals of fourscore have on a mind torn with passion? [*Musing.*] Is it possible such a soul as hers can support itself in so humiliating a situation? A kept woman! [*Rising.*] Well, well—I am glad it is so—I am glad it is so!

Enter SAVILLE.

Sav. What a happy dog you are, Doricourt! I might have been mad, beggared, or pistol'd, myself, without its being mentioned—But you, forsooth! the whole female world is concerned for. I reported the state of your brain to five different women. The lip of the first trembled; the white bosom of the second heaved a sigh; the third ejaculated, and turned her eye to—the glass; the fourth blessed herself; and the fifth said, whilst she pinned a curl, Well, now perhaps he'll be an amusing companion: his native dulness was intolerable.

Dor. Envy! sheer envy, by the smiles of Hebe!—There are no less than forty pair of the brightest eyes in town will drop crystals, when they hear of my misfortune.

Sav. Well, but I have news for you.—Poor Hardy is confined to his bed; they say he is going out of the world by the first post, and he wants to give you his blessing.

Dor. Ill! so ill! I am sorry from my soul. He's a worthy little fellow—if he had not the gift of foreseeing so strongly.

Sav. Well, you must go and take leave.

Dor. What! to act the lunatic in the dying man's chamber?

Sav. Exactly the thing; and will bring your business to a short issue: for his last commands must be, that you are not to marry his daughter.

Dor. That's true, by Jupiter!—and yet, hang it, impose upon a poor fellow at so serious a moment!—I can't do it.

Sav. You must, faith. I am answerable for your appearance, though it should be in a strait waistcoat. He knows your situation, and seems the more desirous of an interview.

Dor. I don't like encountering Rackett.—She's an arch little devil, and will discover the cheat.

Sav. There's a fellow!—Cheated ninety-nine women, and now afraid of the hundredth.

Dor. And with reason—for that hundredth is a widow. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—HARDY'S.

Enter MRS. RACKETT and MISS OGLE.

Miss O. And so Miss Hardy is actually to be married to-night?

Mrs. R. If her fate does not deceive her. You are apprised of the scheme, and we hope it will succeed.

Miss O. Deuce take her! she's six years

younger than I am. [*Aside.*] Is Mr. Doricourt handsome?

Mrs. R. Handsome, generous, young, and rich.—There's a husband for ye! Isn't he worth pulling caps for?

Miss O. My conscience, the widow speaks as though she'd give cap, ears, and all for him. [*Aside.*] I wonder you didn't try to catch this wonderful man, Mrs. Rackett?

Mrs. R. Really, Miss Ogle, I had not time. Besides, when I marry, so many stout young fellows will hang themselves, that, out of regard to society, in these sad times, I shall postpone it for a few years.—This will cost her a new lace.—I heard it crack. [*Aside.*]

Enter SIR GEORGE and LADY FRANCES.

Sir G. Well, here we are. But where's the knight of the woful countenance?

Mrs. R. Here soon, I hope—for a woful night it will be without him.

Sir G. Oh fy! do you condescend to pun?

Mrs. R. Why not? It requires genius to make a good pun—some men of bright parts can't reach it. I know a lawyer who writes them on the back of his briefs; and says they are of great use—in a dry cause.

Enter FLUTTER.

Flut. Here they come! Here they come!—Their coach stopped as mine drove off.

Sav. [*Without.*] Come, let me guide you!—This way, my poor friend! Why are you so furious?

Dor. [*Without.*] The house of death—to the house of death!

Enter DORICOURT and SAVILLE.

Ah! this is the spot!

Lady F. How wild and fiery he looks!

Miss O. Now, I think, he looks terrified!

Mrs. R. I never saw a madman before.—Let me examine him.—Will he bite?

Sav. Pray keep out of his reach, ladies. You don't know your danger. He's like a wild cat, if a sudden thought seizes him.

Mrs. R. You talk like a keeper of wild cats.—How much do you demand for showing the monster?

Dor. I don't like this—I must rouse their sensibility. [*Aside.*] There! there she starts through the air in liquid flames! Down again! Now I have her.—Oh, she burns! she scorches!—Oh! she eats into my very heart!

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Dor. I am laughed at!

Mrs. R. Laughed at—ay, to be sure; why, I could play the madman better than you. There! there she is! Now I have her! Ha, ha, ha!

Dor. I'll leave the house:—I'm covered with confusion. [*Going.*]

Sir G. Stay, Sir.—You must not go. 'Twas poorly done, Mr. Doricourt, to affect madness rather than fulfil your engagements.

Dor. Affect madness! Saville, what can I do?

Sav. Since you are discovered, confess the whole.

Dor. Yes; since my designs have been so unaccountably discovered, I will avow the whole. I cannot love Miss Hardy, and I will never—

Sav. Hold, my dear Doricourt! What will the world say to such—

Dor. Damn the world! What will the world

give me for the loss of happiness? Must I sacrifice my peace, to please the world?

Sir G. Yes, every thing, rather than be branded with dishonour.

Lady F. Though our arguments should fail, there is a pleader, whom you surely cannot withstand—the dying Mr. Hardy supplicates you not to forsake his child!

Sir G. The dying Mr. Hardy!

Flut. The dying Mr. Hardy!

Enter VILLERS.

Vil. The dying Mr. Hardy requests you to grant him a moment's conversation, Mr. Doricourt, though you should persist to send him miserable to the grave.—Let me conduct you to his chamber.

Dor. Oh, ay, any where; to the antipodes—to the moon.—Carry me.—Do with me what you will.

Mrs. R. I'll follow, and let you know what passes.

[*Exeunt VIL. DOR. MRS. R. and MISS O.*]

Flut. Ladies, ladies, have the charity to take me with you, that I may make no blunder in repeating the story.

Lady F. Sir George, you don't know Mr. Saville.

Sir G. Ten thousand pardons; I have been with the utmost impatience at your door twice to-day.

Sav. I am concerned you had so much trouble, Sir George.

Sir G. Trouble! what a word!—I hardly know how to address you; your having preserved Lady Frances in so imminent a danger,—start not, Saville; to protect Lady Frances was my right. You have wrested from me my dearest privilege.

Sav. I hardly know how to answer such a reproach.

Sir G. I do not mean to reproach you. I hardly know what I mean. There is one method by which you may restore peace to me. I have a sister, Saville, who is amiable; and you are worthy of her. You must go with us into Hampshire; and, if you see each other with the eyes I do, our felicity will be complete.

Sav. I will attend you to Hampshire with pleasure; but not on the plan of retirement. Society has claims on Lady Frances that forbid it.

Sir G. Claims, Saville?

Sav. Yes, claims; Lady Frances was born to be the ornament of courts. She is sufficiently alarmed not to wander beyond the reach of her protector; and, from the British court, the most tenderly anxious husband could not wish to banish his wife. Bid her keep in her eye the bright example who presides there; the splendour of whose rank yields to the superior lustre of her virtue.

Re-enter MRS. RACKETT, LADY FRANCES, MISS OGLE, and FLUTTER.

Mrs. R. Oh, Heavens! do you know—

Flut. Let me tell the story. As soon as Doricourt—

Mrs. R. I protest you sha'n't—said Mr. Hardy—

Flut. No, 'twas Doricourt spoke first—says he—No, 'twas the parson—says he—

Mrs. R. Stop his mouth, Sir George;—he'll spoil the tale.

Sir G. Never heed circumstances—the result—the result—

Mrs. R. No, no; you shall have it in form. Mr. Hardy performed the sick man like an angel. He sat up in bed, and talked so pathetically, that the tears stood in Doricourt's eyes.

Flut. Ay, stood; they did not drop, but stood. I shall in future be very exact: the parson seized the moment; you know they never miss an opportunity.

Mrs. R. "Make haste," said Doricourt; "if I have time to reflect, poor Hardy will die unhappy."

Flut. They were got as far as the day of judgment, when we slipped out of the room.

Sir G. Then, by this time, they must have reached amazement, which every body knows is the end of matrimony.

Mrs. R. Ay, the reverend fathers ended the service with that word, prophetically, to teach the bride what a capricious monster a husband is.

Sir G. I rather think it was sarcastically, to prepare the bridegroom for the unreasonable humours and vagaries of his helpmate.

Lady F. Here comes the bridegroom of to-night.

Re-enter DORICOURT and VILLERS: VILLERS whispers SAVILLE, who goes out.

Omnes. Joy! joy! joy!

Miss O. If he's a sample of bridegrooms, keep me single! A younger brother, from the funeral of his father, could not carry a more fretful countenance.

Flut. Oh! now he's melancholy mad, I suppose.

Lady F. You do not consider the importance of the occasion.

Vil. No; nor how shocking a thing it is for a man to be forced to marry one woman, whilst his heart is devoted to another.

Mrs. R. Well, now 'tis over, I confess to you, Mr. Doricourt, I think it was a most ridiculous piece of Quixotism, to give up the happiness of a whole life to a man who perhaps has but few moments to be sensible of the sacrifice.

Flut. So it appeared to me. But, thought I, Mr. Doricourt has travelled; he knows best.

Dor. Zounds! confusion! did ye not all set upon me? Didn't ye talk to me of honour, compassion, justice?

Sir G. Very true: you have acted according to their dictates, and I hope the utmost felicity of the married state will reward you.

Dor. Never, Sir George! To felicity I bid adieu; but I will endeavour to be content. Where is my—I must speak it—where is my wife?

Enter LETITIA, masked, led by SAVILLE.

Sav. Mr. Doricourt, this lady was pressing to be introduced to you.

Dor. Oh!

Let. I told you last night you should see me at a time when you least expected me, and I have kept my promise.

Vil. Whoever you are, Madam, you could not have arrived at a happier moment. Mr. Doricourt is just married.

Let. Married! impossible! 'tis but a few hours since he swore to me eternal love: I believed him, gave him up my virgin heart, and now!—Ungrateful sex!

Dor. Your virgin heart! No, lady; my fate, thank Heaven! yet wants that torture. Nothing

but the conviction that you was another's could have made me think one moment of marriage, to have saved the lives of half mankind. But this visit, Madam, is as barbarous as unexpected. It is now my duty to forget you, which, spite of your situation, I found difficult enough.

Let. My situation! what situation?

Dor. I must apologize for explaining it in this company; but, Madam, I am not ignorant that you are the companion of Lord George Jennett, and this is the only circumstance that can give me peace.

Let. I—a companion! ridiculous pretence! no, Sir, know, to your confusion, that my heart, my honour, my name, is unspotted as hers you have married; my birth equal to your own, my fortune large. That, and my person, might have been yours. But, Sir, farewell. [*Going.*]

Dor. Oh, stay a moment.—Rascal! is she not—

Flut. Who, she? O Lord! 'twas quite a different person that I meant. I never saw that lady before.

Dor. Then, never shalt thou see her more.

[*Shakes FLUTTER.*]

Mrs. R. Have mercy upon the poor man! Heavens! He'll murder him.

Dor. Murder him! Yes, you, yourself, and all mankind. Sir George—Saville—Villers—'twas you who pushed me on this precipice; 'tis you who have snatched me from joy, felicity, and life.

Mrs. R. There! now, how well he acts the madman! This is something like! I knew he would do it well enough, when the time came.

Dor. Hard-hearted woman! Enjoy my ruin—riot in my wretchedness.

Enter HARDY, hastily, in his night-cap and gown.

Har. This is too much. You are now the husband of my daughter; and how dare you show all this passion about another woman?

Dor. Alive again!

Har. Alive! ay, and merry. Here, wipe off the flour from my face. I was never in better health and spirits in my life. I foresaw 'twould do. Why, my illness was only a fetch, man, to make you marry Letty.

Dor. It was! base and ungenerous! Well, Sir, you shall be gratified. The possession of my heart was no object either with you or your daughter. My fortune and name was all you desired, and these—I leave ye. My native England I shall quit, nor ever behold you more. But, lady, that, in my exile, I may have one consolation, grant me the favour you denied last night; let me behold all that mask conceals, that your whole image may be impressed on my heart, and cheer my distant solitary hours.

Let. This is the most awful moment of my life. Oh, Doricourt, the slight action of taking

off my mask stamps me the most bless'd or miserable of women!

Dor. What can this mean? Reveal your face, I conjure you.

Let. Behold it.

Dor. Rapture! transport! heaven!

Flut. Now for a touch of the happy madman.

Let. This little stratagem arose from my disappointment in not having made the impression on you I wished. The timidity of the English character threw a veil over me you could not penetrate. You have forced me to emerge, in some measure, from my natural reserve, and to throw off the veil that hid me.

Dor. I am yet in a state of intoxication. I cannot answer you.—Speak on, sweet angel!

Let. You see I can be any thing; choose then my character—your taste shall fix it. Shall I be an English wife? or, breaking from the bonds of nature and education, step forth to the world in all the captivating glare of foreign manners?

Dor. You shall be nothing but yourself—nothing can be captivating that you are not. I will not wrong your penetration, by pretending that you won my heart at the first interview; but you have now my whole soul;—your person, your face, your mind, I would not exchange for those of any other woman breathing.

Har. A dog! how well he makes up for past slights! Cousin Rackett, I wish you a good husband, with all my heart. Mr. Flutter, I'll believe every word you say this fortnight. Mr. Villers, you and I have managed this to a T. I never was so merry in all my life. 'Gad, I believe I can dance. [*Footing.*]

Dor. Charming, charming creature!

Let. Congratulate me, my dear friends! Can you conceive my happiness?

Har. No, congratulate me; for mine is the greatest.

Flut. No, congratulate me, that I have escaped with life, and give me some sticking plaster; this wild cat has torn the skin from my throat.

Har. Come into the next room; I have ordered out every drop of my forty-eight, and I'll invite the whole parish of St. George's, but we'll drink it out—except one dozen, which I shall keep under three double locks, for a certain christening that I foresee will happen within this twelve month.

Dor. My charming bride! It was a strange perversion of taste, that led me to consider the delicate timidity of your deportment as the mark of an uninformed mind, or inelegant manners. I feel now it is to that innate modesty, English husbands owe a felicity the married men of other countries are strangers to; it is a sacred veil to your own charms; it is the surest bulwark to your husbands' honour; and cursed be the hour, should it ever arrive, in which British ladies shall sacrifice to foreign graces the grace of modesty.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE CRITIC:

OR,

A TRAGEDY REHEARSED.

A DRAMATIC PIECE,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY R. B. SHERIDAN, Esq.

REMARKS.

This production, from the pen of the Rt. Hon. R. B. Sheridan, is one of those dramatical pieces which hold a high rank in the estimation of the public, and is perhaps the best effort of ridicule that has hitherto appeared against those who have imagined they possessed talents for theatrical composition. The character of Sir Fretful Plagiary is highly drawn, and his foibles and peculiarities are painted to the life. The various turns in his speeches are exceedingly natural for a person in his situation; and Dangle, with Sneer at his elbow, contrives to keep him in continual perturbation. The Puffs, too, of this scheming age, who were never more numerous or importunate, are justly lashed in the ridicule bestowed by our witty author.

The vein of original humour which pervades the whole piece, notwithstanding its acrimonious animadversions, cannot fail to raise a pleasant laugh; but the political and other allusions require alteration to adapt it for representation at different periods of time.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally performed.

DANGLE, *Mr. Dodd.*
SNEER, *Mr. Palmer.*
SIR FRETFUL PLAGIARY, *Mr. Parsons.*
UNDER PROMPTER, *Mr. Phillimore.*
PUFF, *Mr. King.*

MRS. DANGLE, *Mrs. Hopkins.*

Characters of the Tragedy.

LORD BURLEIGH, *Mr. Moody.*
GOVERNOR OF TILBURY FORT, .. *Mr. Wrighten.*
EARL OF LEICESTER, *Mr. Farren.*

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, *Mr. Burton.*
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON, *Mr. Waldron.*
MASTER OF THE HORSE, *Mr. Kenny.*
BEEFEATER, *Mr. Wright.*
JUSTICE, *Mr. Packer.*
SON, *Mr. Lamash.*
CONSTABLE, *Mr. Fawcett.*
THAMES, *Mr. Gaudry.*
DON FEROLLO WHISKERANDOS, ... *Mr. Bannister.*

FIRST NIECE, *Miss Collet.*
SECOND NIECE, *Miss Kirby.*
JUSTICE'S LADY, *Mrs. Johnston.*
CONFIDANT, *Mrs. Bradshaw.*
TILBURINA, *Miss Pope.*

Guards, Constables, Servants, Chorus, Drivers, Attendants, &c. &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

MR. and MRS. DANGLE at breakfast, reading Newspapers.

Dang. [*Reading.*] "Brutus to Lord North."
—"Letter the second on the state of the army."
—Pshaw! "To the first L—dash D of the A—dash Y."
—"Genuine extract of a letter from St. Kitt's."
—"Coxheath intelligence."
—"It is now confidently asserted that Sir Charles Hardy,"

Pshaw!—Nothing but about the fleet and the nation!—and I hate all politics but theatrical politics.—Where's the Morning Chronicle?

Mrs. D. Yes, that's your Gazette.

Dang. So, here we have it; "Theatrical intelligence extraordinary.—We hear there is a new tragedy in rehearsal at Drury-lane Theatre, called the Spanish Armada, said to be written by Mr. Puff, a gentleman well known in the theatrical world. If we may allow ourselves to give credit to the report of the performers, who, truth to say,

are in general but indifferent judges, this piece abounds with the most striking and received beauties of modern composition."—So!—I am very glad my friend Puff's tragedy is in such forwardness.—Mrs. Dangle, my dear, you will be very glad to hear that Puff's tragedy—

Mrs. D. Lord, Mr. Dangle, why will you plague me about such nonsense?—Now the plays are begun I shall have no peace.—Isn't it sufficient to make yourself ridiculous by your passion for the theatre, without continually teasing me to join you? Why can't you ride your hobby-horse without desiring to place me on a pillion behind you, Mr. Dangle?

Dang. Nay, my dear, I was only going to read—

Mrs. D. I have no patience with you!—haven't you made yourself the jest of all your acquaintance by your interference in matters where you have no business? Are not you called a theatrical Quidnunc, and a mock Mecænas to second-hand authors?

Dang. True; my power with the managers is pretty notorious; but is it no credit to have applications from all quarters for my interest?—From lords to recommend fiddlers, from ladies to get boxes, from authors to get answers, and from actors to get engagements.

Mrs. D. Yes, truly; you have contrived to get a share in all the plague and trouble of theatrical property, without the profit, or even the credit of the abuse that attends it.

Dang. I am sure, Mrs. Dangle, you are no loser by it, however; you have all the advantages of it;—mightn't you, last winter, have had the reading of the new pantomime a fortnight previous to its performance? And didn't my friend, Mr. Smatter, dedicate his last farce to you, at my particular request, Mrs. Dangle?

Mrs. D. Yes; but wasn't the farce damned, Mr. Dangle? And to be sure it is extremely pleasant to have one's house made the motley rendezvous of all the lackeys of literature:—The very high change of trading authors and jobbing critics!

Dang. Mrs. Dangle, you will not easily persuade me that there is no credit or importance in being at the head of a band of critics, who take upon them to decide for the whole town, whose opinion and patronage all writers solicit, and whose recommendation no manager dares refuse!

Mrs. D. Ridiculous!—Both managers and authors of the least merit, laugh at your pretensions.—The public is their critic—without whose fair approbation they know no play can rest on the stage, and with whose applause they welcome such attacks as yours, and laugh at the malice of them, where they can't at the wit.

Dang. Very well, Madam—very well.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Sneer, Sir, to wait on you.

Dang. O, show Mr. Sneer up. [*Exit SERVANT.*] Plague on't, now we must appear loving and affectionate, or Sneer will hitch us into a story.

Mrs. D. With all my heart; you can't be more ridiculous than you are.

Dang. You are enough to provoke—

Enter MR. SNEER.

—Ha! my dear Sneer, I am vastly glad to see you. My dear, here's Mr. Sneer. Mr. Sneer, my dear—my dear, Mr. Sneer.

Mrs. D. Good morning to you, Sir.

Dang. Mrs. Dangle and I have been diverting ourselves with the papers.—Pray, Sneer, wont you go to Drury-lane Theatre the first night of Puff's tragedy?

Sneer. Yes; but I suppose one sha'n't be able to get in. But here, Dangle, I have brought you two pieces, one of which you must exert yourself to make some of the managers accept, I can tell you that, for 'tis written by a person of consequence.

Dang. So! now my plagues are beginning.

Sneer. Ay, I am glad of it, for now you'll be happy. Why, my dear Dangle, it is a pleasure to see how you enjoy your volunteer fatigue, and your solicited solicitations.

Dang. It's a great trouble—yet, 'egad, it's pleasant too.—Why, sometimes of a morning, I have a dozen people call on me at breakfast time, whose faces I never saw before, nor ever desire to see again.

Sneer. That must be very pleasant indeed!

Dang. And not a week but I receive fifty letters, and not a line in them about any business of my own.

Sneer. An amusing correspondence!

Dang. [*Reading.*] "Bursts into tears, and exit." What, is this a tragedy.

Sneer. No, that's a genteel comedy, not a translation—only taken from the French; it is written in a style which they have lately tried to run down; the true sentimental, and nothing ridiculous in it from the beginning to the end.

Mrs. D. Well, if they had kept to that, I should not have been such an enemy to the stage: there was some edification to be got from those pieces, Mr. Sneer!

Sneer. I am quite of your opinion, Mrs. Dangle; the theatre, in proper hands, might certainly be made the school of morality; but now, I am, sorry to say it, people seem to go there principally for their entertainment.

Mrs. D. It would have been more to the credit of the managers to have kept it in the other line.

Sneer. Undoubtedly, Madam; and hereafter perhaps to have had it recorded, that in the midst of a luxurious and dissipated age, they preserved two houses in the capital, where the conversation was always moral at least, if not entertaining!

Dang. But what have we here?—This seems a very odd—

Sneer. O that's a comedy, on a very new plan; replete with wit and mirth, yet of a most serious moral! You see it is called "The Reformed Housebreaker;" where, by the mere force of humour, housebreaking is put into so ridiculous a light, that if the piece has its proper run, I have no doubt but that bolts and bars will be entirely useless by the end of the season.

Dang. 'Egad, this is new indeed!

Sneer. Yes; it is written by a particular friend of mine, who has discovered that the follies and foibles of society are subjects unworthy the notice of the comic muse, who should be taught to stoop only at the greater vices and blacker crimes of humanity—gibbetting capital offences in five acts, and pillorying petty larcenies in two. In short, his idea is to dramatise the penal laws, and make the stage a court of ease to the Old Bailey.

Dang. It is truly moral.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Fretful Plagiary, Sir.

Dang. Beg him to walk up.—[*Exit SERVANT.*] Now, Mrs. Dangle, Sir Fretful Plagiary is an author to your own taste.

Mrs. D. I confess he is a favourite of mine, because every body else abuses him.

Sneer. Very much to the credit of your charity, Madam, if not of your judgment.

Dang. But, 'egad, he allows no merit to any author but himself, that's the truth on't—though he's my friend.

Sneer. Never.—He is as envious as an old maid verging on the desperation of six and thirty: and then the insidious humility with which he seduces you to give a free opinion on any of his works, can be exceeded only by the petulant arrogance with which he is sure to reject your observations.

Dang. Very true, 'egad—though he's my friend.

Sneer. Then his affected contempt of all newspaper strictures; though, at the same time, he is the sorest man alive, and shrinks like scorched parchment from the fiery ordeal of true criticism.

Dang. There's no denying it—though he is my friend.

Sneer. You have read the tragedy he has just finished, haven't you?

Dang. O yes; he sent it to me yesterday.

Sneer. Well, and you think it execrable, don't you?

Dang. Why, between ourselves, 'egad, I must own—though he's my friend—that it is one of the most—He's here [*Aside.*]*—finished and most admirable perform—*

Sir F. [*Without.*] Mr. Sneer with him, did you say?

Enter SIR FRETFUL.

Ah, my dear friend!—'Egad, we were just speaking of your tragedy.—Admirable, Sir Fretful, admirable!

Sneer. You never did any thing beyond it, Sir Fretful—never in your life.

Sir F. You make me extremely happy; for without a compliment, my dear Sneer, there isn't a man in the world whose judgment I value as I do yours—and Mr. Dangle's.

Mrs. D. They are only laughing at you, Sir Fretful; for it was but just now that—

Dang. Mrs. Dangle! Ah, Sir Fretful, you know Mrs. Dangle.—My friend Sneer was rallying just now—He knows how she admires you, and—

Sir F. O Lord, I am sure Mr. Sneer has more taste and sincerity than to—A damned double-faced fellow! [*Aside.*]

Dang. Yes, yes—Sneer will jest—but a better humoured—

Sir F. O, I know—

Dang. He has a ready turn for ridicule—his wit costs him nothing.—

Sir F. No, 'egad—or I should wonder how he came by it. [*Aside.*]

Dang. But, Sir Fretful, have you sent your play to the managers yet?—or can I be of any service to you?

Sir F. No, no, I thank you; I believe the piece had sufficient recommendation with it.—I thank you though—I sent it to the manager of Covent-garden Theatre this morning.

Sneer. I should have thought now, that it might have been cast (as the actors call it) better at Drury-lane.

Sir F. O lud! no—never send a play there while I live—harkye! [*Whispers SNEER.*]

Sneer. Writes himself!—I know he does—

Sir F. I say nothing—I take away from no man's merit—am hurt at no man's good fortune—I say nothing—But this I will say—through all my knowledge of life, I have observed—that there is not a passion so strongly rooted in the human heart as envy!

Sneer. I believe you have reason for what you say, indeed.

Sir F. Besides—I can tell you it is not always so safe to leave a play in the hands of those who write themselves.

Sneer. What, they may steal from them, hey, my dear Plagiary?

Sir F. Steal!—to be sure they may; and, 'egad, serve your best thoughts as gipsies do stolen children, disfigure them to make 'em pass for their own.

Sneer. But your present work is a sacrifice to Melpomene, and he, you know, never—

Sir F. That's no security.—A dexterous plagiarist may do any thing.—Why, Sir, for aught I know, he might take out some of the best things in my tragedy, and put them into his own comedy.

Sneer. That might be done, I dare be sworn.

Sir F. And then, if such a person gives you the least hint or assistance, he is devilish apt to take the merit of the whole—

Dang. If it succeeds.

Sir F. Ay,—but with regard to this piece, I think I can hit that gentleman, for I can safely swear he never read it.

Sneer. I'll tell you how you may hurt him more—

Sir F. How?—

Sneer. Swear he wrote it.

Sir F. Plague on't now, Sneer, I shall take it ill.—I believe you want to take away my character as an author!

Sneer. Then I am sure you ought to be very much obliged to me.

Sir F. Hey!—Sir!

Dang. O, you know, he never means what he says.

Sir F. Sincerely then—you do like the piece?

Sneer. Wonderfully!

Sir F. But come now, there must be something that you think might be mended, hey?—Mr. Dangle, has nothing struck you?

Dang. Why faith, it is but an ungracious thing for the most part to—

Sir F. With most authors it is just so, indeed; they are in general strangely tenacious!—But, for my part, I am never so well pleased as when a judicious critic points out any defect to me: for what is the purpose of showing a work to a friend, if you don't mean to profit by his opinion?

Sneer. Very true. Why then, though I seriously admire the piece upon the whole, yet there is one small objection; which, if you'll give me leave, I'll mention.

Sir F. Sir, you can't oblige me more.

Sneer. I think it wants incident.

Sir F. Good God!—you surprise me!—wants incident!—

Sneer. Yes; I own I think the incidents are too few.

Sir F. Good God!—Believe me, 'Mr. Sneer, there is no person for whose judgment I have a more implicit deference.—But I protest to you,

Mr. Sneeer, I am only apprehensive that the incidents are too crowded.—My dear Dangle, how does it strike you?

Dang. Really I can't agree with my friend Sneeer.—I think the plot quite sufficient; and the four first acts by many degrees the best I ever read or saw in my life. If I might venture to suggest any thing, it is that the interest rather falls off in the fifth.—

Sir F. Rises, I believe you mean, Sir.

Dang. No, I don't, upon my word.

Sir F. Yes, yes, you do, upon my soul—it certainly don't fall off, I assure you—No, no, it don't fall off.

Dang. Now, Mrs. Dangle, didn't you say it struck you in the same light?

Mrs. D. No, indeed, I did not—I did not see a fault in any part of the play from the beginning to the end.

Sir F. Upon my soul, the women are the best judges after all!

Mrs. D. Or, if I made any objection, I am sure it was to nothing in the piece! but that I was afraid it was, on the whole, a little too long.

Sir F. Pray, Madam, do you speak as to duration of time; or do you mean that the story is tediously spun out?

Mrs. D. O lud! no.—I speak only with reference to the usual length of acting plays.

Sir F. Then I am very happy—very happy, indeed—because the play is a short play, a remarkably short play: I should not venture to differ with a lady on a point of taste; but, on these occasions the watch, you know, is the critic.

Mrs. D. Then, I suppose, it must have been Mr. Dangle's drawling manner of reading it to me.

Sir F. O, if Mr. Dangle read it! that's quite another affair!—But I assure you, Mrs. Dangle, the first evening you can spare me three hours and a half, I'll undertake to read you the whole from beginning to end, with the prologue and epilogue, and allow time for the music between the acts.

Mrs. D. I hope to see it on the stage next.

Dang. Well, Sir Fretful, I wish you may be able to get rid as easily of the newspaper criticisms as you do of ours.—

Sir F. The newspapers! Sir, they are the most villanous—licentious—abominable—infernal—Not that I ever read them—No—I make it a rule never to look into a newspaper.

Dang. You are quite right—for it certainly must hurt an author of delicate feelings to see the liberties they take.

Sir F. No!—quite the contrary; their abuse is, in fact, the best panegyric—I like it of all things.—An author's reputation is only in danger from their support.

Sneeer. Why that's true—and that attack now on you the other day—

Sir F. What? where?

Dang. Ay, you mean in a paper of Thursday; it was completely ill-natured to be sure.

Sir F. O, so much the better—Ha, ha, ha!—I wouldn't have it otherwise.

Dang. Certainly it is only to be laughed at; for—

Sir F. You don't happen to recollect what the fellow said, do you?

Sneeer. Pray, Dangle—Sir Fretful seems a little anxious—

Sir F. O lud, no!—anxious,—not I,—not the least.—I—But one may as well hear, you know.

Dang. Sneeer, do you recollect?—Make out something.

Sneeer. I will. [*To DANGLE.*]—Yes, yes, I remember perfectly.

Sir F. Well, and pray now—Not that it signifies—what might the gentleman say?

Sneeer. Why he roundly asserts that you have not the slightest invention or original genius whatever: though you are the greatest traducer of all other authors living.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!—very good!

Sneeer. That as to comedy you have not one idea of your own, he believes, even in your common place-book, where stray jokes, and pilfered witticisms, are kept with as much method as the ledger of the lost-and-stolen-office.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!—very pleasant!

Sneeer. Nay, that you are so unlucky as not to have the skill even to steal with taste:—But that you glean from the refuse of obscure volumes, where more judicious plagiarists have been before you; so that the body of your work is a composition of dregs and sediments—like a bad tavern's worst wine.

Sir F. Ha, ha!

Sneeer. In your more serious efforts, he says, your bombast would be less intolerable, if the thoughts were ever suited to the expression; but the homeliness of the sentiment stares through the fantastic encumbrance of its fine language, like a clown in one of the new uniforms.

Sir F. Ha, ha!

Sneeer. That your occasional tropes and flowers suit the general coarseness of your style, as tamber sprigs would a ground of linsey-woolsey; while your imitations of Shakspeare resemble the mimicry of Falstaff's page, and are about as near the standard of the original.

Sir F. Ha!—

Sneeer. In short, that even the finest passages you steal are of no service to you; for the poverty of your own language prevents their assimilating! so that they lie on the surface like lumps of marl on a barren moor, encumbering what it is not in their power to fertilize!

Sir F. [*After great agitation.*]—Now another person would be vexed at this.

Sneeer. Oh! but I wouldn't have told you, only to divert you.

Sir F. I know it—I am diverted.—Ha, ha, ha!—not the least invention!—Ha, ha, ha! very good!—very good!

Sneeer. Yes—no genius! Ha, ha, ha!

Dang. A severe rogue! Ha, ha, ha! But you are quite right, Sir Fretful, never to read such nonsense.

Sir F. To be sure—for if there is any thing to one's praise, it is a foolish vanity to be gratified at it, and if it is abuse,—why one is always sure to hear of it from one damned good natured friend or another!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Puff, Sir, has sent word, that the last rehearsal is to be this morning, and that he'll call on you presently.

Dang. That's true—I shall certainly be at home. [*Exit SERVANT.*] Now, Sir Fretful, if you have a mind to have justice done you in the way of answer—'Egad, Mr. Puff's your man.

Sir F. Pshaw! Sir, why should I wish to have it answered, when I tell you I am pleased at it?

Dang. True, I had forgot that.—But I hope you are not fretted at what Mr. Sneer—

Sir F. Zounds! no, Mr. Dangle, don't I tell you these things never fret me in the least.

Dang. Nay, I only thought—

Sir F. And let me tell you, Mr. Dangle, 'tis damned affronting in you to suppose that I am hurt, when I tell you I am not.

Sneer. But why so warm, Sir Fretful?

Sir F. Gadslife! Mr. Sneer, you are as absurd as Dangle; how often must I repeat it to you, that nothing can vex me but your supposing it possible for me to mind the damned nonsense you have been repeating to me!—and let me tell you, if you continue to believe this, you must mean to insult me, gentlemen—and then your disrespect will affect me no more than the newspaper criticisms—and I shall treat it—with exactly the same calm indifference and philosophic contempt—and so your servant.

[Exit.]

Sneer. Ha, ha, ha. Poor Sir Fretful! Now will he go and vent his philosophy in anonymous abuse of all modern critics and authors.—But, Dangle, you must get your friend Puff to take me to the rehearsal of his tragedy.

Dang. I'll answer for't, he'll thank you for desiring it.—I faith, Sneer, though, I am afraid we were a little too severe on Sir Fretful—though he is my friend.

Sneer. Why, 'tis certain, that unnecessarily to mortify the vanity of any writer, is a cruelty which mere dulness never can deserve; but where a base and personal malignity usurps the place of literary emulation, the aggressor neither deserves quarter nor pity.

Dang. That's true, 'egad!—though he's my friend!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Puff, Sir!

Dang. My dear Puff!

Enter PUFF.

Puff. My dear Dangle, how is it with you?

Dang. Mr. Sneer, give me leave to introduce Mr. Puff to you.

Puff. Mr. Sneer is this? Sir, he is a gentleman whom I have long panted for the honour of knowing—a gentleman whose critical talents and transcendent judgment—

Sneer. Dear Sir—

Dang. Nay, don't be modest, Sneer, my friend Puff only talks to you in the style of his profession.

Sneer. His profession!

Puff. Yes, Sir; I make no secret of the trade I follow—among friends and brother authors, Dangle knows I love to be frank on the subject, and to advertise myself *viva voce*.—I am, Sir, a practitioner in panegyric, or to speak more plainly—a professor of the art of puffing, at your service—or any body else's.

Sneer. Sir, you are very obliging!—I believe, Mr. Puff, I have often admired your talents in the daily prints.

Puff. Yes, Sir, I flatter myself I do as much business in that way as any six of the fraternity in town—Devilish hard work all the summer—Friend Dangle! never worked harder!—But harkye,—the winter managers were a little sore, I believe.

Dang. No—I believe they took it all in good part.

Puff. Ay!—Then that must have been affection in them; for, 'egad, there were some of the attacks which there was no laughing at.

Sneer. Ay, the humorous ones—But I should think, Mr. Puff, that authors would in general be able to do this sort of work for themselves.

Puff. Why, yes—but in a clumsy way.—Besides, we look on that as an encroachment, and so take the opposite side.—I dare say now you conceive half the very civil paragraphs and advertisements you see, to be written by the parties concerned, or their friends.—No such thing—Nine out of ten, manufactured by me in the way of business.

Sneer. Indeed!—

Puff. Even the auctioneers now—the auctioneers, I say, though the rogues have lately got some credit for their language—not an article of the merit theirs!—take them out of their pulpits, and they are as dull as catalogues!—No, Sir;—'twas I first enriched their style—'twas I first taught them to crowd their advertisements with panegyrical superlatives, each epithet rising above the other—like the bidders in their own auction-rooms! From me they learned to inlay their phraseology with variegated chips of exotic metaphor: by me too their inventive faculties were called forth.—Yes, Sir, by me they were instructed to clothe ideal walls with gratuitous fruits—to insinuate obsequious rivulets into visionary groves—to teach courteous shrubs to nod their approbation of the grateful soil! or on emergencies to raise upstart oaks, where there never had been an acorn; to create a delightful vicinage without the assistance of a neighbour; or fix the temple of Hygeia in the fens of Lincolnshire!

Dang. I am sure you have done them infinite service; for now, when a gentleman is ruined, he parts with his house with some credit.

Sneer. But pray, Mr. Puff, what first put you on exercising your talents in this way?

Puff. 'Egad, Sir—sheer necessity—the proper parent of an art so nearly allied to invention: you must know, Mr. Sneer, that from the first time I tried my hand at an advertisement, my success was such, that for some time after, I led a most extraordinary life indeed!

Sneer. How, pray?

Puff. Sir, I supported myself two years entirely by my misfortunes.

Sneer. By your misfortunes?

Puff. Yes, Sir, assisted by long sickness, and other occasional disorders; and a very comfortable living I had of it.

Sneer. From sickness and misfortunes!

Puff. Harkye! By advertisements, "To the charitable and humane!" and "To those whom Providence hath blessed with affluence!"

Sneer. Oh,—I understand you.

Puff. And, in truth, I deserved what I got; for I suppose never man went through such a series of calamities in the same space of time.—Sir, I was five times made a bankrupt, and reduced from a state of affluence, by a train of unavoidable misfortune! then, Sir, though a very industrious tradesman, I was twice burnt out, and lost my little all, both times!—I lived upon those fires a month.—I soon after was confined by a most excruciating disorder, and lost the use of my limbs!—That told very well; for I had the case strongly attested, and went about collecting the subscriptions myself.

Dang. 'Egad, I believe that was when you first called on me—

Puff. What—in November last?—O no!—I was, when I called on you, a close prisoner in the Marshalsea, for a debt benevolently contracted to serve a father!—I was afterwards twice tapped for a dropsy, which declined into a very profitable consumption!—I was then reduced to—O no—then, I became a widow with six helpless children,—after having had eleven husbands pressed, and being left every time eight months gone with child, and without money to get me into an hospital!

Sneer. And you bore all with patience, I make no doubt?

Puff. Why, yes,—though I made some occasional attempts at *felo de se*; but, as I did not find those rash actions answer, I left off killing myself very soon.—Well, Sir,—at last, what with bankruptcies, fires, gout, dropsies, imprisonments, and other valuable calamities, having got together a pretty handsome sum, I determined to quit a business which had always gone rather against my conscience, and in a more liberal way still to indulge my talents for fiction and embellishment, through my favourite channels of diurnal communication—and so, Sir, you have my history.

Sneer. Most obligingly communicative, indeed; and your confession, if published, might certainly serve the cause of true charity, by rescuing the most useful channels of appeal to benevolence from the cant of imposition.—But surely, Mr. Puff, there is no great mystery in your present profession?

Puff. Mystery! Sir, I will take upon me to say the matter was never scientifically treated, nor reduced to rule before.

Sneer. Reduced to rule?

Puff. O lud, Sir! you are very ignorant, I am afraid.—Yes, Sir,—Puffing is of various sorts:—the principal are, the Puff direct—the Puff preliminary—the Puff collateral—the Puff collusive—and the Puff oblique, or Puff by implication.—These all assume, as circumstances require, the various forms of Letter to the Editor—Occasional Anecdote—Impartial Critique—Observation from Correspondent,—or Advertisement from the Party.

Sneer. The Puff direct I can conceive.

Puff. O yes, that's simple enough,—for instance—A new comedy or farce is to be produced at one of the theatres (though by the bye they don't bring out half what they ought to do:) the author, suppose Mr. Smatter, or Mr. Dapper—or any particular friend of mine—very well; the day before it is to be performed, I write an account of the manner in which it was received—I have the plot from the author,—and only add—Characters strongly drawn—highly coloured—hand of a master—tund of genuine humour—mine of invention—neat dialogue—attic salt! Then for the performance—Mr. Dodd was astonishingly great in the character of Sir Harry! That universal and judicious actor, Mr. Palmer, perhaps never appeared to more advantage than in the colonel; but it is not in the power of language to do justice to Mr. King.—Indeed he more than merited those repeated bursts of applause which he drew from a most brilliant and judicious audience! As to the scenery—The miraculous powers of Mr. De Louthburgh's pencil are universally acknowledged!—In short, we are at a loss which to admire most,—the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers

—the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers!—

Sneer. That's pretty well, indeed, Sir.

Puff. O cool—quite cool—to what I sometimes do.

Sneer. And do you think there are any who are influenced by this?

Puff. O, lud! yes, Sir;—the number of those who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed!

Sneer. Well, Sir—the Puff preliminary?

Puff. O that, Sir, does well in the form of a caution.—In a matter of gallantry now—Sir Flimsy Gossimer wishes to be well with Lady Fanny Fete—He applies to me—I open trenches for him with a paragraph in the Morning Post.—It is recommended to the beautiful and accomplished Lady F four stars F dash E to be on her guard against that dangerous character, Sir F dash G; who, however pleasing and insinuating his manners may be, is certainly not remarkable for the constancy of his attachments!—in Italics.—Here you see, Sir Flimsy Gossimer is introduced to the particular notice of Lady Fanny—who perhaps never thought of him before—she finds herself publicly cautioned to avoid him, which naturally makes her desirous of seeing him;—the observation of their acquaintance causes a pretty kind of mutual embarrassment, this produces a sort of sympathy of interest—which, if Sir Flimsy is unable to improve effectually, he at least gains the credit of having their names mentioned together, by a particular set, and in a particular way,—which, nine times out of ten, is the full accomplishment of modern gallantry.

Dang. 'Egad, Sneer, you will be quite an adept in business.

Puff. Now, Sir, the Puff collateral is much used as an appendage to advertisements, and may take the form of anecdote.—Yesterday, as the celebrated George Bon-Mot was sauntering down St. James' street, he met the lively Lady Mary Myrtle, coming out of the Park.—“Good God, Lady Mary, I'm surprised to meet you in a white jacket,—for I expected never to have seen you, but in a full trimmed uniform and a light-horse man's cap!”—“Heavens, George, where could you have learned that?”—“Why,” replied the wit, “I just saw a print of you in a new publication called the Camp Magazine, which by the bye is a devilish clever thing,—and is sold at No. 3 on the right-hand of the way, two doors from the printing-office, the corner of Ivy-lane, Paternoster-row, price only one shilling!”

Sneer. Very ingenious, indeed!

Puff. But the Puff collusive is the newest of any; for it acts in the disguise of determined hostility.—It is much used by bold booksellers and enterprising poets.—An indignant correspondent observes—that the new poem called Beelzebub's Cotillon, or Proserpine's Fete Champetre, is one of the most unjustifiable performances he ever read! The severity with which certain characters are handled is quite shocking! And as there are many descriptions in it too warmly coloured for female delicacy, the shameful avidity with which this piece is bought by all people of fashion, is a reproach on the taste of the times, and a disgrace to the delicacy of the age!—Here you see the two strongest inducements are held forth:—First, that nobody ought to read it;—and, secondly, that every body buys it: on the strength of which, the

publisher boldly prints the tenth edition, before he had sold ten of the first; and then establishes it by threatening himself with the pillory, or absolutely indicting himself for *scan. mag.*!

Dang. Ha, ha, ha!—'egad, I know it is so.

Puff. As to the Puff oblique, or Puff by implication, it is too various and extensive to be illustrated by an instance; it branches into many varieties, that it is the last principal class of the art of puffing—An art which I hope you will now agree with me, is of the highest dignity.—

Sneer. Sir, I am completely a convert both to the importance and ingenuity of your profession; and now, Sir, there is but one thing which can possibly increase my respect for you, and that is your permitting me to be present this morning at the rehearsal of your new tragedy—

Puff.—Hush, for Heaven's sake.—My tragedy!—'Egad, I take this very ill—you know how apprehensive I am of being known to be the author.

Dang. I 'faith I would not have told—but it's in the papers, and your name at length—in the Morning Chronicle.

Puff. Ah! those damned editors never can keep a secret!—Well, Mr. Sneer—no doubt you will do me great honour—I shall be infinitely happy—highly flattered—

Dang. I believe it must be near the time—shall we go together?

Puff. No; it will not be yet this hour, for they are always late at that theatre: besides, I must meet you there, for I have some little matters here to send to the papers, and a few paragraphs to scribble before I go. [*Looking at memorandums.*]—Here is "a Conscientious Baker, on the Subject of the Army Bread;" and "a Detester of visible Brick-work, in favour of the new invented Stucco;" both in the style of Junius, and promised for to-morrow.—The Thames Navigation too is at a stand.—Misonud or Anti-shoal must go to work again directly.—Here too are some political memorandums, I see; ay—to take Paul Jones, and get the Indiamen out of the Shannon—reinforce Byron—compel the Dutch to—so! I must do that in the evening papers, or reserve it for the Morning Herald, for I know that I have undertaken to-morrow, besides, to establish the unanimity of the fleet in the Public Advertiser, and to shoot Charles Fox in the Morning Post.—'egad, I ha'n't a moment to lose!

Dang. Well!—we'll meet in the green-room.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Theatre.

DANGLE, PUFF, and SNEER, as before the curtain.

Puff. No, no, Sir; what Shakspeare says of actors may be better applied to the purpose of plays; they ought to be "the abstract and brief chronicles of the times." Therefore when history, and particularly the history of our own country, furnishes any thing like a case in point, to the time in which an author writes, if he knows his own interest, he will take advantage of it; so, Sir, I call my tragedy The Spanish Armada; and have laid the scene before Tilbury Fort.

Sneer. A most happy thought, certainly!

Dang. 'Egad it was—I told you so.—But pray now I don't understand how you have contrived to introduce any love into it.

Puff. Love!—Oh nothing so easy: for it is a received point among poets, that where history gives you a good heroic outline for a play, you may fill up with a little love at your own discretion: in doing which, nine times out of ten, you only make up a deficiency in the private history of the times. Now I rather think I have done this with some success.

Sneer. No scandal about queen Elizabeth, I hope?

Puff. O, lud! no, no.—I only suppose the governor of Tilbury Fort's daughter to be in love with the son of the Spanish admiral.

Sneer. O, is that all?

Dang. Excellent, i'faith! I see it at once.—But wou't this appear rather improbable?

Puff. To be sure it will—but what the plague! a play is not to show occurrences that happen every day, but things just so strange, that though they never did, they might happen.

Sneer. Certainly nothing is unnatural, that is not physically impossible.

Puff. Very true—and for that matter Don Ferolo Whiskerandos—for that's the lover's name, might have been over here in the train of the Spanish ambassador; or Tilburina, for that is the lady's name, might have been in love with him, from having heard his character, or seen his picture; or from knowing that he was the last man in the world she ought to be in love with—or for any other good female reason.—However, Sir, the fact is, that though she is but a knight's daughter, 'egad! she is in love like any princess!—her poor susceptible heart is swayed to and fro, by contending passions like—

Enter UNDER PROMPTER.

Under Prom. Sir, the scene is set, and every thing is ready to begin, if you please.—

Puff. 'Egad; then we'll lose no time.

Under Prom. Though I believe, Sir, you will find it very short, for all the performers have profited by the kind permission you gave them.

Puff. Hey! what!

Under Prom. You know, Sir, you gave them leave to cut out or omit whatever they found heavy or unnecessary to the plot; and I must own they have taken very liberal advantage of your indulgence.

Puff. Well, well.—They are in general very good judges; and I know I am luxurious.—Now, Mr. Hopkins, as soon as you please.

Under Prom. to Music. Gentlemen, will you play a few bars of something, just to—

Puff. Ay, that's right,—for as we have the scenes and dresses, 'egad, we'll go to't, as if it was the first night's performance;—[*Exit UNDER PROMPTER; Orchestra play; then the bell rings.*] Soh! stand clear, gentlemen.—Now you know there will be a cry of down!—down!—hats off!—silence!—Then, up curtain,—and let's see what our painters have done for us.

SCENE II.—Tilbury Fort.

Two SENTINELS asleep.

Dang. Tilbury Fort!—very fine indeed!

Puff. Now, what do you think I open with?

Sneer. Faith, I can't guess—

Puff. A clock—

Sneer. A clock!

Puff. Hark!—[*Clock strikes.*] I open with a clock striking, to beget an awful attention in the

audience—it also marks the time, which is four o'clock in the morning, and saves a description of the rising sun, and a great deal about gilding the eastern hemisphere.

Dang. But, pray, are the sentinels to be asleep?

Puff. Fast as watchmen.

Sneer. Isn't that odd though at such an alarming crisis?

Puff. To be sure it is,—but smaller things must give way to a striking scene at the opening; that's a rule.—And the case is, that two great men are coming to this very spot to begin the piece; now, it is not to be supposed they would open their lips, if these fellows were watching them; so, 'egad, I must either have sent them off their posts, or set them asleep.

Sneer. O that accounts for it!—But tell us, who are these coming?

Puff. These are they—Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Christopher Hatton.—You'll know Sir Christopher, by his turning out his toes—famous you know for his dancing. I like to preserve all the little traits of character.—Now attend.

“Enter SIR WALTER RALEIGH and SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON.

“Sir C. True, gallant Raleigh!”—

Dang. What, they had been talking before?

Puff. O yes; all the way as they came along.—I beg pardon, gentlemen, [*To the Actors.*] but these are particular friends of mine, whose remarks may be of great service to us.—Don't mind interrupting them whenever any thing strikes you. [*To SNEER and DANGLE.*

“Sir C. True, gallant Raleigh!

But O, thou champion of thy country's fame, There is a question which I yet must ask; A question, which I never ask'd before— What mean these mighty armaments?

This general muster? and this throng of chiefs?”

Sneer. Pray, Mr. Puff, how came Sir Christopher Hatton never to ask that question before?

Puff. What, before the play began? how the plague could he?

Dang. That's true, i'faith!

Puff. But you will hear what he thinks of the matter.

“Sir C. Alas, my noble friend——”

Puff. Sir Christopher, pray turn out your toes. Sir Christopher Hatton was famous for dancing well.

“Sir C. When I behold

Yon tented plains in martial symmetry Array'd—When I count o'er yon glittering lines Of crested warriors,—

When briefly all I hear or see bears stamp Of martial vigilance, and stern defiance, I cannot but surmise,—forgive me, friend, If the conjecture's rash—I cannot but Surmise—the state some danger apprehends!”

Sneer. A very cautious conjecture that.

Puff. Yes, that's his character; not to give an opinion, but on secure grounds—now then.

“Sir W. O, most accomplish'd Christopher.—”

Puff. He calls him by his Christian name, to show that they are on the most familiar terms.

“Sir W. O, most accomplish'd Christopher, I Thy fears are just. [find

“Sir C. But where? whence? when? and what The danger is—Methinks I fain would learn.

“Sir W. You know, my friends, scarce two revolving suns,

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And three revolving moons, have closed their course,

Since haughty Philip, in despite of peace, With hostile hand hath struck at England's trade.

“Sir C. I know it well.

“Sir W. Philip, you know is proud Iberia's

“Sir C. He is. [king!

“Sir W. —His subjects in base bigotry And Catholic oppression held—while we, You know, the Protestant persuasion hold.

“Sir C. We do. [ment,

“Sir W. You know besides—his boasted armada—The fam'd armada—by the pope baptized, With purpose to invade these realms——

“Sir C. —Is sailed,

Our last advices so report.

“Sir W. While the Iberian admiral's chief His darling son, by chance a pris'ner hath been And in this fort of Tilbury—— [ta'en,

“Sir C. —Is now

Confin'd.

“Sir W. You also know——”

Dang. Mr. Puff, as he knows all this, why does Sir Walter go on telling him?

Puff. But the audience are not supposed to know any thing of the matter, are they?

Sneer. True, but I think you manage ill: for there certainly appears no reason why Sir Walter should be so communicative.

Puff. 'Egad, now, that is one of the most ungrateful observations I ever heard; for the less inducement he has to tell all this, the more, I think, you ought to be obliged to him; for I am sure you'd know nothing of the matter without.

Dang. That's very true, upon my word.

Puff. But you will find he was not going on.

“Sir C. Enough, enough—'tis plain—and I no Am in amazement lost!——” [more

Puff. Here, now you see, Sir Christopher did not in fact ask any one question for his own information.

Sneer. No indeed;—his has been a most disinterested curiosity!

Dang. Really, I find, we are very much obliged to them both.

Puff. To be sure, you are. Now then for the commander-in-chief, the earl of Leicester! who, you know, was no favourite but of the queen's— We left off—“in amazement lost!”

“Sir C. Am in amazement lost.

But, see where noble Leicester comes! supreme In honours and command.”

Sneer. But who are these with him?

Puff. O! very valiant knights; one is the governor of the fort, the other the master of the horse.—And now, I think, you shall hear some better language: I was obliged to be plain and intelligible in the first scene, because there was so much matter of fact in it; but now, i'faith, you have trope, figure, and metaphor, as plenty as noun substantives.

“Enter EARL OF LEICESTER, the GOVERNOR, and others.

“Leic. How's this, my friend! is't thus your new-fledg'd zeal

And plumed valour moulds in roosted sloth? Can the quick current of a patriot heart, Thus stagnate in a cold and weedy converse, Or freeze in tideless inactivity? No! rather let the fountain of your valour Spring through each stream of enterprise,

Each petty channel of conducive daring;
Till the full torrent of your foaming wrath
O'erwhelm the flats of sunk hostility!

"Sir C. No more! the fresh'ning breath of
thy rebuke

Hath fill'd the swelling canvass of our souls!
And thus, though fate should cut the cable of
Our topmost hopes, in friendship's closing line

[Take hands.

We'll grapple with despair, and if we fall,
We'll fall in glory's wake.

"Leic. There spoke old England's genius!

Then, are we all resolved!

"All. We are—all resolved!

"Leic. To conquer—or be free?

"All. To conquer—or be free.

"Leic. All?

"All. All."

Dang. *Nem. con.* 'egad!

Puff. O yes, where they do agree on the stage,
their unanimity is wonderful!

"Leic. Then, let's embrace—and now——"

Sneer. What the plague, is he going to pray?

Puff. Yes, hush!—in great emergencies, there
is nothing like a prayer!

"Leic. O mighty Mars!—"

Puff. Stop, my dear Sir, you don't expect to
find Mars there. No, Sir, whenever you address
the gods, always look into the one-shilling gallery.

"Leic. O mighty Mars!—"

Dang. Why should he pray to Mars?

Puff. Hush!

"Leic. O mighty Mars! if in thy homage bred,
Each point of discipline, I've still observ'd,
Nor but by due promotion, and the right
Of service, to the rank of major-general
Have ris'n; assist thy votary now!

"Gov. Yet do not rise—hear me!

"Master of Horse. And me!

"Knight. And me!

"Sir W. And me!

"Sir C. And me!"

Puff. And me! Now, mind your hits, pray all
together.

"All. Behold thy votaries submissive beg,
That thou wilt deign to grant them all they
ask——"

Puff. Give 'em a longer all, next time.

"All. Assist them to accomplish all their ends,
And sanctify whatever means they use
To gain them!"

Sneer. A very orthodox quintetto!

Puff. Vastly well, gentlemen.—Is that well
managed or not? have you such a prayer as that
on the stage?

Sneer. Not exactly.

Leic. [To Puff.] But, Sir, you haven't set-
tled how we are to get off here.

Puff. You could not get off kneeling, could
you?

Sir W. [To Puff.] O no, Sir! impossible!

Puff. It would have a good effect, i'faith, if
you could exeunt praying!—Yes, and would vary
the established mode of springing off with a glance
at the pit. Just try.

Sneer. O never mind, so as you get them off,
I'll answer for it the audience wont care how.

Puff. Well then, repeat the last line standing,
and go off the old way.

"All. And sanctify whatever means we use to
gain them."

Dang. Bravo! a fine exit.

Sneer. Stay a moment.—

[*"The SENTINELS get up."*

"1 Sent. All this shall to Lord Burleigh's ear.

"2 Sent. 'Tis meet it should.

[*Exeunt SENTINELS."*

Dang. Hey, why I thought those fellows had
been asleep.

Puff. Only a pretence, there's the art of it:
they were spies of Lord Burleigh's. Take care,
my dear Dangle, the morning gun is going to fire.

Dang. Well, that will have a fine effect.

Puff. I think so, and helps to realize the scene.
—[*Cannon thres times.*] What the plague!—
three morning guns!—there never is but one!—
ay, this is always the way at the theatre—give
these fellows a good thing, and they never know
when to have done with it. You have no more
cannon to fire?

Prom. [*From within.*] No, Sir.

Puff. Now then, for soft music.

Sneer. Pray what's that for?

Puff. It shows that Tilburina is coming; no-
thing introduces you a heroine like soft music.—
Here she comes.

Dang. And her confidante, I suppose?

Puff. To be sure: here they are—inconsolable,
to the minuet in Ariadne! [*Soft music.*

"Enter TILBURINA and CONFIDANTE.

"Til. Now flowers unfold their beauties to the
sun, [them]

And, blushing, kiss the beam he sends to wake
The striped carnation, and the guarded rose,
The vulgar wallflower, and smart gillyflower,
The polyanthus mean—the dapper daisy,
Sweet-William, and sweet marjorum,—and all
The tribe of single and of double pinks!
Now too, the feather'd warblers tune their notes
Around, and charm the listening grove!—The
lark! [greenfinch!]

The linnet! chaffinch! bullfinch! goldfinch!

—But, oh, to me, no joy can they afford!

Nor rose, nor wallflower, nor smart gillyflower,

Nor polyanthus mean, nor dapper daisy,

Nor William sweet, nor marjorum—nor lark,

Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove!"

Puff. Your white handkerchief, Madam—

Til. I thought, Sir, I wasn't to use that till
"heart rending wo."

Puff. O yes, Madam—at "the finches of the
grove," if you please.

"Til. Nor lark,

Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove! [*Weeps.*

Puff. Vastly well, Madam!

Dang. Vastly well, indeed!

"Til. For, O too sure, heart rending wo is
The lot of wretched Tilburina!" [now

Dang. O!—'tis too much.

Sneer. Oh!—it is indeed.

"Con. Be comforted, sweet lady—for who
knows, [store.

But Heaven has yet some milk-white day in
"Til. Alas, my gentle Nora,

Thy tender youth, as yet, hath never mourn'd
Love's fatal dart.

"Con. But see where your stern father comes;
It is not meet that he should find you thus."

Puff. Hey, what the plague! what a cut is
here!—why, what is become of the description of
her first meeting with Don Whiskerandos? his
gallant behaviour in the sea-fight, and the simile
of the canary bird?

Til. Indeed, Sir, you'll find they will not be miss'd.

Puff. Very well.—Very well!

Til. The cue, Ma'am, if you please.

Con. It is not meet that he should find you thus

Til. Thou counsel'st right, but 'tis no easy task
For barefac'd grief to wear a mask of joy.

Enter GOVERNOR.

Gov. How's this—in tears?—O Tilburina, shame!

Is this a time for maudling tenderness,
And Cupid's baby woes?—hast thou not heard
That haughty Spain's pope-consecrated fleet
Advances to our shores, while England's fate,
Like a clipp'd guinea, trembles in the scale!

Til. Then is the crisis of my fate at hand!
I see the fleet's approach,—I see—

Puff. Now pray, gentlemen, mind.—This is one of the most useful figures we tragedy writers have, by which a hero or heroine, in consideration of their being often obliged to overlook things that are on the stage, is allowed to hear and see a number of things that are not.

Sneer. Yes—a kind of poetical second-sight!

Puff. Yes—now then, Madam.

Til. I see their decks

Are clear'd!—I see the signal made!
The line is form'd!—a cable's length asunder!
I see the frigates station'd in the rear;
And now I hear the thunder of the guns!
I hear the victor's shouts—I also hear
The vanquish'd groans!—and now 'tis smoke
—and now

I see the loose sails shiver in the wind!

I see—I see—what soon you'll see—

Gov. Hold, daughter! peace! this love hath turn'd thy brain:

The Spanish fleet thou canst not see—because
—It is not yet in sight!

Dang. 'Egad though, the governor seems to make no allowance for this poetical figure you talk of.

Puff. No, a plain matter-of-fact man—that's his character.

Til. But will you then refuse his offer?

Gov. I must—I will—I can—I ought—I do.

Til. His liberty is all he asks.

Sneer. All who asks, Mr. Puff? Who is—

Puff. 'Egad, Sir, I can't tell—Here has been such cutting and slashing, I don't know where they have got to, myself.

Til. Indeed, Sir, you will find it will connect very well.

Puff. Oh,—if they hadn't been so devilish free with their cutting here, you would have found that Don Whiskerandos has been tampering for his liberty—and now pray observe the conciseness with which the argument is conducted. 'Egad, the *pro* and *con* goes as smart as hits in a fencing match. It is indeed a sort of small-sword logic, which we have borrowed from the French.

Til. A retreat in Spain!

Gov. —Outlawry here!

Til. Your daughter's prayer!

Gov. —Your father's oath!

Til. My lover!

Gov. —My country!

Til. Tilburina!

Gov. —England!

Til. A title!

Gov. —Honour!

Til. A pension!

Gov. —Conscience!

Til. A thousand pounds!

Gov. Hah! thou hast touched me nearly!"

Puff. There you see—she threw in Tilburina. Quick, parry *carte* with England!—Hah! thrust in *tierce*, a title! parried by honour.—Hah! a pension over the arm! put by, by conscience.—Then *flanconade* with a thousand pounds—and a palpable hit, 'egad!

Til. Canst thou—

Reject the suppliant, and the daughter too?

Gov. No more; I would not hear thee plead in vain,

The father softens—but the governor

Is fix'd!

Til. 'Tis well,—hence then, fond hopes,—fond passion, hence;

Duty, behold, I am all over thine— [my—

Whisk. [Without.] Where is my love—

Til. —Ha!

Whisk. [Entering.] My beauteous enemy—

My conquering Tilburina? How! is't thus
We meet? why are thy looks averse? what means
That falling tear—that frown of boding woe?
Hah! now indeed I am a prisoner!

Yes, now I feel the galling weight of these
Disgraceful chains—which, cruel Tilburina!
Thy doting captive gloried in before.—

But thou art false, and Whiskerandos is undone!

Til. O no; how little dost thou know thy Tilburina!

Whisk. Art thou then true? Be gone, cares, doubts, and fears,

I make you all a present to the winds;
And if the winds reject you—try the waves."

Puff. The wind, you know, is the established receiver of all stolen sighs, and cast-off griefs and apprehensions.

Til. Yet must we part?—stern duty seals our doom:

Though here I call yon conscious clouds to witness,
Could I pursue the bias of my soul,
All friends, all right of parents, I'd disclaim,
And thou, my Whiskerandos, should be father,
And mother, brother, cousin, uncle, aunt,
And friend to me! [we part?]

Whisk. O matchless excellence!—and must
Well, if—we must—we must—and in that
The less is said the better." [case]

Puff. Hey-day! here's a cut!—What, are all the mutual protestations out?

Til. Now pray, Sir, don't interrupt us just here, you ruin our feelings.

Puff. Your feelings!—but zounds, my feelings, Ma'am!

Whisk. One last embrace.—

Til. Now,—farewell, for ever.

Whisk. For ever!

Til. Ay, for ever.

Puff. 'Sdeath and fury!—Gads-life! Sir! Madam, if you go out without the parting look, you might as well dance out—Here, here!

Con. But pray, Sir, how am I to get off here?

Puff. You, pshaw! what the devil signifies how you get off! edge away at the top, or where you will—[Pushes the CONFIDANTE off.] Now, Ma'am, you see—

Til. We understand you, Sir.

Ay, for ever.

"Both. Oh!"

[Turning back and exeunt; scene closes.]

Dang. O charming!

Puff. Hey! 'tis pretty well, I believe—you see, I don't attempt to strike out any thing new—but I take it I improve on the established modes. So, now for the under plot.

Sneer. What the plague, have you another plot?

Puff. O Lord, yes—ever while you live, have two plots to your tragedy.—The grand point in managing them, is only to let your under plot have as little connexion with your main plot as possible.—Now, Mr. Hopkins, as soon as you please.

Enter UNDER PROMPTER.

Under Prom. Sir, the carpenter says it is impossible you can go to the park-scene yet.

Puff. The park-scene! No—I mean the description scene here, in the wood.

Under Prom. Sir, the performers have cut it out.

Puff. Cut it out?

Under Prom. Yes, Sir.

Puff. What! the whole account of queen Elizabeth?

Under Prom. Yes, Sir.

Puff. And the description of her horse and side-saddle?

Under Prom. Yes, Sir.

Puff. So, so, this is very fine indeed! Mr. Hopkins, how the plague could you suffer this?

Hop. [From within.] Sir, indeed, the pruning-knife—

Puff. The pruning-knife—zounds, the axe! why, here has been such lopping and topping, I sha'n't have the bare trunk of my play left presently.—Very well, Sir—the performers must do as they please; but, upon my soul, I'll print it every word.

Sneer. That I would, indeed.

Puff. So! this is a pretty dilemma, truly!—Gentlemen—you must excuse me, these fellows will never be ready, unless I go and look after them myself.

Sneer. O dear Sir—these little things will happen—

Puff. To cut out this scene!—but I'll print it—egad, I'll print it every word! [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Before the Curtain.

Enter PUFF, SNEER, and DANGLE.

Puff. Well, we are ready—now then for the justices.

Curtain rises; JUSTICES, CONSTABLES, &c. discovered.

Sneer. This, I suppose, is a sort of senate scene?

Puff. Yes.—What, gentlemen, do you mean to go at once to the discovery scene?

Just. If you please, Sir.

Puff. O very well—harkye, I don't choose to say any thing more, but, i'faith, they have mangled my play in a most shocking manner!

Dang. It's a great pity!

Puff. Now then, Mr. Justice, if you please.

Just. Are all the volunteers without?

Const. They are, some ten in fetters, and some twenty drunk.

Just. Attends the youth, whose most opprobrious fame [soldier?]

And clear convicted crimes have stamp'd him

Const. He waits your pleasure, eager to repay

The bless'd reprieve that sends him to the fields

Of glory, there to raise his branded hand

In honour's cause.

Just. 'Tis well—

If 'tis your worship's pleasure, bid him enter.

Const. I fly, the herald of your will.

[Exit CONST.]

Puff. Quick, Sir!

Sneer. But, Mr. Puff, I think not only the justice, but the clown, seems to talk in as high a style as the first hero among them.

Puff. Heaven forbid they should not, in a free country!—Sir, I am not for making slavish distinctions, and giving all the fine language to the upper sort of people.

Dang. That's very noble in you, indeed.

Enter JUSTICE'S LADY.

Lady. Forgive this interruption, good my love;

But, as I just now pass'd a pris'n'er youth,

Whom rude hands hither lead, strange bodings seiz'd

My fluttering heart, and to myself I said,

An' if our Tom had liv'd, he'd surely been

This stripling's height! [rects]

Just. Ha! sure some powerful sympathy divides both—

Enter SON and CONSTABLE.

What is thy name?

Son. My name's Tom Jenkins—*alias*, have Though orphan'd, and without a friend!

Just. Thy parents?

Son. My father dwelt in Rochester—and As I have heard—a fishmonger—no more. [was]

Puff. What, Sir, do you leave out the account of your birth, parentage, and education?

Son. They have settled it so, Sir, here.

Puff. Oh! oh!

Lady. Had he no other name?

Son. I've seen a bill

Of his, sign'd Tomkins, creditor.

Just. This does indeed confirm each circumstance. The gipsy told!—Prepare! [stance]

Son. I do.

Just. No orphan, nor without a friend, art thou—

I am thy father, here's thy mother, there

Thy uncle—this thy first cousin, and those

Are all your near relations!

Mother. O ecstasy of bliss!

Son. O most unlook'd for happiness!

[They faint alternately in each others' arms.]

Puff. There, you see relationship, like murder, will out.

Just. Now, let's revive—else were this joy too much!

But come—and we'll unfold the rest within,

And thou, my boy, must needs want rest and food.

Hence may each orphan hope, as chance directs,

To find a father—where he least expects!

[Exeunt.]

Puff. What do you think of that?

Dang. One of the finest discovery scenes I ever saw.—Why, this under plot would have made a tragedy itself.

Sneer. Ay, or a comedy either.

Puff. And keeps quite clear, you see, of the other.

Enter SCENEMAN, taking away the seats.

Puff. The scene remains, does it?

Scenem. Yes, Sir.

Puff. You are to leave one chair, you know.—But it is always awkward in a tragedy, to have you fellows coming in, in your playhouse liveries, to remove things—I wish that could be managed better.

“Enter a BEEFEATER.

“Beef. Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee.”

Sneer. Haven't I heard that line before?

Puff. No, I fancy not—Where, pray?

Dang. Yes, I think there is something like it in Othello.

Puff. 'Gad? now you put me in mind on't, I believe there is—but that's of no consequence—all that can be said is, that two people happened to hit on the same thought—and Shakspeare made use of it first, that's all.

Sneer. Very true.

Puff. Now, Sir, your soliloquy—but speak more to the pit, if you please—the soliloquy always to the pit—that's a rule.

“Beef. Though hopeless love finds comfort in despair,

It never can endure a rival's bliss!

But soft—I am observ'd. [*Exit BEEFEATER.*”

Dang. That's a very short soliloquy.

Puff. Yes—but it would have been a great deal longer, if he had not been observed.

Sneer. A most sentimental beefeater that, Mr. Puff.

Puff. Harkye—I would not have you be too sure he is a beefeater.

Sneer. What, a hero in disguise?

Puff. No matter—I only give you a hint—But now for my principal character—Here he comes—Lord Burleigh in person! Pray, gentlemen, step this way—softly—if he is but perfect!

Enter BURLEIGH, goes slowly to the chair, and sits.

Sneer. Mr. Puff!

Puff. Hush! vastly well, Sir! vastly well! a most interesting gravity!

Dang. What, isn't he to speak at all?

Puff. 'Egad, I thought you'd ask me that—yes, it is a very likely thing—that a minister in his situation, with the whole affairs of the nation on his head, should have time to talk!—but, hush! or you'll put him out.

Sneer. Put him out! how the plague can that be, if he's not going to say any thing?

Puff. There's a reason! why his part is to think, and how the plague do you imagine he can think if you keep talking?

Dang. That's very true, upon my word!

[*BURLEIGH comes forward, shakes his head, and exit.*

Sneer. He is very perfect, indeed—Now, pray what did he mean by that?

Puff. You don't take it?

Sneer. No; I don't, upon my soul.

Puff. Why, by that shake of the head, he gave you to understand that even though they had more justice in their cause, and wisdom in their measures—yet, if there was not a greater spirit shown on the part of the people—the country would at

last fall a sacrifice to the hostile ambition of the Spanish monarchy.

Sneer. The devil!—did he mean all that by shaking his head?

Puff. Every word of it—If he shook his head as I taught him.

Sneer. O, here are some of our old acquaintance.

“Enter HATTON and RALEIGH.

“Sir C. My niece, and your niece too? By heaven! there's witchcraft in't—He could not else

Have gain'd their hearts. But see where they approach;

Some horrid purpose low'ring on their brows!

“Sir W. Let us withdraw, and mark them.

[*Withdraw.*”

Sneer. What is all this?

Puff. Ah! here has been more pruning!—but the fact is, these two young ladies are also in love with Don Whiskerandos.—Now, gentlemen, this scene goes entirely for what we call situation and stage effect, by which the greatest applause may be obtained, without the assistance of language, sentiment, or character: pray, mark!

“Enter the two NIECES.

“1 Niece. Ellena here!

But see the proud destroyer of my peace.

Revenge is all the good I've left. [*Aside.*

“2 Niece. He comes, the false disturber of my quiet.

Now, vengeance, do thy worst— [*Aside.*

“Enter WHISKERANDOS.

“Whisk. O hateful liberty—if thus in vain I seek my Tilburina!

“Both Nieces. And ever shalt!

“[Sir C. and Sir W. come forward.] Hold! we will avenge you.

“Whisk. Hold you—or see your nieces bleed.—

“[The two Nieces draw their two daggers to strike Whiskerandos, the two Uncles at the instant with their two swords drawn catch their two Nieces' arms, and turn the points of their swords to Whiskerandos, who immediately draws two daggers, and holds them to the two Nieces' bosoms.]”

Puff. There's situation for you! there's an heroic group!—you see the ladies can't stab Whiskerandos—he durst not strike them for fear of their uncles—the uncles durst not kill him because of their nieces—I have them all at the dead lock!—for every one of them is afraid to let go first.

Sneer. Why, then they must stand there for ever.

Puff. So they would, if I hadn't a very fine contrivance for't—Now mind—

“Enter BEEFEATER, with his halberd.

“Beef. In the queen's name, I charge you all to drop

Your swords and daggers!

[*They drop their swords and daggers.*”

Sneer. This is a contrivance indeed.

Puff. Ay—in the queen's name.

“Sir C. Come, niece!

“Sir W. Come, niece!

[*Exeunt with the two NIECES.*

"Whisk. What's he, who bids us thus renounce our guard?"

"Beef. Thou must do more—renounce thy love!"

"Whisk. Thou liest—base beefeater!"

"Beef. Ha! Hell! the lie."

By Heaven, thou'st rous'd the lion in my heart! Off, yeoman habit!—base disguise! off! off!

[Discovers himself, by throwing off his upper dress, and appearing in a very fine waistcoat.

Am I a beefeater now?

Or beams my crest as terrible, as when In Biscay's Bay I took thy captive sloop!"

Puff. There, egad! he comes out to be the very captain of the privateer who had taken Whiskerandos prisoner—and was himself an old lover of Tilburina's.

Dang. Admirably managed, indeed.

Puff. Now, stand out of the way.

"Whisk. I thank thee, fortune! that hast thus bestow'd

A weapon to chastise this insolent.

[Takes up one of the swords.

"Beef. I take thy challenge, Spaniard, and I thank

Thee, fortune, too!—[Takes up the other sword.

"Whisk. Vengeance and Tilburina!"

"Beef. Exactly so—"

[They fight, and after the usual number of wounds given, WHISKERANDOS falls.

"Whisk. O cursed parry!—that last thrust in tierce

Was fatal!—Captain, thou hast fenced well!

And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene

For all eter—"

"Beef. —nity—he would have added, but stern death

Cut short his being, and the noun, at once!"

Puff. O my dear Sir, you are too slow; now mind me.—Sir, shall I trouble you to die again?

"Whisk. And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene

For all eter—"

"Beef. —nity—he would have added—"

Puff. No, Sir—that's not it—once more, if you please.

Whisk. I wish, Sir—you would practise this without me—I can't stay dying here all night.

Puff. Very well, we'll go over it by and by—I must humour these gentlemen.

[Exit WHISKERANDOS.

"Beef. Farewell—brave Spaniard, and when next—"

Puff. Dear Sir, you needn't speak that speech, as the body has walked off.

Beef. That's true, Sir—then I'll join the fleet.

Puff. If you please. [Exit BEEFEATER.] Now, enter Tilburina, stark mad, in white satin.

Sneer. Why in white satin?

Puff. O Lord, Sir—when a heroine goes mad; she always goes into white satin—don't she, Dangle?

Dang. Always—it's a rule.

Puff. Yes—here it is—[Looking at the book.] enter Tilburina, stark mad in white satin, and her confidante stark mad in white linen.

Enter TILBURINA and CONFIDANTE mad, according to custom.

Sneer. But what the deuce, is the confidante to be mad too?

Puff. To be sure, she is: the confidante is always to do whatever her mistress does; weep when she weeps, smile when she smiles, go mad when she goes mad.—Now, Madam Confidante—but keep your madness in the back ground, if you please.

"Til. The wind whistles—the moon rises —see

They have kill'd my squirrel in his cage!

Is this a grasshopper?—Ha! no, it is my

Whiskerandos—you shall not keep him—

I know you have him in your pocket—

An oyster may be cross'd in love!—Who says

A whale's a bird!—Ha! did you call, my love?

—He's here! He's there!—He's every where!

Ah me! He's no where! [Exit TILBURINA.]

Puff. There, do you ever desire to see any body madder than that?

Sneer. Never, while I live! And pray what becomes of her?

Puff. She is gone to throw herself into the sea, to be sure—and that brings us at once to the scene of action, and so to my catastrophe—my sea-fight, I mean.

Sneer. What, you bring that in at last?

Puff. Yes—yes—you know my play is called the Spanish Armada, otherwise, egad, I have no occasion for the battle at all.—Now then for my magnificence,—my battle!—my noise!—and my procession!—You are all ready?

Prom. [Within.] Yes, Sir.

Puff. Is the Thames dressed?

"Enter THAMES, with two Attendants.

"Thames. Here I am, Sir."

Puff. Very well, indeed—See, gentlemen, there's a river for you!

Sneer. But, pray, who are these gentlemen in green with him?

Puff. Those?—those are his banks.

Sneer. His banks?

Puff. Yes, one crowned with alders, and the other with a villa!—you take the allusions? but, hey! what the plague! you have got both your banks on one side—Here, Sir, come round—Ever while you live, Thames, go between your banks. [Bell rings.]—There, soh! now for't!—Stand aside, my dear friends!—away, Thames!

[Exit THAMES, between his banks.

[Flourish of drums, trumpets, cannon, &c. &c.—scene changes to the sea—the fleets engage—the music plays "Britons, strike Home."—Spanish fleet destroyed by fire ships, &c.—English fleet advances—music plays "Rule Britannia."—The procession of all the English rivers and their tributaries, with their emblems, &c. begins with Handel's water-music, ends with a chorus, to the march in Judas Maccabæus.—During this scene, Puff directs and applauds every thing—then

Puff. Well, pretty well—but not quite perfect—so, ladies and gentlemen, if you please, we'll rehearse this piece again to-morrow.

[Curtain drops

OROONOKO:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY THOMAS SOUTHERN.

REMARKS.

THE circumstance on which the better part of this drama is founded, is said to have actually occurred during the reign of Charles II. at Surinam, where an African prince, entrapped by the "mild subjects of a Christian king and a Christian government," was brought and sold to slavery.

Oroonoko excites the warmest sympathy of his auditors; his love for Imoinda is tender, manly, noble, and unpolluted; his firmness and resolution, truly heroic.

The loose and trivial nature of the comic characters, in which Southern has unfortunately yielded to the corrupt taste of the age wherein he wrote, has hitherto prevented the attraction of this play; but the talents of Mr. Kean, and the judicious alterations now made, are likely to procure it an ample share of public favour

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN, 1785.	DRURY LANE, 1817
ABOAN,.....	<i>Mr. Aicken</i>	<i>Mr. Rae.</i>
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR,	<i>Mr. Davies</i>	<i>Mr. Bengough</i>
OROONOKO,	<i>Mr. Pope</i>	<i>Mr. Kean.</i>
BLANDFORD,	<i>Mr. Hull</i>	<i>Mr. Barnard.</i>
HOTMAN,	<i>Mr. Thompson</i>	<i>Mr. P. Cooke.</i>
STANMORE,	<i>Mr. Cubitt</i>	<i>Mr. Kent.</i>
JACK STANMORE,.....	<i>Mr. Helme.</i>	
DANIEL,	<i>Mr. Quick.</i>	
CAPTAIN DRIVER,	<i>Mr. Fearon</i>	<i>Mr. Smith.</i>
WIDOW LACKITT,.....	<i>Mrs. Webb</i>	<i>Miss Tidswell</i>
CHARLOTTE WELDON,	<i>Mrs. Bates.</i>	
LUCY WELDON,	<i>Mrs. Inchbald.</i>	
IMOINDA,.....	<i>Miss Younge</i>	<i>Miss Somerville</i>

Planters, Indians, Negroes, Men, Women, and Children.

SCENE.—Surinam, a Colony in the West Indies; at the time of the action of this Tragedy in the possession of the English.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter CHARLOTTE WELDON, in man's clothes, following LUCY.

Lucy. What will this come to? what can it end in? you have persuaded me to leave dear England, and dearer London, the place of the world most worthy living in, to follow you, a husband-hunting, into America: I thought husbands grew in these plantations.

Char. Why so they do, as thick as oranges ripening one under another. Week after week they drop into some woman's mouth. 'Tis but a little patience, spreading your apron in expectation, and one of 'em will fall into your lap at last.

Lucy. Ay, say you so, indeed?

Char. But you have left dear London, you say: pray what have you left in London that was very dear to you, that had not left you before?

Lucy. Speak for yourself, sister.

Char. Nay, I'll keep you in countenance. The young fellows, you know, the dearest part of the town, and without whom London had been a wilderness to you and me, had forsaken us a great while.

Lucy. Forsaken us! I don't know that ever they had us.

Char. Forsaken us the worst way, child; that is, did not think us worth having; they neglected us, no longer designed upon us, they were tired of us. Women in London are like the rich silks

they are out of fashion a great while before they wear out—

Lucy. The devil take the fashion, I say.

Char. You may tumble them over and over at their first coming up, and never disparage their price; but they fall upon wearing immediately, lower and lower in their value, till they come to the broker at last. To prevent which, with what youth and beauty, were left some experience, and the small remainder of fifteen hundred pounds a piece, which amounted to bare two hundred between us both, I persuaded you to bring your person for a venture to the Indies. Every thing has succeeded in our voyage: I pass for your brother: one of the richest planters here happening to die just as we landed, I have claimed kindred with him: so without making his will, he has left us the credit of his relation to trade upon: we pass for his cousins, coming here to Surinam chiefly upon his invitation; we live in reputation; have the best acquaintance in the place; and we shall see our account in't, I warrant you.

Lucy. I must rely upon you—

Enter WIDOW LACKITT.

Widow L. Mr. Weldon, your servant. Your servant, Mrs. Lucy, I am an ill visitor, but 'tis not too late, I hope, to bid you welcome to this side of this world. [*Salutes Lucy.*]

Char. 'Gad so, I beg your pardon, widow, I should have done the civilities of my house before: but, as you say, 'tis not too late, I hope—

[*Going to kiss her.*]

Widow L. What! you think now this was a civil way of begging a kiss; and by my troth, if it were, I see no harm in't; 'tis a pitiful favour indeed that is not worth asking for; though I have known a woman speak plainer before now, and not understood neither.

Char. Not under my roof. Have at you, widow—

Widow L. Why that 's well said, spoke like a younger brother, that deserves to have a widow.— [*Kisses her.*] You're a younger brother, I know, by your kissing.

Char. How so, pray?

Widow L. Why, you kiss as if you expected to be paid for't. You stick so close, there's no getting rid of you.

Char. I am a-kin to a younger brother.

Widow L. So much the better: we widows are commonly the better for younger brothers.

Lucy. Better or worse, most of you. But you want be much the better for him, I can tell you.

[*Aside.*]

Char. I was a younger brother; but an uncle of my mother's has maliciously left me an estate, and I'm afraid spoiled my fortune.

Widow L. No, no; an estate will never spoil your fortune; I have a good estate myself, thank Heaven, and a kind husband that left it behind him.

Char. Thank Heaven that took him away from it, widow, and left you behind him.

Widow L. Nay, Heaven's will must be done; 'e's in a better place.

Char. A better place for you, no doubt on't. Now you may look about you; choose for yourself, Mrs. Lackitt, that's your business; for I know you design to marry again.

Widow L. Nay, I'll do nothing rashly: I'll resolve against nothing. The devil, thev say, is

very busy upon these occasions, especially with the widows. But, if I am to be tempted, it must be with a young man, I promise you—Mrs. Lucy, your brother is a very pleasant gentleman: I came about business to him, but he turns every thing into merriment.

Char. Business, Mrs. Lackitt? Then I know you would have me to yourself. Pray, leave us together, sister. [*Exit Lucy.*] What am I drawing upon myself here? [*Aside.*]

Widow L. You have taken a very pretty house here, every thing so neat about you already. I hear you are laying out for a plantation.

Char. Why, yes, truly, I like the country, and would buy a plantation, if I could, reasonably.

Widow L. O! by all means reasonably.

Char. If I could have one to my mind, I would think of settling among you.

Widow L. O! you can't do better. Indeed we can't pretend to have so good company for you as you had in England; but we shall make very much of you. For my own part, I assure you, I shall think myself very happy to be more particularly known to you.

Char. Dear Mrs. Lackitt, you do me too much honour.

Widow L. Then as to a plantation, Mr. Weldon, you know I have several to dispose of. Mr. Lackitt, I thank him, has left, though I say it, the richest widow upon the place; therefore I may afford to use you better than other people can. You shall have one upon any reasonable terms. Mr. Weldon: well, I like that name of yours exceedingly, Mr. Weldon.

Char. My name!

Widow L. O exceedingly! If any thing could persuade me to alter my own name, I verily believe nothing in the world would do it so soon, as to be called Mrs. Weldon.

Char. I'm glad you like my name.

Widow L. Of all things. But then there's the misfortune, one cannot change one's name without changing one's condition.

Char. You hardly think it worth that, I believe.

Widow L. Think it worth what, Sir? changing my condition! indeed, Sir, I think it worth every thing. But alas! Mr. Weldon, I have buried my poor dear husband but six weeks; poor dear creature, I loved him sincerely: 'tis too soon to think of changing one's condition yet; indeed it is: pray, don't desire it of me: not but that you may persuade me to any thing, sooner than any person in the world—

Char. Who, I, Mrs. Lackitt?

Widow L. Indeed you may, Mr. Weldon, sooner than any man living. Lord, there's a great deal in saving a decency: I never minded it before. Well, I am glad you spoke first, to excuse my modesty. Now I will own to you, (but I won't confess neither,) I have had a great respect for you a great while. I beg your pardon, Sir; and I must declare to you, indeed I must, if you desire to dispose of all I have in the world, in an honourable way, my fortune and person, if you wont understand me without telling you so, are both at your service, 'gad so! another time—

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, Mrs. Lackitt, your widowhood's weaning apace; I see which way 'tis going.

Weldon, you're a happy man. The women and their favours come home to you.

Widow L. A fiddle of favour, Mr. Stanmore; I am a lone woman, you know it, left in a great deal of business, and business must be followed or lost. I have several stocks and plantations upon my hands, and other things to dispose of, which Mr. Weldon may have occasion for.

Char. We were just upon the brink of a bargain, as you came in.

Stan. Let me drive it on for you.

Char. So you must, I believe, you or somebody for me.

Stan. I'll stand by you; I understand more of this business than you can pretend to.

Char. I don't pretend to it; 'tis quite out of my way indeed.

Stan. If the widow gets you to herself, she will certainly be too hard for you: I know her of old: she has no conscience in a corner; a very Jew in a bargain.

Char. Is this true, widow?

Widow L. Speak as you find, Mr. Weldon; I have offered you very fair! think upon't, and let me hear of you; the sooner the better, Mr. Weldon. *[Exit.*

Stan. I assure you, my friend, she'll cheat you if she can.

Char. I don't know that, but I can cheat her if I will.

Stan. Cheat her! how?

Char. I can marry her; and then I am sure I have it in my power to cheat her.

Stan. Can you marry her?

Char. Yes, faith, so she says: her pretty person and fortune (which, one with the other, you know, are not contemptible) are both at my service.

Stan. Contemptible! very considerable, 'egad; very desirable; why, she's worth twenty thousand pounds, man; a clear estate: no charge upon't, but a boobily son: he indeed, was to have half; but his father begot him, and she breeds him up not to know or have more than she has a mind to.

Char. There's a great deal to be made of this— *[Musing.*

Stan. A handsome fortune may be made on't, and I advise you to't by all means.

Char. To marry her! an old wanton witch! I hate her.

Stan. No matter for that: let her go to the devil for you. She'll cheat her son of a good estate for you; that's a perquisite of a widow's portion always.

Char. I have a design, and will follow her at least, till I have a pennyworth of the plantation.

Stan. I speak as a friend, when I advise you to marry her, for 'tis directly against the interest of my own family. My cousin Jack has be-laboured her a good while that way.

Char. What! honest Jack? I'll not hinder him. I'll give over the thoughts of her.

Stan. He'll make nothing on't; she does not care for him. I'm glad you have her in your power.

Char. I may be able to serve him.

Stan. Here's a ship come into the river; I was in hopes it had been from England.

Char. From England?

Stan. No; I was disappointed; I long to see this handsome cousin of yours: the picture you gave me of her has charmed me.

Char. You'll see whether it has flattered her or no, in a little time. If she be recovered of that illness that was the reason of her staying behind us, I know she will come with the first opportunity. We shall see her, or hear of her death.

Stan. We'll hope the best. The ships from England are expected every day.

Char. What ship is this?

Stan. A rover, a buccaneer, a trader in slaves: that's the commodity we deal in, you know. If you have a curiosity to see our manner of marketing, I'll wait upon you.

Char. We'll take my sister with us.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—An open Place.

Enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR and BLANDFORD.

Lieut. There's no resisting your fortune, Blandford; you draw all the prizes.

Bland. I draw for our lord governor; you know his fortune favours me.

Lieut. I grudge him nothing this time; but if fortune had favoured me in the last sale, the fair slave had been mine; Clemene had been mine.

Bland. Are you still in love with her?

Lieut. Every day more in love with her.

Enter CAPTAIN DRIVER, teased and pulled about by WIDOW LACKITT and several PLANTERS, at one door; at another, CHARLOTTE WELDON, dressed in man's clothes, LUCY, STANMORE, and JACK STANMORE.

Widow L. Here have I six slaves in my lot, and not a man among them; all women and children; what can I do with 'em, captain?

1 *Plan.* I have all men in mine. Pray, captain, let the men and women be mingled together, for the good of the plantation.

2 *Plan.* Ay, ay, a man and a woman, captain, for the good of the plantation.

Capt. D. Let them mingle together, and be damned; what care I. Would you have me a pimp for the good of the plantation?

1 *Plan.* I am a constant customer, captain.

Widow L. I am always ready money to you, captain.

1 *Plan.* For that matter, mistress, my money is as ready as yours.

Widow L. Pray hear me, captain.

Capt. D. Look you, I have done my part by you; I have brought the number of slaves I bargained for; if your lots have not pleased you, you must draw again among yourselves.

3 *Plan.* I am contented with my lot.

4 *Plan.* I am very well satisfied.

3 *Plan.* We'll have no drawing again.

Widow L. Ay, but—

Capt. D. Do you hear, mistress? you may hold your tongue: for my part, I expect my money.

Widow L. Captain, nobody questions or scruples the payment: but I won't hold my tongue, 'tis too much to pray and pay too: one may speak for one's own, I hope.

Capt. D. Well, what would you say?

Widow L. I say, no more than I can make out.

Capt. D. Out with it, then.

Widow L. I say things have not been so fair carried as they might have been. How do I know but you have juggled together in my absence? You drew the lots before I came, I'm sure.

Capt. D. That 's your own fault, mistress; you might have come sooner.

Widow L. Then here 's a prince, as they say, among the slaves, and you set him down to go as a common man.

Capt. D. I'll warrant you.

Widow L. Sir, you're a scurvy fellow, to talk at this rate to me. If my husband were alive, gadsbodikins, you would not use me so. Marry come up here, who are you, I trow? You begin to think yourself a captain, forsooth, because we call you so. You forget yourself as fast as you can; but I remember you; I know you for a pitiful, paltry fellow, as you are, an upstart to prosperity; one that is but just come acquainted with cleanliness, and that never saw five shillings of your own without deserving to be hanged for 'em.

Lieut. She has given you a broadside, captain; you'll stand up to her.

Capt. D. Hang her, I'll come no nearer.

Widow L. By this good light, it would make a woman do a thing she never designed; marry again, though she were sure to repent it, and be revenged of such a—

Jack S. What 's the matter, Mrs. Lackitt; can I serve you?

Widow L. No, no, you can't serve me: you are for serving yourself, I'm sure. Pray, go about your business. Lord! how can you be so troublesome; nay, so unconscionable, to think that every rich widow must throw herself away upon a young fellow that has nothing?

Stan. Jack, you are answered, I suppose.

Jack S. I'll have another pluck at her.

Widow L. Mr. Weldon, I am a little disconcerted; but pray bring your sister to dine with me. 'Gads my life, I'm out of all patience with that pitiful fellow: my flesh rises at him; I can't stay in the place where he is. [Exit.]

Bland. Captain, you have used the widow very familiarly.

Capt. D. This is my way; I have no design, and therefore am not over civil. If she had ever a handsome daughter to wheedle her out of, or if I could make any thing of her booby son—

Char. I may improve that hint, and make something of him. [Aside.]

Lieut. She's very rich.

Capt. D. I am rich myself. She has nothing that I want; I have no leaks to stop. Old women are fortune-menders. I have made a good voyage, and would reap the fruits of my labour. We plough the deep, my masters, but our harvest is on shore. I am for a young woman.

Stan. Look about, captain; there 's one ripe, and ready for the sickle.

Capt. D. A woman, indeed. I will be acquainted with her: who is she?

Char. My sister, Sir.

Capt. D. Would I were a-kin to her; if she were my sister, she should never go out of the family.—What say you, mistress? you expect I should marry you, I suppose?

Lucy. I sha'nt be disappointed, if you don't.

[Turns away.]

Char. She wont break her heart, Sir.

Capt. D. But I mean—

[Follows her.]

Char. And I mean—[Goes between him and Lucy.] that you must not think of her without marrying.

Capt. D. I mean so too

Char. Why then your meaning 's out.

Capt. D. You're very short.

Char. I will grow, and be taller for you.

Capt. D. I shall grow angry and swear.

Char. You'll catch no fish then.

Capt. D. I don't well know whether he designs to affront me or no.

Stan. No, no, he 's a little familiar; 'tis his way.

Capt. D. Say you so? nay, I can be as familiar as he, if that be it. Well, Sir, look upon me full. What say you? how do you like me for a brother-in-law?

Char. Why, yes, faith, you'll do my business, [Turning him about.] if we can agree about my sister's.

Capt. D. I don't know whether your sister will like me or not: I can't say much to her; but I have money enough: and if you are her brother, as you seem to be a-kin to her, I know that will recommend me to you.

Char. This is your market for slaves; my sister is a free woman, and must not be disposed of in public. You shall be welcome to my house, if you please; and, upon better acquaintance, if my sister likes you, and I like your offers—

Capt. D. Very well, Sir, I'll come and see her.

Lieut. Where are the slaves, captain? they are long a coming.

Bland. And who is this prince that 's fallen to my lot for the lord-governor? Let me know something of him, that I may treat him accordingly: who is he?

Capt. D. He 's the devil of a fellow, I can tell you; a prince every inch of him: you have paid dear enough for him for all the good he'll do you: I was forced to clap him in irons, and did not think the ship safe neither. You are in hostility with the Indians, they say; they threaten you daily: you had best have an eye upon him.

Bland. But who is he?

Lieut. And how do you know him to be a prince?

Capt. D. He is son and heir to the great king of Angola, a mischievous monarch in those parts, who, by his good will, would never let any of his neighbours be in quiet. 'Tis his son was his general, a plaguy fighting fellow! I have formerly had dealings with him for slaves, which he took prisoners, and have got pretty roundly by him; but, the wars being at an end, and nothing more to be got by the trade of that country, I made bold to bring the prince along with me.

Lieut. How could you do that?

Bland. What! steal a prince out of his own country! impossible!

Capt. D. 'Twas hard indeed; but I did it. You must know this Oronoko—

Bland. Is that his name?

Capt. D. Ay, Oronoko.

Lieut. Oronoko.

Capt. D. Is naturally inquisitive about the men and manners of the white nations. Because I could give him some account of the other parts of the world, I grew very much into his favour: in return of so great an honour, you know, I could do no less, upon my coming away, than invite him on board me. Never having been in a ship, he appointed his time, and I prepared my entertainment. He came the next evening, as private as he could, with about some twenty along with

um. The punch went round, and as many of his attendants as would be dangerous, I sent dead drunk on shore; the rest we secured; and so you have the prince Oroonoko.

Bland. Unheard of villany!

Stan. Barbarous treachery!

Lieut. But, captain, methinks you have taken a great deal of pains for this prince Oroonoko; why did you part with him at the common rate of slaves?

Capt. D. Why, lieutenant-governor, I'll tell you, I did design to carry him to England, to have showed him there; but I found him troublesome upon my hands, and I'm glad I'm rid of him—Oh, oh, hark, they come.

Enter Black Slaves, men, women, and children, who pass across the Stage by two and two; ABOAN, and others of OROONOKO's attendants, two and two: OROONOKO last of all, in chains.

Lucy. Are all these wretches slaves?

Stan. All sold, they and their posterity, all slaves.

Lucy. O miserable fortune!

Bland. Most of them know no better; they were born so, and only change their masters. But a prince, born only to command, betrayed and sold, my heart drops blood for him.

Capt. D. Now, governor, here he comes; pray, observe him.

Oro. So, Sir, you have kept your word with me.

Capt. D. I am a better Christian, I thank you, than to keep it with a heathen.

Oro. You are a Christian; be a Christian still. If you have any god that teaches you To break your word, I need not curse you more: Let him cheat you, as you are false to me. You faithful followers of my better fortune, We have been fellow-soldiers in the field;

[Embracing his friends.]

Now we are fellow-slaves. This last farewell.

Be sure of one thing that will comfort us, Whatever world we are next thrown upon Cannot be worse than this.

[All the slaves go off, but OROONOKO.]

Capt. D. You see what a horrible Pagan he is, governor; but I took care that none of his followers should be in the same lot with him, for fear they should undertake some desperate action, to the danger of the colony.

Oro. Live still in fear; it is the villain's curse, And will revenge my chains: fear even me, Who have no power to hurt thee. Nature abhors,

And drives thee out from the society, And commerce of mankind, for breach of faith. Men live and prosper but in mutual trust, A confidence of one another's truth:

That thou hast violated. I have done: know my fortune, and submit to it.

Lieut. Sir, I am sorry for your fortune, and would help it if I could.

Bland. Take off his chains. You know your condition; but you are fallen into honourable hands: you are the lord-governor's slave, who will use you nobly: in his absence it shall be my care to serve you. *[BLANDFORD applying to him.]*

Oro. I hear you, but I can believe no more.

Lieut. Captain, I'm afraid the world wont speak so honourably of this action of yours, as you would have them.

Capt. D. I have the money; let the worst speak and be damned: I care not.

Oro. I would forget myself. Be satisfied.

[To BLANDFORD]

I am above the rank of common slaves.

Let that content you. The Christian there that knows me,

For his own sake will not discover more.

Capt. D. I have other matters to mind. You have him, and much good may you do with your prince. *[Exit; the PLANTERS pulling and staring at OROONOKO.]*

Bland. What would you have there? You stare as if you never saw a man before. Stand further off. *[Turns them away.]*

Oro. Let them stare on.

I am unfortunate, but not ashamed

Of being so. No, let the guilty blush:

The white man that betray'd me. Honest black

Disdains to change its colour. I am ready:

Where must I go? Dispose of me as you please.

I am not well acquainted with my fortune, But must learn to know it better: so, I know you say,

Degrees make all things easy.

Bland. All things shall be easy.

Oro. Tear off this pomp, and let me know myself:

The slavish habit best becomes me now.

Hard fate, and whips, and chains, may overpower

The frail flesh, and bow my body down:

But there's another, nobler part of me,

Out of your reach, which you can never tame.

Bland. You shall find nothing of this wretchedness

You apprehend. We are not monsters all.

You seem unwilling to disclose yourself:

Therefore, for fear the mentioning your name

Should give you new disquiets, I presume

To call you Cæsar.

Oro. I am myself; but call me what you please.

Stan. A very good name, Cæsar.

Lieut. And very fit for his character.

Oro. Was Cæsar then a slave?

Lieut. I think he was; to pirates too. He was a great conqueror, but unfortunate in his friends—

Oro. His friends were Christians?

Bland. No.

Oro. No! that's strange.

Lieut. And murder'd by 'em.

Oro. I would be Cæsar then. Yet I will live.

Bland. Live to be happier.

Oro. Do what you will with me.

Bland. I will wait upon you, attend, and serve you. *[Exit, with OROONOKO.]*

Lucy. Well, if the captain had brought this prince's country along with him, and would make me queen of it, I would not have him, after doing so base a thing.

Char. He's a man to thrive in the world, sister: he'll make you the better jointure.

Lucy. Hang him, nothing can prosper with him.

Stan. Inquire into the great estates, and you'll find most of them depend upon the same title of honesty; the men who raise them first, are much of the captain's principles.

Char. Ay, ay, as you say, let him be damned for the good of his family. Come, sister, we are invited to dinner.

Lieut. Stanmore, you dine with me. *[Exeunt]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—WIDOW LACKITT'S House.

Enter WIDOW LACKITT, and CHARLOTTE WELDON, in man's clothes.

Char. This is so great a favour, I don't know how to receive it.

Widow L. O dear Sir! you know how to receive, and how to return, a favour as well as any body, I don't doubt it; 'tis not the first you have had from our sex, I suppose.

Char. But this is so unexpected.

Widow L. Lord, how can you say so, Mr. Weldon? I won't believe you. Don't I know how handsome gentlemen expect every thing a woman can do for you? and by my troth you're in the right on't. I think one can't do too much for a handsome gentleman; and so you shall find it.

Char. I shall never have such an offer again, that's certain. What shall I do? I am mightily divided—

Widow L. Divided, O dear! I hope not so, Sir. If I marry, truly, I expect to have you to myself.

Char. There's no danger of that, Mrs. Lackitt: I am divided in my thoughts: my father upon his death-bed obliged me to see my sister disposed of, before I married myself. 'Tis that sticks upon me.

Widow L. Is that all?

Char. All in all to me. The commands of a dying father, you know, ought to be obeyed.

Widow L. And so they may.

Char. Impossible, to do me any good.

Widow L. They sha'n't be your hindrance. You would have a husband for your sister, you say: he must be very well to pass too in the world, I suppose.

Char. I would not throw her away.

Widow L. Then marry her out of hand to the sea-captain you were speaking of.

Char. I was thinking of him, but 'tis to no purpose; she hates him.

Widow L. Does she hate him? nay, 'tis no matter, an impudentascal as he is; I would not advise her to marry him.

Char. Can you think of nobody else?

Widow L. Let me see. Well, if I thought you would like of it, I have a husband for her. What do you think of my son?

Char. You don't think of it yourself.

Widow L. I protest but I do: I am in earnest, if you are: he shall marry her within this half hour, if you'll give your consent to it.

Char. I give my consent! I'll answer for my sister, she shall have him: you may be sure I shall be glad to get over the difficulty.

Widow L. No more to be said then, that difficulty is over: but I vow and swear you frightened me, Mr. Weldon. If I had not had a son now for your sister, what must I have done, do you think? Were not you an ill-natured thing, to boggle at a promise? I could break twenty for you.

Char. I am the more obliged to you; but this son will save all.

Widow L. He's in the house; I'll go and bring him myself. [*Going.*] You would do well to break the business to your sister. She's within, I'll send her to you—[*Going again, comes back.*]

Char. Pray do.

Widow L. But, d'you hear? perhaps she may stand upon her maidenly behaviour, and blush, and play the fool, and delay; but don't be answered so. What! she is not a girl at these years. Show your authority, and tell her roundly, she must be married immediately. I'll manage my son, I warrant you—

[*Exit hastily*]
Char. The widow's in haste, I see: I thought! I had laid a rub in the road, about my sister; but she has stepped over that. She's making way for herself as fast as she can; but little thinks where she is going. I could tell her she is going to play the fool; but people don't love to hear of their faults: besides, that is not my business at present.

Enter LUCY.

So, sister, I have a husband for you—

Lucy. With all my heart. I don't know what confinement marriage may be to the men, but I'm sure the women have no liberty without it. I'm for any thing that will deliver me from the care of a reputation, which I begin to find impossible to preserve.

Char. I'll ease you of that care. You must be married immediately.

Lucy. The sooner the better; for I'm quite tired of setting up for a husband. The widow's foolish son is the man, I suppose?

Char. I considered your constitution, sister; and, finding you would have occasion for a fool, I have provided accordingly.

Lucy. I don't know what occasion I may have for a fool when I'm married; but I find none but fools have occasion to marry.

Char. Since he is to be a fool then, I thought it better for you to have one of his mother's making than your own; 'twill save you the trouble.

Lucy. I thank you; you take a great deal of pains for me; but, pray, tell me what you are doing for yourself all this while?

Char. You are never true to your own secrets, and therefore I won't trust you with mine. Only remember this, I am your eldest sister, and consequently, laying my breeches aside, have as much occasion for a husband as you can have. I have a man in my eye, be satisfied.

Enter WIDOW LACKITT, with her son DANIEL.

Widow L. Come, Daniel, hold up thy head, child; look like a man: you must not take it as you have done. 'Gads my life! there's nothing to be done with twirling your hat, man.

Dan. Why, mother, what's to be done then?

Widow L. Why, look me in the face, and mind what I say to you.

Dan. Marry, who's the fool then? What shall I get by minding what you say to me?

Widow L. Mrs. Lucy, the boy is bashful, don't discourage him; pray come a little forward, and let him salute you.

[*Going between* LUCY and DANIEL.

Lucy. A fine husband I am to have, truly.

[*To* CHARLOTTE.

Widow L. Come, Daniel, you must be acquainted with this gentlewoman.

Dan. Nay, I'm not proud, that is not my fault: I am presently acquainted when I know the company; but this gentlewoman is a stranger to me.

Widow L. She is your mistress: I have spoke a good word for you; make her a bow, and go and kiss her.

Dan. Kiss her! have a care what you say; I warrant she scorns your words. Such fine folks are not used to be slopp'd and kissed. Do you think I don't know that, mother?

Widow L. Try her, try her, man. [*DANIEL bows, she thrusts him forward.*] Why, that's well done; go nearer her.

Dan. Is the devil in the woman? Why, so I can go nearer her, if you would let a body alone. [*To his mother.*] Cry your mercy, forsooth; my mother is always shaming one before company; she would have me as unmannerly as herself, and offer to kiss you. [*To LUCY.*]

Char. Why, wont you kiss her?

Dan. Why, pray, may I?

Char. Kiss her, kiss her, man.

Dan. Marry, and I will. [*Kisses her.*] Gad-zooks, she kisses rarely! An' please you, mistress, and seeing my mother will have it so, I don't much care if I kiss you again, forsooth.

[*Kisses her again.*]

Lucy. Well, how do you like me now?

Dan. Like you! marry, I don't know; you have bewitched me, I think: I was never so in my born days before.

Widow L. You must marry this fine woman, Daniel.

Dan. Hey-day! marry her! I was never married in all my life. What must I do with her then, mother?

Widow L. You must live with her, eat and drink with her, and sleep with her.

Dan. Nay, marry, I shall never sleep, that's certain; she'll break me of my rest, quite and clean, I tell you beforehand. As for eating and drinking with her, why I have a good stomach, and can play my part in any company. But how do you think I can go to bed to a woman I don't know?

Char. You shall know her better.

Dan. Say you so, Sir?

Char. Kiss her again. [*DANIEL kisses LUCY.*]

Dan. Nay, kissing I find will make us presently acquainted. We'll steal into a corner to practise a little, and then I shall be able to do any thing.

Char. The young man mends apace.

Dan. Mother, mother, if you'll stay in the room by me, and promise not to leave me, I don't care for once if I venture to go to bed with her.

Widow L. There's a good child, go in and put on thy best clothes; pluck up a spirit, I'll stay in the room by thee. She wont hurt thee, I warrant thee.

Dan. Nay, as to that matter, I'm not afraid of her. I'll give her as good as she brings. I have a Rowland for her Oliver, and so thou may tell her. [*Exit.*]

Widow L. Mrs. Lucy we sha'n't stay for you: you are in readiness, I suppose?

Char. She is always ready to do what I would have her, I must say that for my sister.

Widow L. 'Twill be her own another day, Mr. Weldon; we'll marry 'em out of hand, and then—

Char. And then Mrs. Lackitt, look to yourself— [*Exeunt.*]

Enter OROONOKO and BLANDFORD.

Oro. You know my story, and you say you are A friend to my misfortunes: that's a name Will teach you what you owe yourself and me.

Bland. I'll study to deserve to be your friend.

When once our noble governor arrives, With him you will not need my interest; He is too generous not to feel your wrongs. But, be assur'd, I will employ my power, And find the means to send you home again.

Oro. I thank you, Sir.—My honest, wretched friends! [*Sighing.*]

Their chains are heavy: they have hardly found So kind a master. May I ask you, Sir, What is become of them? Perhaps I should not. You will forgive a stranger.

Bland. I'll inquire; And use my best endeavours, where they are, To have 'em gently us'd.

Oro. Once more I thank you.

You offer every cordial that can keep My hopes alive, to wait a better day. What friendly care can do, you have applied: But, oh! I have a grief admits no cure.

Bland. You do not know, Sir—

Oro. Can you raise the dead?

Pursue and overtake the wings of time? And bring about again the hours, the days, The years that made me happy?

Bland. That is not to be done.

Oro. No, there is nothing to be done for me.

[*Kneels and kisses the earth.*]

Thou God ador'd! thou ever-glorious sun!

If she be yet on earth, send me a beam

Of thy all-seeing power to light me to her;

Or, if thy sister goodness has preferr'd

Her beauty to the skies, to be a star,

O, tell me where she shines, that I may stand

Whole nights, and gaze upon her.

Bland. I am rude, and interrupt you.

Oro. I am troublesome:

But pray give me your pardon. My swol'n heart

Bursts out its passage, and I must complain,

(O! can you think of nothing dearer to me;

Dearer than liberty, my country, friends,

Much dearer than my life?) that I have lost

The tend'rest, best beloved, and loving wife.

Bland. Alas! I pity you.

Oro. Do pity me.

Pity's a-kin to love; and every thought

Of that soft kind is welcome to my soul.

I would be pitied here.

Bland. I dare not ask

More than you please to tell me; but, if you

Think it convenient to let me know

Your story, I dare promise you to bear

A part in your distress, if not assist you.

Oro. Thou honest-hearted man! I wante! such,

Just such a friend as thou art, that would sit

Still as the night, and let me talk whole days

Of my Imoinda. O! I'll tell thee all

From first to last! and pray observe me well.

Bland. I will, most heedfully.

Oro. There was a stranger in my father's court,

Valu'd and honour'd much: he was a white,

The first I ever saw of your complexion.

He chang'd his god for ours, and so grew great;

Of many virtues, and so fam'd in arms,

He still commanded all my father's wars:

I was bred under him. One fatal day,

The armies joining, he before me stepp'd,

Receiving in his breast a poison'd dart,

Levell'd at me; he dy'd within my arms.

I've tir'd you already.

Bland. Pray, go on.

Oro. He left an only daughter, whom he brought

An infant to Angola. When I came Back to the court, a happy conqueror, Humanity oblig'd me to condole With this sad virgin for a father's loss, Lost for my safety. I presented her With all the slaves of battle, to atone Her father's ghost. But, when I saw her face, And heard her speak, I offer'd up myself To be the sacrifice. She bow'd and blush'd; I wonder'd and ador'd. The sacred power, That had subdu'd me, then inspir'd my tongue, Inclined her heart, and all our talk was love.

Bland. Then you were happy.

Oro. Oh! I was too happy.

I married her: and, though my country's custom Indulg'd the privilege of many wives, I swore myself never to know but her. O, my Imoinda! But it could not last. Her fatal beauty reach'd my father's ears: He sent for her to court, where, cursed court! No woman comes but for his amorous use. He, raging to possess her, she was forc'd To own herself my wife. The furious king Started at incest; but, grown desperate, Not daring to enjoy what he desir'd, In mad revenge (which I could never learn) He poison'd her, or sent her far, far off, Far from my hopes ever to see her more.

Bland. Most barbarous of fathers! the sad tale Has struck me dumb with wonder.

Oro. I have done.

I'll trouble you no further: now and then A sigh will have its way; that shall be all.

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. Blandford, the lieutenant-governor is gone to your plantation. He desires you would bring the royal slave with you. The sight of his fair mistress, he says, is an entertainment for a prince. He would have his opinion of her.

Oro. Is he a lover?

Bland. So he says himself. He flatters a beautiful slave that I have, and calls her mistress.

Oro. Must he then flatter her, to call her mistress?

I pity the proud man, who thinks himself Above being in love. What, though she be a slave, She may deserve him.

Bland. You shall judge of that when you see her, Sir.

Oro. I go with you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Plantation.

Enter IMOINDA, followed by the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR.

Lieut. I have disturb'd you. I confess my faults

My fair Clemene; but begin again, And I will listen to your mournful song, Sweet as the soft complaining nightingale's. Sing, sing again, And let me wonder at the many ways You have to ravish me.

Imo. Oh, I can weep Enough for you and me, if that will please you.

Lieut. You must not weep: I come to dry your tears,

And raise you from your sorrow. I may take This pretty hand: I know your modesty Would draw it back: but you would take it ill If I should let it go.

[*She struggles, and gets her hand from him, then he offers to kiss her.*]

Nay, if you struggle with me, I must take—

Imo. You may—my life, that I can part with freely. [*Exit*]

Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and OROONOKO

Bland. So, governor, we don't disturb you, I hope?

Your mistress has left you. You were making love.

She's thankful for the honour I suppose.

Lieut. Quite insensible to all I say, and do.

When I speak to her, she sighs, or weeps, But never answers me as I would have her.

Stan. There's something nearer than her slavery, that touches her.

Bland. What do her fellow-slaves say of her? Can't they find the cause?

Lieut. Some of them, who pretend to be wiser than the rest, and hate her, I suppose, for being used better than they are, will needs have it that she is with child.

Bland. Poor wretch! if it be so, I pity her.

She has lost a husband, that perhaps was dear To her, and then you cannot blame her.

Oro. If it be so, indeed, you cannot blame her.

[*Sighing.*]

Lieut. No, no, it is not so. If it be so, I must still love her; and, desiring still, I must enjoy her.

Bland. Try what you can do with fair means, and welcome.

Lieut. I'll give you ten slaves for her.

Bland. You know, she is our lord-governor's; but, if I could dispose of her, I would not now, especially to you.

Lieut. Why not to me?

Bland. I mean, against her will. You are in love with her;

And we all know what your desires would have. Love stops at nothing but possession.

Were she within your power, you do not know How soon you would be tempted to forget

The nature of the deed, and, may be, act A violence you after would repent.

Oro. 'Tis godlike in you to protect the weak.

Lieut. Fy, fy, I would not force her. Though she be

A slave, her mind is free, and should consent.

Oro. Such honour will engage her to consent: And then, if you're in love, she's worth the having.

Shall we not see the wonder?

Lieut. Have a care;

You have a heart, and she has conquering eyes.

Oro. I have a heart; but, if it could be false

To my first vows, ever to love again, These honest hands should tear it from my breast,

And throw the traitor from me. O! Imoinda! Living or dead, I can be only thine.

Bland. Imoinda was his wife; she's either dead,

Or, living, dead to him; forc'd from his arms By an inhuman father. Another time

I'll tell you all. [*To LIEUT. and STAN.; exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Slaves, men, women, and children, discovered upon the ground; some rise and dance.

During the entertainment, enter the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and OROONOKO, as spectators; that ended, enter CAPTAIN DRIVER, JACK STANMORE, and several PLANTERS, with their swords drawn. Drums beat; bells ring.

Capt. D. Where are you, governor? Make what haste you can
To save yourself and the whole colony.
I bid 'em ring the bell.

Lieut. What 's the matter?

Jack S. The Indians are come down upon us; they have plundered some of the plantations already, and are marching this way as fast as they can.

Lieut. What can we do against them?

Bland. We shall be able to make a stand till more planters come into us.

Jack S. There are a great many more with-out, if you would show yourself, and put us in order.

Lieut. There 's no danger of the white slaves, they'll not stir. Blandford and Stanmore, come you along with me. Some of you stay here to look after the black slaves.

[All go out but the CAPTAIN and six Planters, who all at once seize OROONOKO.]

1 Plan. Ay, ay, let us alone.

Capt. D. In the first place we secure you, Sir, as an enemy to the government.

Oro. Are you there, Sir? You are my constant friend.

1 Plan. You will be able to do a great deal of mischief.

Capt. D. But we shall prevent you: bring the irons hither. He has the malice of a slave in him, and would be glad to be cutting his masters' throats. I know him. Chain his hands and feet, that he may not run over to 'em. If they have him, they'll carry him on their backs, that I can tell 'em.

As they are chaining him, re-enter BLANDFORD, who runs to them.

Bland. What are you doing there?

Capt. D. Securing the main chance: this is a bosom enemy.

Bland. Away, you brutes: I'll answer with my life for his behaviour; so tell the governor.

Capt. D. & Plan. Well, Sir, so we will.

[Exeunt CAPTAIN and PLANTERS.]

Oro. Give me a sword, and I'll deserve your trust.

A party of Indians enter, hurrying IMOINDA among the slaves; another party of Indians sustains them retreating, followed at a distance by the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, with the Planters: BLANDFORD and OROONOKO join them.

Bland. Hell and the devil! they drive away our slaves before our faces. Governor, can you stand tamely by, and suffer this? Clemene, Sir, your mistress, is among 'em.

Lieut. We throw ourselves away in the attempt to rescue them.

Oro. A lover cannot fall more glorious, Than in the cause of love. He, that deserves

His mistress' favour, will not stay behind.
I'll lead you on; be bold, and follow me.

[OROONOKO, at the head of the Planters, falls upon the Indians, with a great shout, and beats them off.]

Enter IMOINDA.

Imo. I'm toss'd about by my tempestuous fate,
And no where must have rest. Indians, or English!

Whoever has me, I am still a slave.
No matter whose I am, since I'm no more
My royal master's; since I'm his no more.
O, I was happy! nay, I will be happy
In the dear thought that I am still his wife,
Though far divided from him. *[Retires.]*

Re-enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, OROONOKO, BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and Planters.

Lieut. Thou glorious man! thou something greater sure
Than Cæsar ever was! that single arm
Has sav'd us all: accept our gen'ral thanks.

[All bow to OROONOKO.]

And what can we do more to recompense
Such noble services, you shall command.
Clemene too shall thank you—she is safe—
Look up, and bless your brave deliverer.

[Brings IMOINDA forward, looking down on the ground.]

Oro. Bless, me, indeed!

Bland. You start!

Oro. O all you gods,

Who govern this great world, and bring about
Things strange and unexpected! can it be?

Lieut. What is't you stare at so?

Oro. Answer me some of you, you who have power,

And have your senses free: or are you all
Struck through with wonder too?

[Looking still fixedly on IMOINDA.]

Bland. What would you know?

Oro. My soul steals from my body through my eyes;

All that is left of life I'll gaze away.

And die upon the pleasure.

Lieut. This is strange!

Oro. If you but mock me with her image here:
If she be not Imoinda—

[She looks upon him and falls into a swoon; he runs to her.]

Ha! She faints!

Nay, then, it must be she: it is Imoinda!

My heart confesses her, and leaps for joy

To welcome her to her own empire here.

[Kisses her.]

Imoinda! Oh! thy Oroonoko calls.

Imo. *[Coming to life.]* My Oroonoko! Oh! I can't believe

What any man can say. But, if I am
To be deceiv'd, there 's something in that name,
That voice, that face— *[Stares at him.]*
O! if I know myself, I cannot be mistaken.

[Embraces him]

Oro. Never here:

You cannot be mistaken: I am yours,
Your Oroonoko, all that you would have,
Your tender, loving husband.

Imo. All indeed

That I would have: my husband! then I am

Alive, and waking to the joys I feel:

They were so great, I could not think 'em true.

For truth itself, and everlasting love,
Grows in this breast, and pleasure in these arms.

Oro. Take, take me all : inquire into my heart.
(You know the way to ev'ry secret there,)

My hear, the sacred treasury of love :
And if, in absence, I have misemploy'd
A mite from the rich store ; if I have spent
A wish, a sigh, but what I sent to you ;
May I be curs'd to wish and sigh in vain,
And you not pity me.

Imo. O ! I believe,
And know you by myself. If these sad eyes,
Since last we parted, have beheld the face
Of any comfort, or once wish'd to see
The light of any other heaven but you,
May I be struck this moment blind, and lose
Your blessed sight, never to find you more.

Oro. Imoinda ! O ! this separation
Has made you dearer, if it can be so,
'Than you were ever to me. You appear
Like a kind star to my benighted steps,
To guide me on my way to happiness :
I cannot miss it now. Governor, friend,
You think me mad : but let me bless you all,
Who any way have been the instruments
Of finding her again. Imoinda's found !
And ev'ry thing that I would have in her.

[Embraces her, with the most passionate fondness.]

Stan. Where's your mistress now, governor ?

Lieut. Why, where most men's mistresses are
forced to be sometimes ; with her husband, it
seems.—But I won't lose her so. [Aside.]

Stan. He has fought lustily for her, and de-
serves her : I'll say that for him.

Bland. Sir, we congratulate your happiness :
I do most heartily.

Lieut. And all of us : but how it comes to
pass—

Oro. That will require
More precious time than I can spare you now.
I have a thousand things to ask of her,
And she as many more to know of me.
But you have made me happier, I confess,
Acknowledge it, much happier, than I
Have words or power to tell you. Captain, you,
E'en you, who most have wrong'd me, I forgive.
I will not say you have betray'd me now :
I'll think you but the minister of fate,
To bring me to my lov'd Imoinda here. [worthy]

Imo. How, how shall I receive you ? how be
Of such endearments, all this tenderness ?
These are the transports of prosperity,
When fortune smiles upon us.

Oro. Let the fools
Who follow fortune, live upon her smiles ;
All our prosperity is plac'd in love,
We have enough of that to make us happy.
This little spot of earth you stand upon,
Is more to me than the extended plains
Of my great father's kingdom. Here I reign
In full delights, in joys to power unknown :
Your love my empire, and your heart my throne.
[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter ABOAN, with several SLAVES, and
HOTMAN.

Hot. What ! to be slaves to cowards ! slaves to
sages, who can't defend themselves !

Aboan. Who is this fellow ? He talks as if he
were acquainted with our design : is he one of us ?
[Aside to his own gang.]

1 Slave. Not yet ; but he will be glad to make
one, I believe.

Aboan. He makes a mighty noise.

Hot. Go, sneak in corners, whisper out your
griefs, [crouch]

For fear your masters hear you : cringe and
Under the bloody whip, like beaten curs,
That lick their wounds, and know no other cure.

All, wretches all ! you feel their cruelty,
As much as I can feel, but dare not groan.
For my part, while I have a life and tongue,
I'll curse the authors of my slavery.

Aboan. Have you been long a slave ?

Hot. Yes, many years.

Aboan. And do you only curse ?

Hot. Curse ! only curse ! I cannot conjure,

To raise the spirits up of other men :

I am but one. O ! for a soul of fire,
To warm and animate our common cause,
And make a body of us ; then I would
Do something more than curse.

Aboan. That body set on foot, you would be
A limb, to lend it motion ? [one]

Hot. I would be

The heart of it ; the head, the hand, and heart :
Would I could see the day !

Aboan. You will do all yourself.

Hot. I would do more

Than I shall speak ; but I may find a time—

Aboan. The time may come to you ; be ready
fort.

Methinks he talks too much ; I'll know him more
Before I trust him further. [Aside.]

1 Slave. If he dares

Half what he says, he'll be of use to us.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. If there be any one among you here
That did belong to Oroonoko, speak
I come to him.

Aboan. I did belong to him ; Aboan my name.

Bland. You are the man I want ; pray come
with me. [Exeunt.]

Enter OROONOKO and IMOINDA.

Oro. I do not blame my father for his love ;
But when I think on his barbarity,
That could expose you to so many wrongs ;
Driving you out to wretched slavery,
Only for being mine ; then I confess
I wish I could forget the name of son,
That I might curse the tyrant.

Imo. I will bless him,

For I have found you here : heaven only knows
What is reserv'd for us : but, if we guess
The future by the past, our fortune must
Be wonderful ; it must be in extremes :
Extremely happy, or extremely wretched.

Oro. 'Tis in our power to make it happy now.

Imo. But not to keep it so.

Re-enter BLANDFORD and ABOAN.

Bland. My royal lord !
I have a present for you.

Oro. Aboan !

Aboan. Your lowest slave.

Oro. My tried and valued friend

[To BLANDFORD]
This worthy man always prevents my wants :

I only wish'd, and he has brought thee to me.

Thou art surpris'd : carry thy duty there,

[*ABOAN goes to IMOINDA, and falls at her feet.*

While I acknowledge mine. How shall I thank you ?

[*To BLANDFORD.*

Bland. Believe me honest to your interest, And I am more than paid. I have secur'd That all your followers shall be gently us'd, Shall wait upon your person, while you stay Among us.

Oro. I owe every thing to you.

Bland. You must not think you are in slavery.

Oro. I do not find I am.

Bland. Kind Heaven has miraculously sent Those comforts, that may teach you to expect Its further care, in your deliverance.

Oro. I sometimes think myself Heaven is concern'd

For my deliverance.

Bland. It will be soon ;

You may expect it. Pray, in the mean time, Appear as cheerful as you can among us.

You have some enemies, that represent You dangerous, and would be glad to find

A reason, in your discontent, to fear.

They watch your looks. But there are honest [men Who are your friends : you are secur'd in them.

Oro. I thank you for your caution.

Bland. I will leave you :

And be assur'd I wish your liberty.

[*Exit.*

Aboan. He speaks you very fair.

Oro. He means me fair.

Aboan. If he should not, my lord ?

Oro. If he should not ?

I'll not suspect his truth : but, if I did,

What shall I get by doubting ?

Aboan. You secure

Not to be disappointed : but, besides,

There's this advantage in suspecting him :

When you put off the hopes of other men,

You will rely upon your godlike self ;

And then you may be sure of liberty.

Oro. Be sure of liberty ? what dost thou mean,

Advising to rely upon myself ?

I think I may be sure on't : we must wait :

'Tis worth a little patience.

[*Turning to IMOINDA.*

Aboan. O, my lord !

Oro. What dost thou drive at ?

Aboan. Sir, another time

You would have found it sooner : but I see

Love has your heart, and takes up all your thoughts.

Oro. And canst thou blame me ?

Aboan. Sir, I must not blame you.

But, as our fortune stands, there is a passion

(Your pardon, royal mistress, I must speak)

That would become you better than your love :—

A brave resentment ; which, inspir'd by you,

Might kindle and diffuse a gen'rous rage

Among the slaves, to rouse and shake our chains,

And struggle to be free.

Oro. How can we help ourselves ?

Aboan. I knew you when you would have found a way.

How help ourselves ? the very Indians teach us :

We need but to attempt our liberty,

And we carry it. We have hands sufficient,

Double the number of our masters' force,

Ready to be employ'd. We want but you,

To head our enterprise, and bid us strike.

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Oro. What would you do ?

Aboan. Cut our oppressors' throats.

Oro. And you would have me join in your design

Of murder ?

Aboan. It deserves a better name .

But, be it what it will, 'tis justified

By self-defence, and natural liberty.

Oro. I'll hear no more on't.

Aboan. I'm sorry for't.

Oro. Nor shall you think of it.

Aboan. Not think of it ?

Oro. No, I command you not.

Aboan. Remember, Sir,

You are a slave yourself, and to command

Is now another's right. Not think of it ?

Since the first moment they put on my chains,

I've thought of nothing but the weight of 'em,

And how to throw 'em off. Can yours sit easy ?

Oro. I have a sense of my condition, As painful and as quick as yours can be.

I feel for my Imoinda and myself ;

Imoinda ! much the tenderest part of me.

But, though I languish for my liberty,

I would not buy it at the Christian price

Of black ingratitude : they sha' not say

That we deserv'd our fortunes by our crimes.

Murder the innocent !

Aboan. The innocent !

Oro. These men are so, whom you would rise against.

If we are slaves, they did not make us slaves,

But bought us in an honest way of trade,

As we have done before 'em ; bought and sold

Many a wretch, and never thought it wrong.

They paid our price for us, and we are now

Their property, a part of their estate,

To manage as they please. Mistake me not,

I do not tamely say that we should bear

All they could lay upon us : but we find

The load so light, so little to be felt

(Considering they have us in their power,

And may inflict what grievances they please,)

We ought not to complain.

Aboan. My royal lord !

You do not know the heavy grievances,

The toils, the labours, weary drudgeries,

Which they impose ; burdens more fit for beasts,

For senseless beasts, to bear, than thinking men.

Then if you saw the bloody cruelties

They execute on every slight offence ;

Nay, sometimes in their proud, insulting sport,

How worse than dogs they lash their fellow-creatures ;

Your heart would bleed for 'em. Oh ! could you know

How many wretches lift their hands and eyes

To you for their relief !

Oro. I pity 'em,

And wish I could with honesty do more.

Aboan. You must do more, and may, with honesty.

O, royal Sir, remember who you are,

A prince, born for the good of other men ;

Whose godlike office is to draw the sword

Against oppression, and set free mankind :

And this, I'm sure, you think oppression now.

What though you have not felt these miseries,

Never believe you are oblig'd to them :

They have their selfish reasons, may be, now,

For using of you well ; but there will come

A time, when you must have your share of 'em.

Oro. You see how little cause I have to think so :

Favour'd in my own person, in my friends ;
Indulg'd in all that can concern my care,
In my Imoinda's soft society. [*Embraces her.*]

Aboan. And therefore would you lie contented down

In the forgetfulness and arms of love,
And get young princes for 'em ?

Oro. Say'st thou ? ha !

Aboan. Princes, the heirs of empire, and the last

Of your illustrious lineage, to be born
To pamper up their pride and be their slaves ?

Oro. Imoinda! save me, save me from that thought!

Aboan. I know you are persuaded to believe
The governor's arrival will prevent

Those mischiefs, and bestow your liberty :

But who is sure of that ? I rather fear

More mischief from his coming. He is young,

Luxurious, passionate, and amorous :

Such a complexion, and made bold by power,

To countenance all he is prone to do,

Will know no bounds, no law against his lusts.

If, in a fit of his intemperance,

With a strong hand he shall resolve to seize

And force my royal mistress from your arms,

How can you help yourself ?

Oro. Ha ! thou hast rous'd

The lion in his den ; he stalks abroad,

And the wide forest trembles at his roar ;

I find the danger now. My spirits start

At the alarm, and from all quarters come

To man my heart, the citadel of love.

Is there a power on earth to force you from me,

And shall I not resist it, nor strike first,

To keep, to save you, to prevent that curse ?

This is your cause ; and shall it not prevail ?

Oh ! you were born always to conquer me.

Now am I fashion'd to thy purpose : speak,

What combination, what conspiracy,

Wouldst thou engage me in ? I'll undertake

All thou wouldst have me now for liberty,

For the great cause of love and liberty.

Aboan. Now, my great master, you appear

yourself ;

And, since we have you join'd in our design,

It cannot fail us. I have muster'd up

The choicest slaves, men who are sensible

Of their condition, and seem most resolv'd :

They have their several parties.

Oro. Summon 'em,

Assemble 'em : I will come forth and show

Myself among them : if they are resolv'd,

I'll lead their foremost resolutions.

Aboan. I have provided those will follow you.

Oro. With this reserve in our proceedings still,

The means that lead us to our liberty,

Must not be bloody.

Aboan. You command in all.

We shall expect you, Sir.

Oro. You sha' not long.

[*Exeunt OROONOKO and IMOINDA on one*

side, ABOAN at the other.]

Enter CHARLOTTE WELDON, dressed in man's clothes, followed by WIDOW LACKITT.

Widow L. These unmannerly Indians were something unreasonable to disturb us just in the nick, Mr. Weldon ; but I have the parson within call still, to do us the good turn.

Char. We had best stay a little, I think, to set things settled again, had not we ? Marriage is a serious thing, you know.

Widow L. What do you talk of a serious thing, Mr. Weldon ? I think you have found me sufficiently serious : I have married my son to your sister, to pleasure you : and now I come to claim your promise to me, you tell me marriage is a serious thing.

Char. Why, is it not ?

Widow L. Fiddle faddle, I know what it is : 'tis not the first time I have been married, I hope ; but I shall begin to think you don't design to do fairly by me, so I shall.

Char. Why, indeed, Mrs. Lackitt, I'm afraid I can't do so fairly as I would by you. 'Tis what you must know, first or last ; and I should be the worst man in the world to conceal it any longer ; therefore I must own to you that I am married already.

Widow L. Married ! You don't say so, I hope ? how have you the conscience to tell me such a thing to my face ? I would have you to know I understand better things than to ruin my son without a valuable consideration. If I can't have you, I can keep my money. Your sister sha'n't have the catch of him she expected : I wont part with a shilling to 'em.

Char. You made the match yourself, you know ; you can't blame me.

Widow L. Yes, yes, I can and do blame you : you might have told me before, you were married.

Char. I would not have told you now, but you followed me so close, I was forced to it : indeed I am married in England ; but 'tis as if I were not ; for I have been parted from my wife a great while, and, to do reason on both sides, we hate one another heartily. Now I did design, and will marry you still, if you'll have a little patience.

Widow L. A likely business truly.

Char. I have a friend in England that I will write to, to poison my wife, and then I can marry you with a good conscience.

Widow L. And will he do it, do you think ?

Char. At the first word, or he is not the man I take him to be.

Widow L. Well, you are a dear devil, Mr. Weldon : and would you poison your wife for me ?

Char. I would do any thing for you.

Widow L. Well, I am mightily obliged to you. But 'twill be a great while before you can have an answer of your letter.

Char. 'Twill be a great while, indeed.

Widow L. In the meantime, Mr. Weldon—

Char. Why, in the meantime—Here 's company. We'll settle that within ; I'll follow you. [*Exit WIDOW LACKITT.*]

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, Sir, you carry on your business swimmingly : you have stolen a wedding, I hear.

Char. Ay, my sister is married : and I am very near being run away with myself.

Stan. The widow will have you then ?

Char. You come very seasonably to my rescue.

Jack Stanmore is to be had, I hope ?

Stan. At half an hour's warning.

Char. I must advise with you. [*Exeunt*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter WIDOW LACKITT, and CHARLOTTE WELDON, *dressed in man's clothes.*

Char. Now, Mrs. Lackitt.

Widow L. Well, well, Lackitt, or what you will now; now I am married to you; I am very well pleased with what I have done, I assure you. Mr. Weldon, what must I call you? I must have some pretty fond name or other for you, it looks negligent, and is the fashion, you know.

Char. To be negligent of their husbands, it is indeed.

Widow L. Nay then I won't be in the fashion; for I can never be negligent of dear Mr. Weldon; and, to convince you, here's something to encourage you not to be negligent of me. [*Gives a purse and a little casket.*] Five hundred pounds in gold in this; and jewels to the value of five hundred pounds more in this.

Char. [*Opens the casket.*] Ay, marry, this will encourage me, indeed.

Widow L. There are comforts in marrying an elderly woman, Mr. Weldon. Now a young woman would have fancied she had paid you with her person, or had done you the favour.

Char. What do you talk of young women? you are as young as any of 'em, in every thing but their folly and ignorance.

Widow L. And do you think me so? But I have reason to suspect you. Was not I seen at your house this morning, do you think?

Char. You may venture again: you'll come at night, I suppose?

Widow L. O dear, at night? so soon?

Char. Nay, if you think it so soon—

Widow L. O, no! 'tis not for that, Mr. Weldon; but—I will come to please you.

Char. To please yourself; own it.

Widow L. Well, well, to please myself then. You're the strangest man in the world, nothing can 'scape you.

Enter DANIEL, followed by LUCY.

Dan. What would you have? what do you follow me for?

Lucy. Why mayn't I follow you? I must follow you now all the world over.

Dan. Hold you, hold you there: not so far by a mile or two; I have enough of your company already, by'r lady, and something to spare; you may go home to your brother, an' you will; I have no further to do with you.

Widow L. Why, Daniel, child; thou art not out of thy wits sure, art thou?

Dan. Nay, marry, I don't know; out I am very near, I believe. I am altered for the worse mightily since you saw me; and she has been the cause of it there.

Widow L. How so, child?

Dan. I told you before what would come on't of putting me to bed to a strange woman; but you would not be said nay.

Widow L. She is your wife now, child, you must love her.

Dan. Why, so I did at first.

Widow L. But you must love her always.

Dan. Always! I loved her as long as I could, mother, and as long as loving was good, I believe; for I find now I don't care a fig for her.

Lucy. Why, you lubberly, slovenly block-head—I see all good nature is thrown away upon you—

Widow L. It was so with his father before him. He takes after him.

Lucy. And therefore I will use you as you deserve, you tony.

Widow L. Indeed, he deserves bad enough; but don't call him out of his name: his name is Daniel, you know.

Dan. Let her call me what she pleases, mother, 'tis not her tongue that I'm afraid of.

Lucy. I will make such a beast of thee!

Widow L. O, pray no, I hope; do nothing rashly, Mrs. Lucy.

Dan. I had rather be a beast than what you would make me in a week, I'm sure; I have no more manhood left in me already, than there is in one of my mother's old under-petticoats.

Widow L. Sirrah, sirrah, meddle with your wife's petticoats, and let your mother's alone, you ungracious bird you. [*Beats him.*]

Dan. Why, is the devil in the woman? What have I said now? Do you know if you were asked, I trow? But you are all of a bundle; e'en hang together: he that unties you makes a rod for himself; and so he will find it that has any thing to do with you.

Widow L. Ay, rogue enough, you shall find it; I have a rod for you still.

Dan. No wife, and I care not.

Widow L. I'll swinge you into better manners, you booby. [*Beats him off, and exit.*]

Char. You have consummated our project upon him.

Lucy. Nay, if I have a limb of the fortune, I care not who has the whole body of the fool.

Char. That you shall, and a large one, I promise you.

Lucy. Have you heard the news? They talk of an English ship in the river.

Char. I have heard on't; and am preparing to receive it as fast as I can.

Lucy. There's something the matter too with the slaves, some disturbance or other; I don't know what it is.

Char. So much the better still; we fish in troubled waters: we shall have fewer eyes upon us. Pray, go you home, and be ready to assist me in your part of the design.

Lucy. I can't fail in mine. [*Exit.*]

Char. The widow has furnish'd me, I thank her, to carry it on. Now I have got a wife, 'tis high time to think of getting a husband. I carry my fortune about me—a thousand pounds in gold and jewels. Let me see—'twill be a considerable trust: and I think I shall lay it out to advantage.

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, Weldon, Jack has told me his success; and his hopes of marrying the widow by your means.

Char. I have strained a point, Stanmore, upon your account, to be serviceable to your family.

Stan. I take it upon my account; and am very much obliged to you. But here we are all in an uproar.

Char. So they say. What's the matter?

Stan. A mutiny among the slaves. Oronoko is at the head of 'em. Our governor is gone out with his rascally militia against 'em. What it may come to nobody knows.

Char. For my part, I shall do as well as the rest; but I'm concerned for my sister and cousin, whom I expect in the ship from England.

Stan. There's no danger of 'em.

Char. I have a thousand pounds here, in gold and jewels, for my cousin's use, that I would more particularly take care of: 'tis too great a sum to venture at home: and I would not have her wrong'd of it; therefore to secure it, I think my best way will be to put it into your own keeping.

Stan. You have a very good opinion of my honesty. [*Takes the purse and casket.*]

Char. I have, indeed. If any thing should happen to me in this bustle, as nobody is secure of accidents, I know you will take my cousin into your protection and care. Pray see her married as soon as you can.

Stan. If she be as handsome as her picture, I can promise her a husband.

Char. If you like her when you see her, I wish nothing so much as to have you marry her yourself; for I always thought you worth making a friend.

Stan. You sha'n't find your good opinion thrown away upon me: I am in your debt, and shall think so as long as I live. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—The Country.

Enter on one side of the stage OROONOKO, ABOAN, and slaves; IMOINDA with a bow and quiver; the women, some leading, others carrying their children upon their backs.

Oro. The women with their children fall before Imoinda, you must not expose yourself. [*hind.* Retire, my love: I almost fear for you.

Imo. I fear no danger; life, or death, I will enjoy with you.

Oro. My person is your guard.

Aboan. Now, Sir, blame yourself: if you had not prevented my cutting his throat, that coward there had not discovered us. He comes now to upbraid you.

Enter, on the other side, LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, talking to HOTMAN, with his rabble.

Lieut. This is the very thing I would have wish'd.

Your honest service to the government

Shall be rewarded with your liberty. [*To HOTMAN.*]

Aboan. His honest service! call it what it is, His villany, the service of his fear. If he pretends to honest services, Let him stand out, and meet me like a man.

Oro. Hold, you: and you who come against us, hold: [*Advances.*]

I charge you in a general good to all; And wish I could command you, to prevent The bloody havoc of the murdering sword. I would not urge destruction uncompell'd: But if you follow fate, you find it here. The bonds are set, the limits of our lives: Between us lies the gaping gulf of death, To swallow all. Who first advances dies.

Enter CAPTAIN DRIVER, with his crew.

Capt. D. Here, here, here they are, governor. What, seize upon my ship! Come, boys, fall on—

[*Advancing first, OROONOKO kills him.*]

Oro. Thou art fall'n indeed; Thy own blood be upon thee.

Lieut. Rest it there; He did deserve his death. Take him away.

[*The body is removed*]

You see, Sir, you and those mistaken men Must be our witnesses, we do not come As enemies, and thirsting for your blood. If we desir'd your ruin, the revenge Of our companion's death had push'd it on. But that we overlook, in a regard

To common safety and the public good. [*men,*

Oro. Regard that public good; draw off your And leave us to our fortune: we're resolv'd.

Lieut. Resolv'd! on what? your resolutions Are broken, overturn'd, prevented, lost:

You see our numbers could with ease compel What we request: and what do we request? Only to save yourselves.

[*The women with their children gather about the men.*]

Oro. I'll hear no more.

Lieut. To those poor wretches, who have been seduc'd,

We offer a full pardon—

Oro. Then fall on. [*Preparing to engage.*]

Lieut. Lay hold upon't, before it be too late: Pardon and mercy.

[*The women clinging about the men, they leave OROONOKO, and fall upon their faces, crying out for pardon.*]

Slaves. Pardon, mercy, pardon!

Oro. Let them go all. Now, governor, I see, I own, the folly of my enterprise, The rashness of this action, and must blush, Quite through this veil of night, a whitely shame, To think I could design to make those free, Who were by nature slaves; wretches design'd To be their masters' dogs, and lick their feet.

I would not live on the same earth with creatures, That only have the faces of their kind.

Why should they look like men, who are not so, When they put off their noble natures, for The grovelling qualities of downcast beasts? We were too few before for victory.

We're still enow to die.

[*To IMOINDA and ABOAN.*]

Enter BLANDFORD.

Lieut. Live, royal Sir:

Live, and be happy long on your own terms; Only consent to yield, and you shall have What terms you can propose for you and yours.

Oro. Consent to yield! shall I betray myself?

[*BLANDFORD comes forward.*]

Bland. I'm glad you have proceeded by fair means. [*To LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR.*]

I came to be a mediator.

Lieut. Try what you can to work upon him.

Oro. Are you come against me too?

Bland. Is this to come against you?

[*Offering his sword to OROONOKO.*]

Unarm'd, to put myself into your hands?

I come, I hope, to serve you.

Oro. You have serv'd me; I thank you for't: and I am pleas'd to think You were my friend while I had need of one: But now 'tis past; this farewell, and be gone.

[*Embraces him.*]

Bland. It is not past, and I must serve you still,

Oro. I know what I have done, and I should A child to think they ever can forgive. [*be*]

Forgive! were there but that, I would not live
To be forgiven: is there a power on earth,
That I can ever need forgiveness from?

Bland. You sha' not need it.

Oro. No, I wo't need it.

Bland. You see he offers you your own con-
ditions, For you and yours.

Oro. Must I capitulate?

Precariously compound, on stinted terms,
To save my life?

Bland. Sir, he imposes none.

You make 'em for your own security.

Lieut. He will rely on what you say to him.

[*To BLANDFORD.*

Offer him what you can; I will confirm
And make all good. Be you my pledge of trust.

Bland. I'll answer with my life for all he says.

Lieut. Ay, do, and pay the forfeit if you please.
[*Aside.*

Bland. Consider, Sir, can you consent to throw
That blessing from you, you so hardly found,
And so much valued once?

Oro. Imoinda! oh!

'Tis she that holds me on this argument
Of tedious life; I could resolve it soon,
Were this curs'd being only in debate.
But my Imoinda struggles in my soul;
She makes a coward of me, I confess;
I am afraid to part with her in death;
And more afraid of life to lose her here.

Bland. This way you must lose her. Think
upon

The weakness of her sex, made yet more weak
With her condition, requiring rest,
And soft indulging ease, to nurse your hope,
And make you a glad father.

Oro. There I feel

A father's fondness, and a husband's love.
They seize upon my heart, strain all its strings,
To pull me to 'em from my stern resolve.
Husband and father! all the melting art
Of eloquence lives in those softening names.
Methinks I see the babe, with infant hands,
Pleading for life, and begging to be born.
Shall I forbid its birth, deny him light,
The heavenly comforts of all-cheering light,
And make the womb the dungeon of his death,
His bleeding mother his sad monument?
These are the calls of nature, that call loud;
They will be heard, and conquer in their cause:
He must not be a man, who can resist 'em.
No, my Imoinda! I will venture all
To save thee and that little innocent.
The world may be a better friend to him
Than I have found it. Now I yield myself.

[*Gives up his sword.*

The conflict's past, and we are in your hands.
[*Several men seize ORO. and ABOAN.*

Lieut. So you shall find you are. Dispose of
them as I commanded you.

Bland. Good Heaven forbid. You cannot
mean—

Lieut. This is not your concern.

[*To BLANDFORD, who goes to ORO.*

I must take care of you.

[*To IMOINDA.*

Imo. I'm at the end

Of all my care: here will I die with him.

[*Holding ORO.*

Oro. You shall not force her from me.

[*Holds her.*

Lieut. Then I must.

[*They force her from him.*

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Try other means, and conquer force by force:

Break, cut off his hold, bring her away.

Imo. I do not ask to live, kill me but here.

Oro. O, bloody dogs! inhuman murderers!

[*IMOINDA is forced out at one door by the*

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR and others;

ORO. and ABOAN hurried out at another;

exeunt.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

*Enter STANMORE, CHARLOTTE WELDON, and
LUCY.*

Char. If I should consent to the fine things
you can say to me, how would you look at last,
to find 'em thrown away on an old acquaintance?

Stan. An old acquaintance!

Char. Lord, how easy are you men to be im-
posed upon! I am no cousin newly arrived from
England, not I; but the very Weldon you wot of.

Stan. Weldon!

Char. Not murdered, nor made away, as my
sister would have you believe; but am, in very
good health, your old friend in breeches that was,
and now your humble servant in petticoats.

Stan. I am glad we have you again. But what
service can you do me in petticoats, pray?

Char. Can't you tell what?

Stan. Not I, by my troth. I have found my
friend and lost my mistress, it seems; which I did
not expect from your petticoats.

Char. Come, come, you have had a friend of
your mistress long enough; 'tis high time now to
have a mistress of your friend.

Stan. What do you say?

Char. I am a woman, Sir.

Stan. A woman?

Char. As arrant a woman as you would have
had me but now, I assure you.

Stan. And at my service?

Char. If you have any for me in petticoats.

Stan. Yes, yes, I shall find you employment.

Char. I need not tell you, I made that little
plot, and carried it on only for this opportunity.
I was resolved to see whether you liked me as a
woman, or not: if I had found you indifferent, I
would have endeavoured to have been so too: but
you say you like me, and therefore I have ventured
to discover the truth.

Stan. Like you! I like you so well, that I am
afraid you wont think marriage a proof on't:
shall I give you any other?

Char. No, no, I'm inclined to believe you, and
that shall convince me. At more leisure, I'll
satisfy you how I came to be in man's clothes;
for no ill, I assure you, though I have happened
to play the rogue in 'em. They have assisted me
in marrying my sister, and have gone a great
way in befriending your cousin Jack with the
widow. Can you forgive me for pimping for your
family.

Enter JACK STANMORE.

Stan. So, Jack, what news with you?

Jack S. I am the forepart of the widow, you
know she's coming after with the body of the
family, the young squire in her hand, my son-in-
law that is to be, with the help of Mr. Weldon.

Char. Say you so, Sir?

[*Claps JACK S. upon the back.*

Enter WIDOW LACKITT and her son DANIEL.

Widow L. So, Mrs. Lucy, I have brought him about again; I have chastised him. Will you ever rebel again? will you, sirrah? But come, come, down on your marrow-bones, and ask her forgiveness. [*DANIEL kneels.*] Say after me, pray, forsooth, wife.

Dan. Pray, forsooth, wife.

Lucy. Well, well, this is a day of good nature, and so I take you into favour: but first take the oath of allegiance. [*He kisses her hand, and rises.*] If ever you do so again—

Dan. Nay, marry if I do, I shall have the worst on't.

Lucy. Here's a stranger forsooth, would be glad to be known to you, a sister of mine; pray salute her. [*WIDOW starts at CHARLOTTE.*]

Widow L. Your sister, Mrs. Lucy! What do you mean? This is your brother, Mr. Weldon. Do you think I do not know Mr. Weldon?

Lucy. Have a care what you say; this gentleman's about marrying her: you may spoil all.

Widow L. Fiddle faddle; what, you would put a trick upon me.

Char. No, faith, widow, the trick is over; it has taken sufficiently; and now I will teach you the trick, to prevent your being cheated another time.

Widow L. How! cheated, Mr. Weldon?

Char. Why, ay, you will always take things by the wrong handle: I see you will have me, Mr. Weldon: I grant you I was Mr. Weldon a little while, to please you or so; but Mr. Stanmore here has persuaded me into a woman again.

Widow L. A woman! pray let me speak with you. [*Draws her aside.*] You are not in earnest, I hope, a woman?

Char. Really a woman.

Widow L. 'Gads my life! I could not be cheated in every thing. I know a man from a woman at these years, or the devil is in't. Pray did not you marry me?

Char. You would have it so.

Widow L. And did not I give you a thousand pounds this morning?

Char. Yes, indeed, 'twas more than I deserved; but you had your pennyworth for your penny, I suppose: you seemed to be pleased with your bargain.

Widow L. A rare bargain I have made on't, truly! I have laid out my money to a fine purpose upon a woman.

Char. You would have a husband, and I provided for you as well as I could.

Widow L. Yes, yes, you have provided for me.

Char. And you have paid me very well for't; I thank you.

Widow L. 'Tis very well: I may be with child too, for aught I know, and may go look for the father.

Char. Nay, if you think so, 'tis time to look about you, indeed. For my part, Mrs. Lackitt, your thousand pounds will engage me not to laugh at you. Then my sister is married to your son; he is to have half your estate, I know; and indeed they may live upon it very comfortably to themselves, and very creditably to you.

Widow L. Nay, I can blame nobody but myself.

Char. You have enough for a husband still,

and that you may bestow upon honest Jack Stanmore.

Widow L. Is he the man then?

Char. He is the man you are obliged to.

Jack S. Yes, faith, widow, I am the man.

Widow L. Well, well, I see you will have me; even marry me, and make an end of the business.

Stan. Why, that's well said; now we are all agreed, and all well provided for.

Enter a SERVANT to STANMORE.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Blandford desires you to come to him, and bring as many of your friends as you can with you.

Stan. I come to him. You shall all go along with me. Come, young gentleman, marriage is the fashion you see; you must like it now.

Dan. If I don't, how shall I help myself?

Lucy. Nay, you may hang yourself in the noose, if you please, but you'll never get out on't with struggling.

Dan. Come, then, let's e'en jog on in the old road.

Cuckold, or worse, I must now be contented: I'm not the first has married and repented.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, BLANDFORD, and Planters.

Bland. Have you no reverence for future fame?

No awe upon your actions, from the tongues, The censuring tongues, of men, that will be free?

Re-enter STANMORE, JACK STANMORE, CHARLOTTE WELDON, LUCY, WIDOW LACKITT, and DANIEL.

So, Stanmore, you, I know, the women too, Will join with me: 'tis Oroonoko's cause, A lover's cause, a wretched woman's cause, That will become your intercession.

[*To the Women.*]

Stan. So far from further wrong, that 'tis a shame

He should be where he is. Good governor, Order his liberty: he yielded up Himself, his all, at your discretion.

Bland. Discretion! no; he yielded on your word;

And I am made the cautionary pledge, The gage and hostage of your keeping it. Remember, Sir, he yielded on your word; Your word; which honest men will think should be

The last resort of truth and trust on earth: There's no appeal beyond it but to Heaven.

Stan. He's out of all power of doing any harm now, if he were disposed to it.

Char. But he is not disposed to it.

Bland. To keep him where is, will make him soon

Find out some desperate way to liberty:

He'll hang himself, or dash out his mad brains.

Char. Pray try him by gentle means: we'll all be sureties for him.

Omnnes. All, all.

Lucy. We will all answer for him now.

Lieut. Well, you will have it so; do what you please, just what you will, with him; I give you leave. [*Exit.*]

Bland. We thank you, Sir; this way; pray come with me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The curtain rising, discovers OROONOKO upon his back, his legs and arms stretched out, and chained to the ground. Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, &c.

Bland. O miserable sight! help, ev'ry one, Assist me all to free him from his chains.

[They help him up and bring him forward, looking down.]
Most injur'd prince! how shall we clear ourselves? [all]

Oro. If you would have me think you are not Confederates, all accessory to The base injustice of your governor; If you would have me live, as you appear Concern'd for me: if you would have me live To thank and bless you; there is yet a way To tie me ever to your honest love; Bring my Imoinda to me; give me her, To cheer my sorrows, and, if possible, I'll sit down with my wrongs, never to rise Against my fate, or think of vengeance more.

Bland. Be satisfy'd, you may depend upon us, We'll bring her safe to you, and suddenly.

Char. We will not leave you in so good a Widow L. No, no, we'll go with you. [work.]

Bland. In the meantime, Endeavour to forget, Sir, and forgive; And hope a better fortune.

[Exeunt all but OROONOKO.]
Oro. Forget! forgive! I must indeed forget When I forgive: but while I am a man, In flesh, that bears the living marks of shame, The print of his dishonourable chains, My memory still rousing up my wrongs, I never can forgive this governor, This villain; the disgrace of trust and place, And just contempt of delegated power. What shall I do? If I declare myself, I know him, he will sneak behind his guard Of followers, and brave me in his fears. Else, lion-like, with my devouring rage, I would rush on him, fasten on his throat, Tear a wide passage to his treacherous heart, And that way lay him open to the world.

[Pauses.]
If I should turn his Christian arts on him, Promise him, speak him fair, flatter, and creep With fawning steps, to get within his faith, I could betray him then, as he has me. But am I sure by that to right myself? Lying's a certain mark of cowardice: And, when the tongue forgets its honesty, The heart and hand may drop their functions too, And nothing worthy be resolv'd or done. Let me but find out An honest remedy, I have the hand, A minist'ring hand, that will apply it home.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—The LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S House.

Enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR.

Lieut. I would not have her tell me she consents;
In favour of the sex's modesty.

Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, JACK STANMORE, DANIEL, CHARLOTTE WELDON, and LUCY.

What's the matter?

Char. Nay, nothing extraordinary. But one good action draws on another. You have given the prince his freedom: now we come a begging for his wife: you won't refuse us.

Lieut. Refuse you? No, no, what have I to do to refuse you? I send her to him! You do very well; 'tis kindly done of you; even carry her to him, with all my heart.

Lucy. You must tell us where she is.

Lieut. I tell you! why, don't you know?

Bland. Your servant says she's in the house.

Lieut. No, no, I brought her home at first indeed; but I thought it would not look well to keep her here: I removed her in the hurry only to take care of her. What! she belongs to you: I have nothing to do with her.

Char. But where is she now, Sir?

Lieut. Why, faith, I can't say certainly: you'll hear of her at Parham-house, I suppose: there or thereabouts: I think I sent her there.

Bland. I'll have an eye on him. [Aside.]

[Exeunt all but LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR.]

Lieut. I have lied myself into a little time, And must employ it: they'll be here again; But I must go before 'em.

[Going out, he meets IMOINDA, and seizes her.]

Are you come?

I'll court no longer for a happiness That is in my own keeping: you may still Refuse to grant, so I have power to take. The man that asks deserves to be denied.

[She disengages one hand, and draws his sword from his side upon him; GOVERNOR starts and retires. BLANDFORD enters behind him.]

Imo. He does indeed, that asks unworthily.

Bland. You hear her, Sir, that asks unworthily.

Lieut. You are no judge.

Bland. I am, of my own slave.

Lieut. Be gone, and leave us.

Bland. When you let her go.

Lieut. To fasten upon you.

Bland. I must defend myself.

[IMOINDA retreats towards the door, favoured by BLANDFORD; when they are closed, she throws down the sword and runs out. GOVERNOR takes up his sword, they fight, close, and fall, BLANDFORD upon him. Servants enter and part them.]

Lieut. She sha'n't escape me so; I've gone too far.

Not to go further. Curse on my delay.

But yet she is, and shall be in my power.

Bland. Nay, then it is the war of honesty; I know you, and will save you from yourself.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

Enter OROONOKO.

Oro. To honour bound! and yet a slave to I am distracted by their rival powers, [love!]
And both will be obey'd. O great revenge! Thou raiser and restorer of fall'n fame! Let me not be unworthy of thy aid, For stopping in thy course. I still am thine; But can't forget I am Imoinda's too. She calls me from my wrongs to rescue her. No man condemn me, who has never felt A woman's power, or tried the force of love,

To run his glorious race of light anew,
And carry on the world. Love, love will be
My first ambition, and my fame the next.

Enter ABOAN, bloody.

My eyes are turn'd against me, and combine
With my sworn enemies, to represent
This spectacle of horror. Aboan!

Aboan. I have no name

That can distinguish me from the vile earth,
To which I'm going: a poor abject worm,
That crawl'd awhile upon the bustling world,
And now am trampled to my dust again.

Oro. I see thee gash'd and mangled!

Aboan. Spare my shame,
To tell how they have us'd me; but believe
The hangman's hand would have been merciful.
Do not you scorn me, Sir, to think I can
Intend to live under this infamy?

I do not come for pity, to complain.
I've spent an honourable life with you;
The earliest servant of your rising fame,
And would attend it with my latest care:
My life was yours, and so shall be my death.
You must not live;
Bending and sinking, I have dragg'd my steps
Thus far, to tell you that you cannot live:
To warn you of those ignominious wrongs,
Whips, rods, and all the instruments of death,
Which I have felt, and are prepar'd for you.
This was the duty that I had to pay.
'Tis done, and now I beg to be discharg'd.

Oro. What shall I do for thee?

Aboan. My body tires,
And wo't not bear me off to liberty:
I shall again be taken, made a slave.
A sword, a dagger, yet would rescue me.
I have not strength to go and find out death,
You must direct him to me.

Oro. Here he is, [*Gives him a dagger.*]
The only present I can make thee now:
And, next the honourable means of life,
I would bestow the honest means of death.

Aboan. I cannot stay to thank you. If there is
A being after this, I shall be yours
In the next world, your faithful slave again.
This is to try. [*Stabs himself.*] I had a living
sense

Of all your royal favours, but this last
Strikes through my heart. I wo't not say farewell,
For you must follow me. [*Dies.*]

Oro. In life and death,
The guardian of my honour! Follow thee!
I should have gone before thee: then perhaps
Thy fate had been prevented. All his care
Was to preserve me from the barbarous rage
That worried him, only for being mine.
Why, why ye gods: why am I so accurs'd,
That it must be a reason of your wrath,
A guilt, a crime sufficient to the fate
Of any one, but to belong to me?
My friend has found it out, and my wife will soon:
My wife! the very fear's too much for life.
I can't support it. Where's Imoinda? Oh!

[*Going out, he meets IMOINDA, who runs
into his arms.*]

Thou bosom softness! Down of all my cares!
I could recline my thoughts upon this breast
To a forgetfulness of all my griefs,
And yet be happy: but it wo't not be.
Thou art disorder'd, pale, and out of breath!
If fate pursue thee, find a shelter here.

What is it thou wouldst tell me?

Imo. 'Tis in vain to call him villain.

Oro. Call him governor: is it not so?

Imo. There's not another sure. [*here,*]

Oro. Villain's the common name of mankind
But his most properly. What! what of him?
I fear to be resolv'd, and must inquire.
He had thee in his power.

Imo. I blush to think it.

Oro. Blush! to think what?

Imo. That I was in his power.

Oro. He could not use it?

Imo. What can't such men do?

Oro. But did he? durst he?

Imo. What he could he dar'd.

Oro. His own gods damn him then! For ours
have none,

No punishment for such unheard of crime.

Imo. This monster, cunning in his flatteries,
When he had weary'd all his useless arts,
Leap'd out, fierce as a beast of prey, to seize me.
I trembled, fear'd.

Oro. I fear and tremble now.

What could preserve thee? What deliver thee?

Imo. That worthy man, you us'd to call your

Oro. Blandford? [*friend—*]

Imo. Came in, and sav'd me from his rage.

Oro. He was a friend indeed, to rescue thee!

And, for his sake, I'll think it possible

A Christian may be yet an honest man.

Imo. O did you know what I have struggled
through,

To save me yours, sure you would promise me
Never to see me forc'd from you again.

Oro. To promise thee! O! do I need to promise?
But there is now no further use of words.
Death is security for all our fears.

[*Shows ABOAN'S body on the floor.*]

And yet I cannot trust him.

Imo. Aboan!

Oro. Mangled and torn, resolv'd to give me
time

To fit myself for what I must expect,
Groan'd out a warning to me, and expir'd.

Imo. For what you must expect?

Oro. Would that were all.

Imo. What, to be butcher'd thus—

Oro. Just as thou seest.

Imo. By barbarous hands to fall at last their
prey?

Oro. I have run the race with honour, shall I
now

Lag, and be overtaken at the goal?

Imo. No.

Oro. I must look back to thee. [*Tenderly.*]

Imo. You sha' not need.

I am always present to your purpose; say,

Which way would you dispose me?

This dagger will instruct you. [*Gives it to him.*]

Oro. Ha! this dagger!

Like fate, it points me to the horrid deed.

Imo. Strike, strike it home, and bravely save
us both.

There is no other safety.

Oro. It must be—

But first a dying kiss—

[*Kisses her.*]

This last embrace—

[*Embraces her.*]

And now—

Imo. I'm ready.

Oro. O, where shall I strike?

Is there the smallest grain of that lov'd body
That is not dearer to me than my eyes,

My bosom'd heart, and all the life blood there?
 Bid me cut off these limbs, hew off these hands,
 Dig out these eyes, though I would keep them
 To gaze upon thee: but to murder thee! [last
 The joy and charm of ev'ry ravish'd sense,
 My wife! forbid it, nature.

Imo. 'Tis your wife,

Who on her knees conjures you. O! in time,
 Prevent those mischiefs that are falling on us.
 You may be hurried to a shameful death,
 And I too dragg'd to the vile governor;
 Then I may cry aloud. When you are gone,
 Where shall I find a friend again to save me?

Oro. It will be so. 'Thou unexampled virtue,
 Thy resolution has recover'd mine:
 And now prepare thee.

Imo. Thus, with open arms,
 I welcome you and death.

[*He drops the dagger as he looks on her,
 and throws himself on the ground.*

Oro. I cannot bear it.

O let me dash against the rock of fate,
 Dig up this earth, and tear her bowels out,
 To make a grave, deep as the centre down,
 To swallow wide and bury us together!
 It wou't be. Oh! then some pitying god
 (If there be one a friend to innocence)
 Find yet a way to lay her beauties down
 Gently in death, and save me from her blood.

Imo. O rise, 'tis more than death to see you
 thus.

I'll ease your love, and do the deed myself—
 [*She takes up the dagger, he rises in haste
 to take it from her.*

Oro. O! hold, I charge thee, hold.

Imo. Though I must own

It would be nobler for us both, from you.
Oro. O! for a whirlwind's wing to hurry us
 To yonder cliff, which frowns upon the flood;
 That in embraces lock'd we might plunge in,
 And perish thus in one another's arms.

Imo. Alas! what shout is that?

Oro. I see 'em coming.

They sha'not overtake us. This last kiss,
 And now farewell.

Imo. Farewell, farewell for ever!

Oro. I'll turn my face away, and do it so.
 Now, are you ready?

Imo. Now. But do not grudge me
 The pleasure, in my death, of a last look;
 Pray look upon me.—Now I'm satisfied.

Oro. So fate must be by this.

[*Going to stab her, he stops short; she lays
 her hand on his, in order to give the blow.*

Imo. Nay, then I must assist you.
 And since it is the common cause of both,

'Tis just that both should be employ'd in it
 Thus, thus 'tis finish'd, and I bless my fate.
 [Stabs herself.
 That, where I liv'd, I die in these lov'd arms.

Oro. She's gone. And now all's at an end
 with me.

Soft, lay her down: O we will part no more.
 [Throws himself by her.

But let me pay the tribute of my grief,
 A few sad tears to thy lov'd memory,
 And then I follow—[Shouts; weeps over her.
 But I stay too long. [A noise again.
 The noise comes nearer. Hold, before I go,
 There's something would be done. It shall be so,
 And then, Imoinda, I'll come all to thee. [Rises.

Enter BLANDFORD and his party, before the
 LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR and his party. Swords
 drawn on both sides.

Lieut. You strive in vain to save him, he shall
 die.

Bland. Not while we can defend him with our
 lives.

Lieut. Where is he?

Oro. Here is the wretch whom you would
 have.

Put up your swords, and let no civil broils
 Engage you in the cursed cause of one
 Who cannot live, and now entreats to die;
 This object will convince you.

Bland. 'Tis his wife.

[They gather about the body
 Alas, there was no other remedy.

Lieut. Who did the bloody deed?

Oro. The deed was mine:

Bloody I know it is, and I expect
 Your laws should tell me so. Thus self-con-
 demn'd,

I do resign myself into your hands,
 The hands of justice—But I hold the sword
 For you—and for myself.

[Stabs the GOVERNOR and himself, then
 throws himself by IMOINDA'S body.

'Tis as it should be now, I have sent his ghost
 To be a witness of that happiness
 In the next world, which he denied us here.

[Dies.

Bland. I hope there is a place of happiness
 In the next world for such exalted virtue.

Pagan or unbeliever, yet he liv'd

To all he knew: and, if he went astray,

There's mercy still above to set him right.

But Christians, guided by the heavenly ray,

Have no excuse if they mistake their way.

[Exeunt,

THE COUNTRY GIRL:

A COMEDY

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY DAVID GARRICK. Esq.

REMARKS.

This comedy, originally called the *Country Wife*, was written by Wycherly, a witty companion of Charles the Second, and a favourite of that social and dissolute monarch. The most entertaining parts of this play, to the age for which it was written, are precisely those which the purer taste of the present would reject. Mr Garrick revived this piece, in 1766, when Manager of Drury Lane Theatre; and his judicious alterations have rendered it worthy the approbation of the public.

Mrs. Jordan made her first appearance on the London stage in the character of Peggy; in which she displayed that native talent, grace, simplicity, and harmony, which so long rendered her an object of boundless attraction and applause.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.	COVENT GARDEN
MOODY,.....	<i>Mr. Bartley,</i>	<i>Mr. Fawcett.</i>
HARCOURT,.....	<i>Mr. Wallack,</i>	<i>Mr. Barrymore.</i>
SPARKISH,.....	<i>Mr. S. Penley,</i>	<i>Mr. Farley.</i>
BELVILLE,.....	<i>Mr. Barnard,</i>	<i>Mr. Hamerton.</i>
WILLIAM,.....	<i>Mr. Maddocks,</i>	<i>Mr. Menage.</i>
COUNTRYMAN,.....	<i>Mr. Minton,</i>	<i>Mr. Howell.</i>
JOHN,.....	<i>Mr. Coveney,</i>	<i>Mr. W. Chapman.</i>
Mrs PEGGY,.....	<i>Mrs. Mardyn,</i>	<i>Mrs. Alsop.</i>
ALITHEA,.....	<i>Mrs. Orger,</i>	<i>Miss Matthews.</i>
LUCY,.....	<i>Miss Tidswell,</i>	<i>Mrs. Gibbs.</i>

ACT I.

SCENE I.—HARCOURT's Lodgings.

HARCOURT and BELVILLE discovered sitting.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! and so you are in love, nephew; not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentleman ought, but sighingly, miserably so; not content to be ankle-deep, you have soused over head and ears—ha, Dick?

Bel. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle. [*Sighs.*]

Har. Nay, never blush at it: when I was of your age I was ashamed too; but three years at college, and half a one at Paris, methinks should have cured you of that unfashionable weakness—modesty.

Bel. Could I have released myself from that, I had perhaps been at this instant happy in the

possession of what I must despair now ever to obtain—Heigho!

Har. Ha, ha, ha! very foolish indeed.

Bel. Don't laugh at me, uncle; I am foolish, I know; but like other fools, I deserve to be pitied.

Har. Prythee don't talk of pity; how can I help you? for this country girl of yours is certainly married.

Bel. No, no—I won't believe it; she is not married, nor she sha'n't be, if I can help it.

Har. Well said, modesty; with such a spirit you can help yourself, Dick, without my assistance.

Bel. But you must encourage and advise me too, or I shall never make any thing of it.

Har. Provided the girl is not married; for I never encourage young men to covet their neighbours' wives.

Bel. My heart assures me, that she is not married.

Har. O, to be sure, your heart is much to be relied upon; but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you in misfortunes as in relationship, you must know—

Bel. What, uncle? you alarm me!

Har. That I am in love too.

Bel. Indeed!

Har. Miserably in love.

Bel. That's charming.

Har. And my mistress is just going to be married to another.

Bel. Better and better.

Har. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please you; but now prepare for the wonderful wonder-of-wonders!

Bel. Well!

Har. My mistress is in the same house with yours.

Bel. What, are you in love with Peggy too?

[*Rising from his chair.*]

Har. Well said, jealousy. No, no, set your heart at rest; your Peggy is too young, and too simple for me. I must have one a little more knowing, a little better bred, just old enough to see the difference between me and a coxcomb, spirit enough to break from a brother's engagements, and choose for herself.

Bel. You don't mean Alitheia, who is to be married to Mr. Sparkish?

Har. Can't I be in love with a lady that is going to be married to another, as well as you, Sir?

Bel. But Sparkish is your friend?

Har. Pr'ythee don't call him my friend; he can be nobody's friend, not even his own.—He would thrust himself into my acquaintance, would introduce me to his mistress, though I have told him again and again that I was in love with her; which, instead of ridding me of him, has made him only ten times more troublesome, and me really in love. He should suffer for his self-sufficiency.

Bel. 'Tis a conceited puppy!—And what success with the lady?

Har. No great hopes; and yet if I could defer the marriage a few days, I should not despair; but honour, I am confident, is her only attachment to my rival: she can't like Sparkish; and if I can work upon his credulity, a credulity which even popery would be ashamed of, I may yet have the chance of throwing sixes upon the dice to save me.

Bel. Nothing can save me.

Har. No, not if you whine and sigh, when you should be exerting every thing that is man about you. I have sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours, in the house, to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not married already.

Bel. How cruel you are—you raise me up with one hand, and then you knock me down with the other.

Har. Well, well, she sha'n't be married. [*Knocking at the door.*] This is Sparkish, I suppose: don't drop the least hint of your passion to him; if you do, you may as well advertise it in the public papers.

Bel. I'll be careful.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. An odd sort of a person, from the country, I believe, who calls himself Moody, wants to see you, Sir; but as I did not know him, I said you

were not at home, but would return directly; "And so will I too," said he, very short and surly! and away he went mumbling to himself.

Har. Very well, Will; I'll see him when he comes. [*Exit SERVANT.*] Moody call to see me!—He has something more in his head than making me a visit; 'tis to complain of you, I suppose.

Bel. How can he know me?

Har. We must suppose the worst, and be prepared for him; tell me all you know of this war. of his, this Peggy—Peggy what's her name?

Bel. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.

Har. Ay, ay, Sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hampshire; and left very young, under the guardianship of my old companion and acquaintance, Jack Moody.

Bel. Your companion!—he's old enough to be your father.

Har. Thank you, nephew—he has greatly the advantage of me in years, as well as wisdom. When I first launched from the university, into this ocean of London, he was the greatest make in it; I knew him well for near two years, but all of a sudden he took a freak (a very prudent one) of retiring wholly into the country.

Bel. There he gained such an ascendancy over the odd disposition of his neighbour, Sir Thomas, that he left him sole guardian to his daughter; who forfeits half her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent—there's the devil, uncle.

Har. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much in love, that you would take her with half her value? ha, nephew?

Bel. I'll take her with any thing—with nothing.

Har. What! such an unaccomplished, awkward, silly creature? he has scarce taught her to write; she has seen nobody to converse with, but the country people about 'em; so she can do nothing but dangle her arms, look gawky, turn her toes in, and talk broad Hampshire.

Bel. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity; had you but heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall in the country, by moon-light—

Har. Romeo and Juliet, I protest, ha, ha, ha! "Arise fair sun, and kill the envious—" ha, ha, ha! How often have you seen this fair Capulet?

Bel. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke to her twice; I have leaped an orchard wall, like Romeo, to come at her; played the balcony scene, from an old summer-house in the garden; and if I lose her, I will find out an apothecary, and play the tomb scene too.

Har. Well said, Dick!—this spirit must produce something; but has the old dragon ever caught you sighing at her?

Bel. Never in the country; he saw me yesterday kissing my hand to her, from the new tavern window that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately drove her from it, and fastened up the window-shutters.

Spark. [*Without.*] Very well, Will, I'll go up to 'em.

Har. I hear Sparkish coming up; take care of what I told you; not a word of Peggy; hear his intelligence, and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

Bel. Mum, mum, uncle.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. O, my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing; I have such news for thee—ha, ha,

ha!—What, your nephew too, and a little dumpy, or so; you have been giving him a lecture upon economy. I suppose, you, who never had any, can best describe the evils that arise from the want of it. I never mind my own affairs, not I—“The gods take care of Cato.”—I hear, Mr. Belville, you have got a pretty snug house, with a bow-window that looks into the Park, and a back-floor that goes out into it. Very convenient, and well imagined—no young handsome fellow should be without one—you may be always ready there, like a spider in his web, to seize upon strayed women of quality.

Har. As you used to do—you vain fellow you; prythee, don't teach my nephew your abandoned tricks; he is a modest young man, and you must not spoil him.

Spark. May be so; but his modesty has done some mischief at our house—my surly, jealous brother-in-law saw that modest young gentleman casting a wishful eye at his forbidden fruit, from the new tavern window.

Bel. You mistake the person, Mr. Sparkish; I don't know what young lady you mean.

Har. Explain yourself, Sparkish, you must mistake; Dick has never seen the girl.

Spark. I don't say he has; I only tell you what Moody says. Besides, he went to the tavern himself, and inquired of the waiter who dined in the back room, No. 4? and they told him it was Mr. Belville, your nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to know of it, faith.

Har. He kissed his hand, indeed, to your lady, Alithea, and is more in love with her than you are, and very near as much as I am; so look about you, such a youth may be dangerous.

Spark. The more danger the more honour: I defy you both—win her and wear her if you can—*Dolus an virtus* in love as well as in war—though you must be expeditious, faith; for, I believe, if I don't change my mind, I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after.—Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt, no fellow-collegian to recommend me, to do the business?

Har. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. [*Aside.*] Why, faith, I have, Sparkish; my brother, a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands.—I am a very generous rival, you see, to lend you my brother to marry the woman I love!

Spark. And so am I too, to let your brother come so near us—but Ned shall be the man; poor Alithea grows impatient; I can't put off the evil day any longer. I fancy the brute, her brother, has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Bel. How, country idiot, Sir?

Har. Hold your tongue. [*Apart to BELVILLE.*] I thought he had been married already.

Spark. No, no, he's not married, that's the joke of it.

Bel. No, no, he is not married.

Har. Hold your tongue—

[*Elbowing BELVILLE.*]

Spark. Not he—I have the finest story to tell you—by the by, he intends calling upon you, for he asked me where you lived, to complain of modesty there. He picked up an old raking acquaintance of his as we came along together, Will Frankly, who saw him with his girl, skulking and muffled up, at the play last night; he plagued him much about matrimony, and his be-

ing ashamed to show himself; swore he was in love with his wife, and intended to cuckold him. “Do you?” cried Moody, folding his arms, and scowling with his eyes thus—“You must have more wit than you used to have; besides, if you have as much as you think you have, I shall be out of your reach, and this profligate metropolis, in less than a week.”—Moody would fain have got rid of him, but the other held him by the sleeve, so I left 'em; rejoiced most luxuriously to see the poor devil tormented.

Bel. I thought you said, just now, that he was not married; is not that a contradiction, Sir?

[*HARCOURT still makes signs to BELVILLE.*]

Spark. Why, it is a kind of one; but considering your modesty, and the ignorance of the young lady, you are pretty tolerably inquisitive, methinks; ha, Harcourt! ha, ha, ha!

Har. Pooh, pooh! don't talk to that boy, tell me all you know.

Spark. You must know, my booby of a brother-in-law hath brought up this ward of his (a good fortune let me tell you,) as he coops up and fattens his chickens, for his own eating; he is plaguy jealous of her, and was very sorry that he could not marry her in the country, without coming up to town; which he could not do on account of some writings or other; so what does my gentleman? he persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking a sixpence, or some nonsense or another, that they are to all intents married in heaven; but that the laws require the signing of articles and the church service to complete their union: so he has made her call him husband, and bud, which she constantly does; and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, egad; ha, ha, ha! and all went do

Bel. Thank you, Sir. What heavenly news, uncle!

[*Aside.*]

Har. What an idiot you are, nephew! [*Apart.*] And so then you make but one trouble of it, and are both to be tacked together the same day?

Spark. No, no, he can't be married this week; he damns the lawyers for keeping him in town; besides, I am out of favour; and he is continually snarling at me, and abusing me for not being jealous. [*Knocking at the door.*] There he is—I must not be seen with you, for he'll suspect something; I'll wait for you, and make a visit to my wife that is to be, and perhaps we shall show young modesty here a sight of Peggy too.

Re-enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here's the strange odd sort of a gentleman come again, and I have shown him into the fore-parlour.

Spark. That must be Moody! Well said, Will; an odd sort of a strange gentleman, indeed; we'll step into the next room till he comes into this, and then you may have him all to yourself—much good may he do you. [*Going.*] Remember that he is married, or he'll suspect me of betraying him.

[*Exeunt SPARKISH and BELVILLE.*]

Har. Show him up, Will. [*Exit SERVANT.*] Now must I prepare myself to see a very strange, though a very natural metamorphosis; a once high-spirited, handsome, well-dressed, raking prodigal of the town, sunk into a surly, suspicious, economical, country sloven.

Enter Moody.

Moo. Mr. Harcourt, your humble servant: have you forgot me?

Har. What, my old friend Jack Moody! by thy long absence from the town, the grumness of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy—you are certainly married.

Moo. My long stay in the country will excuse my dress, and I have a suit at law that brings me up to town, and puts me out of humour; besides, I must give Sparkish ten thousand pounds to-morrow to take my sister off my hands.

Har. Your sister is very much obliged to you: being so much older than you, you have taken upon you the authority of a father, and have engaged her to a coxcomb.

Moo. I have, and to oblige her: nothing but coxcombs or debauchees are the favourites now-a-days; and a coxcomb is rather the more innocent animal of the two.

Har. She has sense and taste, and can't like him; so you must answer for the consequences.

Moo. When she is out of my hands, her husband must look to consequences. He's a fashionable fool, and will cut his horns kindly.

Har. And what is to secure your worship from consequences?—I did not expect marriage from such a rake—one that knew the town so well; fy, fy, Jack.

Moo. I'll tell you my security—I have married no London wife.

Har. That's all one; that grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful, pampered, Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Moo. I wish the devil had both him and his simile.

Har. Well, never grumble about it, what's done can't be undone. Is your wife handsome and young?

Moo. She has little beauty but her youth, nothing to brag of but her health, and no attraction but her modesty—wholesome, homely, and house-wifely; that's all.

Har. You talk as like a grazier as you look, Jack. Why did you not bring her to town before, to be taught something?

Moo. Which something I might repent as long as I live.

Har. But pr'ythee, why wouldst thou marry her, if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly? she must be rich then?

Moo. As rich as if she had the wealth of the mogul. She'll not ruin her husband, like a London baggage, with a million of vices she never heard of: then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference between me and you; that is, between a man of thirty, and one of forty.

Har. Fifty, to my knowledge. [*Moody turns off and grumbles.*]—But see how you and I differ, Jack—wit to me is more necessary than beauty; I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Moo. 'Tis my maxim—He's a fool that marries; but he's a greater that does not marry a fool.—I know the town, Mr. Harcourt; and my wife shall be virtuous in spite of you or your nephew.

Har. My nephew!—poor sheepish lad, he runs away from every woman he sees; he saw your sister Alithea at the opera, and was much smitten with her; he always toasts her, and hates the very name of Sparkish. I'll bring him to your house, and you shall see what a formidable Tarquin he is.

Moo. I have no curiosity, so give yourself no trouble.—You have heard of a wolf in sheep's clothing; and I have seen your innocent nephew kissing his hands at my windows.

Har. At your sister, I suppose; not at her, unless he was tipsy. How can you, Jack, be so outrageously suspicious? Sparkish has promised to introduce him to his mistress.

Moo. Sparkish is a fool, and may be what I'll take care not to be—I confess my visit to you, Mr. Harcourt, was partly for old acquaintance sake, but chiefly to desire your nephew to confine his gallantries to the tavern, and not send 'em in looks, signs, or tokens, on the other side of the way. I keep no brothel; so pray tell your nephew.

[*Going.*]
Har. Nay, pr'ythee, Jack, leave me in better humour. Well, I'll tell him; ha, ha, ha! Poor Dick, how he'll stare. This will give him a reputation, and the girls wont laugh at him any longer. Shall we dine together at the tavern, and send for my nephew to chide him for his gallantry? Ha, ha, ha! we shall have fine sport.

Moo. I am not to be laughed out of my senses, Mr. Harcourt.—I was once a modest young gentleman myself; and I never have been half so mischievous before or since, as I was in that state of innocence.—And, so, old friend, make no ceremony with me; I have much business, and you have much pleasure, and therefore as I hate forms, I will excuse your returning my visit, or sending your nephew to satisfy me of his modesty—and so your servant.

[*Exit.*]
Har. Ha, ha, ha! poor Jack! what a life of suspicion does he lead! I pity the poor fellow, though he ought and will suffer for his folly—Folly!—'tis treason, murder, sacrilege! When persons of a certain age will indulge their false, ungenerous appetites, at the expense of a young creature's happiness, dame Nature will revenge herself upon them, for thwarting her most heavenly will and pleasure.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Chamber in MOODY'S House.

Enter PEGGY and ALITHEA.

Peg. Pray, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in, in London?

Ali. A pretty question! why, sister, Vauxhall, Kensington Gardens, and St. James' Park, are the most frequented.

Peg. Pray, sister, tell me why my bud looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up so close, and wont let me go a walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday?

Ali. O, he's jealous, sister!

Peg. Jealous! what's that?

Ali. He's afraid you should love another man.

Peg. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Ali. Did he not carry you yesterday to a play?

Peg. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people: ho

would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could see 'em: He told me none but naughty women sat there; but I would have ventured for all that.

Ali. But how did you like the play?

Peg. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I liked hugely the actors; they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Ali. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Peg. Ay, how should I help it, sister? pray, sister, when my guardian comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a walking?

Ali. A walking! ha, ha, ha! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a foot-post; and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses. [*Aside.*] But here comes my brother; I'll ask him, though I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Enter MOODY.

Peg. O my dear, dear bud, welcome home; why dost thou look so fropish? who has nanger'd thee?

Moo. You're a fool.

[*PEGGY goes aside and cries.*
Ali. Faith, and so she is, for crying for no fault; poor tender creature!

Moo. What, you would have her as impudent as yourself; as arrant a girl-flirt, a gadder, a magpie; and, to say all, a mere notorious town woman!

Ali. Brother, you are my only censurer: and the honour of your family will sooner suffer in your wife that is to be, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the town!

Moo. Hark you, mistress! do not talk so before my wife: the innocent liberty of the town!

Ali. Pray, what ill people frequent my lodgings? I keep no company with any woman of scandalous reputation.

Moo. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputation company.

Ali. Would you not have me civil? answer 'em at public places? walk with 'em when they join me in the Park, Kensington Gardens, or Vauxhall?

Moo. Hold, hold; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found; I believe she's the worse for your town documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance, as I do.

Peg. Indeed, be not angry with her, bud, she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a day.

Moo. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find.

Peg. Not I, indeed, dear; I hate London: our place-house in the country is worth a thousand of't; would I were there again!

Moo. So you shall, I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in? you are her encourager in such discourses.

[*To ALITHEA.*
Peg. No, indeed, dear: she chid me just now for liking the player-men.

Moo. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there is no harm in't. [*Aside.*] Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I do; the player-men are finer folks.

Moo. But you love none better than me?

Peg. You are my own dear bud, and I know you; I hate strangers.

Moo. Ay, my dear, you must love me only; and not be like the naughty town women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddles, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town life.

Peg. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town life, London is not so bad a place, dear.

Moo. How! if you love me, you must hate London.

Peg. Bud, bud, do the town women love the player-men too?

Moo. Ay, I warrant you.

Peg. Ay, I warrant you.

Moo. Why, you do not, I hope?

Peg. No, no, bud; but why have we no player-men in the country?

Moo. Ha! Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Peg. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me as it were desire it. Pray, let me go to a play, dear?

Moo. Hold your peace; I wont.

Peg. Why, love?

Moo. Why, I'll tell you.

Peg. Pray why, dear?

Moo. First, you like the actors; and the gal-lants may like you.

Peg. What, a homely country girl? no, bud, nobody will like me.

Moo. I tell you yes, they may.

Peg. No, no, you jest—I wont believe you; I will go.

Moo. I tell you then, that one of the most raking fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Peg. Indeed! who, who, pray who was't?

Moo. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware. How overjoyed she is? [*Aside.*

Peg. Was it any Hampshire gallant? any of our neighbours?—Promise you I am beholden to him.

Moo. I promise you, you lie; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds.

Peg. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me? answer me to that. Methinks he should not; I would do him no harm.

Ali. Ha, ha, ha!

Moo. 'Tis very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company; get you in, get you in.

Peg. But pray, husband, is he a pretty gentleman that loves me?

Moo. In baggage, in. [*Thrusts her in, and shuts the door.*] what, all the libertines of the town brought to my lodging by this easy coxcomb! 'sdeath, I'll not suffer it.

Enter SPARKISH, HARCOURT, and BELVILLE.

Spark. Here, Belville, do you approve my choice? Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, the wits.

[*To ALITHEA.*
Moo. Ay, they shall know her as well as yourself will, I warrant you. [*Aside.*

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow; and one you must make welcome; for he's modest. [*BELVILLE salutes ALITHEA.*] Harcourt makes

himself welcome, and has not the same foible, though of the same family.

Har. You are too obliging, Sparkish.

Moo. And so he is, indeed. The top's horns will as naturally sprout upon his brows as mushrooms upon dunghills. [*Aside.*]

Har. This, Mr. Moody, is my nephew you mentioned to me. I would bring him with me; for a sight of him will be sufficient, without poppy or mandragora, to restore you to rest.

Bel. I am sorry, Sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness; it was not so intended, I assure you, Sir.

Moo. It may be so, Sir, but not the less criminal for that.—My wife, Sir, must not be snirked and nodded at from tavern windows. I am a good shot, young gentleman, and don't suffer magpies to come near my cherries.

Bel. Was it your wife, Sir?

Moo. What 's that to you, Sir? suppose it were my grandmother?

Bel. I would not dare to offend her.—Permit me to say a word in private to you.

[*Exit Moody and Bel.*]

Spark. Now old surly is gone, tell me, Harcourt, if thou likest her as well as ever.—My dear, don't look down; I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Ali. For shame, Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost like her? thou hast stared upon her enough to resolve me.

Har. So infinitely well that I could wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Ali. Sir, Mr. Sparkish has often told me that his acquaintance were all wits and railers; and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, Madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him. I do assure you he is the honestest, worthiest, true-hearted gentleman; a man of such perfect honour, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that—

Spark. Nay, 'egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely; I see it in your eyes.—He does admire you, Madam; he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times; have you not, Harcourt? you do admire her, by the world, you do—don't you?

Har. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it, her whole sex; and till now I never thought I should have envied you or any man about to marry; but you have the best excuse to marry I ever knew.

Ali. Nay, now Sir, I am satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is most civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, the common butt of every railer.

Har. Truly, Madam, I was never an enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Ali. But why, Sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? because it robs you of your friend here? for you look upon a friend married as one gone into a monastery; that is, dead to the world.

Har. 'Tis indeed because you marry him: I see, Madam, you can guess my meaning.—I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in

my power to break the match; by heavens, I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Ali. Would you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no, 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank! no, 'egad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Ali. Great kindness to you indeed!—Insensible! let a man make love to his mistress to his face. [*Aside.*]

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shalt enjoy me sometimes, dear rogue.—By my honour, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest. I think that was prettily said of me, ha, Harcourt?—Pr'ythee, Frank, dost think my wife, that shall be, there, a fine person?

Har. I could gaze upon her till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How as I am? how?

Har. Because you are a lover; and true lovers are blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too, as well as beauty. Go, go with her into a corner, and try if she has wit; talk to her any thing; she's bashful before me—take her into a corner. [*Harcourt courts ALITHEA aside.*]

Re-enter MOODY.

Moo. How, Sir! If you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister.—Be a pander to your own wife, bring men to her, let 'em make love before your face, thrust 'em into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha! a silly, wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool, ha, ha, ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee, by the world. What have you done with Belleville?

[*Struggles with MOODY to keep him from HARCOURT and ALITHEA.*]

Moo. Shown him the way out of my house, as you should do that gentleman.

Spark. Nay, but pr'ythee let me reason with thee. [*Talks apart with MOODY.*]

Ali. The writings are drawn, Sir, settlements made; 'tis too late, Sir, and past all revocation.

Har. Then so is my death.

Ali. I would not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so?

Ali. I have no obligations to you.

Har. My love.

Ali. I had his before.

Har. You never had it; he wants, you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Ali. Love proceeds from esteem: he cannot distrust my virtue; besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Har. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than bribing your woman, that he may marry you, is a sign of his generosity. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Ali. No, now you have put a scruple in my head.—But in short, Sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him; my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Har. No; if you do marry him, with your par-

don, Madam, your reputation must suffer in the world.

Ali. Nay, now you are rude, Sir.—Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend here is very troublesome, and very loving.

Har. Hold, hold. [*Aside to ALITHEA.*]

Moo. D'ye hear that, senseless puppy?

Spark. Why, d'ye think I'll seem jealous, like a country bumpkin?

Moo. No, rather be dishonoured, like a credulous driveller.

Har. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him?

Ali. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Har. Wrong him! no man can do it; he's beneath an injury; a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot; a wretch so contemptible to all the world but you, that—

Ali. Hold, do not rail at him; for since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him: nay, I think I am obliged to tell him you are not his friend—Mr. Sparkish, Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. What, what?—Now, dear rogue, has she not wit?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had.

Ali. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you?

Har. Madam!

Spark. How? no; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant: what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Ali. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him.

Moo. And he was in the right on't.

Ali. Besides, he has been making love to me.

Moo. And I told the fool so.

Har. True, damned tell-tale woman. [*Aside.*]

Spark. Pshaw! to show his parts; we wits rail and make love often, but to show our parts; as we have no affections, so we have no malice; we—

Moo. Did you ever hear such an ass?

Ali. He said you were a wretch, below an injury.

Spark. Pshaw!

Ali. A common bubble.

Spark. Pshaw!

Ali. A coward.

Spark. Pshaw, pshaw!

Ali. A senseless, drivelling idiot.

Moo. True, true, true; all true.

Spark. How! did he disparage my parts? nay then, my honour's concerned. I can't put up that. Brother, help me to kill him. [*Offers to draw.*]

Ali. Hold! hold!

Moo. If Harcourt would but kill Sparkish, and run away with my sister, I should be rid of three plagues at once. [*Aside.*]

Ali. Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said, after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How! say I am a fool; that is no wit, out of friendship to me.

Ali. Yes, to try whether I was concerned enough for you; and made love to me only to be satisfied of my virtue for your sake.

Har. Kind, however!

[*Aside.*]

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon; but why would not you tell me so, faith?

Har. Because I do not think on't, faith.

Spark. Come, Belville is gone away; Harcourt let's be gone to the new play; come, Madam.

Ali. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box, and run all about the house, as you used to do.

Spark. Pshaw! I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box, to entertain you, and that's as good. If I sat in the box, I should be thought no critic. I must run about, my dear, and abuse the author.—Come, away. Harcourt, lead her down. B'ye, brother.

[*Exeunt HARCOURT, SPARKISH, and ALITHEA.*]

Moo. B'ye, driveller. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops; such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they're married. But let me go look to my freehold.

Enter a COUNTRYMAN.

Coun. Master, your worship's servant. Here is the lawyer, counsellor gentleman, with a green bag full of papers, come again, and should be glad to speak to you.

Moo. Now here's some other damned impediment, which the law has thrown in our way. I shall never marry the girl, nor get clear of the smoke and wickedness of this cursed town. [*Aside.*] Where is he?

Coun. He's below in a coach, with three other lawyers, counsellor gentlemen. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Another Chamber.

Enter PEGGY and LUCY.

Lucy. What ails you, Miss Peggy? you are grown quite melancholy.

Peg. Would it not make any one melancholy to see your mistress Alithea go every day fluttering about abroad to plays and assemblies, and I know not what, whilst I must stay at home, like a poor, lonely, sullen bird in a cage?

Lucy. Dear Miss Peggy, I thought you chose to be confined: I imagined that you had been bred so young to the cage, that you had no pleasure in flying about, and hopping in the open air, as other young ladies, who go a little wild about this town.

Peg. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till somebody told me what pure lives the London ladies lead, with their dancing meetings, and junketings, and dressed every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you, play at nine-pins every day in the week, so they do.

Lucy. To be sure, Miss, you will lead a better life when joined in holy wedlock with your sweet-tempered guardian, the cheerful Mr. Moody?

Peg. I can't lead a worse, that's one good thing; but I must make the best of a bad market, for I can't marry nobody else.

Lucy. How so, Miss? that's very strange.

Peg. Why, we have a contraction to one another; so we are as good as married, you know.

Lucy. I know it!—Heaven forbid, Miss.

Peg. Heigho!

Lucy. Don't sigh, Miss Peggy; if that young gentleman, who was here just now, would take pity on me, I'd throw such a contract as yours behind the fire.

Peg. Lord bless us, how you talk!

Lucy. Young Mr. Belville would make you talk otherwise, if you knew him.

Peg. Mr. Belville!—Where is he?—When did you see him?—You have undone me, Lucy; where was he? did he say any thing?

Lucy. Say any thing!—very little indeed; he's quite distracted, poor young creature. He was talking with your guardian just now.

Peg. The deuce he was!—but where was it, and when was it?

Lucy. In this house, five minutes ago, when your guardian turned you into your chamber, for fear of your being seen.

Peg. I knew something was the matter, I was in such a fluster. But what did he say to my bud?

Lucy. What do you call him bud for? Bud means husband, and he is not your husband yet, and I hope never will be; and if he was my husband I'd bud him, a surly, unreasonable beast.

Peg. I'd call him any names, to keep him in good humour, if he'd let me marry any body else, (which I can't do,) I'd call him husband as long as he lived. But what said Mr. Belville to him?

Lucy. I don't know what he said to him, but I'll tell you what he said to me, with a sigh, and his hand upon his breast, as he went out of the door—"If you ever were in love, young gentlewoman, (meaning me,) and can pity a most faithful lover, tell the dear object of my affections—"

Peg. Meaning me, Lucy!

Lucy. Yes, you, to be sure. "Tell the dear object of my affections, I live but upon the hopes that she is not married; and when those hopes leave me, she knows the rest;" then he cast up his eyes thus—gnashed his teeth—struck his forehead—would have spoke again, but could not—fetched a deep sigh, and vanished.

Peg. That is really very fine; I am sure it makes my heart sink within me, and brings tears into my eyes! O, he's a charming sweet—But hush, hush, I hear my husband!

Lucy. Don't call him husband. Go into the Park this evening, if you can.

Peg. Mum, mum.

Enter MOODY.

Moo. Come, what's here to do; you are putting the town pleasures in her head, and setting her a longing.

Lucy. Yes, after nine-pins; you suffer none to give her those longings but yourself.

Moo. Come, Mrs. Flippant, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us: the liberty your mistress takes abroad makes her hanker after it, and out of humour at home. Poor wretch! she desired not to come to London; I would bring her.

Lucy. O yes, you surfeit her with pleasures.

Moo. She has been this fortnight in town, and never desired, till this afternoon, to go abroad.

Lucy. Was she not at the play yesterday?

Moo. Yes, but she never asked me: I was myself the cause of her going.

Lucy. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my mistress.

Moo. Well, next week I shall be rid of you all, rid of this town, and my dreadful apprehensions. Come, be not melancholy, for thou shalt go into the country very soon, dearest.

Peg. Pish! what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Moo. How's this? what, flout at the country?

Peg. Let me alone, I am not well.

Moo. O, if that be all—what ails my dearest?

Peg. Truly, I don't know; but I have not been well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Moo. Ha!

Lucy. That's my mistress too.

Moo. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concerned because a raking young fellow chanced to lie, and say he liked you, you'll make me sick too.

Peg. Of what sickness?

Moo. O, of that which is worse than the plague, jealousy.

Peg. Pish, you jeer: I'm sure there's no such disease in your receipt-book at home.

Moo. No, you never met with it, poor innocent.

Peg. Well, but pray, bud, let's go to a play to-night.

Moo. No, no; no more plays. But why are you so eager to see a play?

Peg. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the playmen, and would see, if I could, the gallant you say loves me; that's all, dear bud.

Moo. Is that all, dear bud?

Lucy. This proceeds from my mistress' example.

Peg. Let's go abroad, however, dear bud, if we don't go to the play.

Moo. Come, have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the country next week.

Peg. Therefore, I would first see some sights to tell my neighbours of: nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Moo. What, you have put this into her head?

[*To LUCY.*
Lucy. Heaven defend me, what suspicions! somebody has put more things into your head than you ought to have.

Moo. Your tongue runs too glibly, Madam; and you have lived too long with a London lady, to be a proper companion for innocence. I am not over fond of your mistress.

Lucy. There's no love lost between us.

Moo. You admitted those gentlemen into the house, when I said I would not be at home; and there was the young fellow too who behaved so indecent to my wife at the tavern window.

Lucy. Because you would not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodgings.

Peg. Why, O Lord, did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Moo. No, no. You are not the cause of that damned question too? [*To LUCY.*

Peg. Come, pray, bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late; for I will go, that's flat and plain—only into the Park.

Moo. So! the obstinacy already of the town wife; and I must, while she's here, humour her like one. [*Aside.*]—How shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Lucy. Muffle her up with a bonnet and cloak, and I'll go with her to avoid suspicion.

Moo. No, no, I am obliged to you for your kindness, but she sha'n't stir without me.

Lucy. What will you do then?

Peg. What, shall we go? I am sick with staying at home: if I don't walk in the Park, I'll do nothing that I am bid for a week—I won't be moped.

Lucy. O she has a charming spirit! I could

stand your friend now, and would, if you had ever a civil word to give me. [*To MOODY.*]

Moo. I'll give thee a better thing, I'll give thee a guinea for thy good advice, if I like it; and I can have the best of the college for the same money.

Lucy. I despise a bribe: when I am your friend, it shall be without fee or reward.

Peg. Don't be long then, for I will go out.

Lucy. The tailor brought home last night the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Peg. You must not tell that, Lucy.

Lucy. But I will, Madam. When you were with your lawyers last night, Miss Peggy, to divert me and herself, put 'em on, and they fitted her to a hair.

Moo. Thank you, thank you, Lucy, 'tis the luckiest thought! Go this moment, Peggy, into your chamber, and put 'em on again—and you shall walk with me into the Park, as my godson. Well thought of, Lucy! I shall love you for ever for this.

Peg. And so shall I too, Lucy: I'll put 'em on directly. [*Going.*] Suppose, bud, I must keep on my petticoats, for fear of showing my legs?

Moo. No, no, you fool, never mind your legs? [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Park.

Enter BELVILLE and HARCOURT.

Bel. And the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments through Lucy to Miss Peggy; and here I am, in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Har. And so, to blind Moody, and take him off the scent of your passion for this girl, and at the same time to give me an opportunity with Sparkish's mistress (and of which I have made the most,) you hinted to him with a grave melancholy face that you were dying for his sister—Gad-a-mercy, nephew! I will back thy modesty against any other in the three kingdoms: it will do, Dick.

Bel. What could I do, uncle?—It was my last stake, and I played for a great deal.

Har. You mistake me, Dick; I don't say you could do better, I only can't account for your modesty's doing so much: you have done such wonders, that I, who am rather bold than sheepish, have not yet ceased wondering at you. But do you think that you imposed upon him?

Bel. Faith, I can't say; he said very little, grumbled much, shook his head, and showed me the door.—But what success have you had with Althea?

Har. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, without having light enough to see an inch before my nose.—This day will produce something; Althea is a woman of great honour, and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish's absurdity stands my friend, and does every thing that the fates ought to do for me.

Bel. Yonder comes the prince of coxcombs, and if your mistress and mine should, by chance, be tripping this way, this fellow will spoil sport; let us avoid him—you can't cheat him before his face.

Har. But I can though, thanks to my wit, and his want of it.

Bel. But you cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Har. Still the better for me, nephew, for fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessaries; and he is to be bubbled of his mistress, or of his money (the common mistress,) by keeping him company.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. Who's that, that is to be bubbled? faith, let me snack; I han't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles are like their brother woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Har. He did not hear all, I hope.

[*Apart to BEL.*]

Spark. Come, you bubbling rogues, you, where do we sup? O Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have made love, fierce love, to her last night, all the play long; ha, ha, ha! but I—

Har. I make love to her?

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, and know her; but I am sure I know myself.

Bel. Do you, Sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world, and I honour you as such.

[*Bows.*]

Spark. O, your servant, Sir; you are at your railleury, are you? You can't oblige me more; I'm your man: he'll meet with his match. Ha! Harcourt! did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play last night?

Har. Yes, and was very much disturbed at it. You put the actors and audience into confusion, and all your friends out of countenance.

Spark. So much the better; I love confusion, and to see folks out of countenance; I was in tip-top spirits, faith, and said a thousand good things.

Bel. But I thought you had gone to plays to laugh at the poet's good things, and not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, Sir: no I thank you. 'Gad, I go to a play as to a country treat: I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either: and the reason why we are so often louder than the players is, because we hate authors damnably.

Bel. But why should you hate the poor rogues; you have too much wit, and despise writing, I'm sure.

Spark. O yes, I despise writing; but women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Every body does it; 'tis e'en as common with lovers as playing with fans; and you can no more help rhyming to your Phillis, than drinking to your Phillis.

Har. But the poets damned your songs, did they?

Spark. Damn the poets: they turned them into burlesque, as they call it: that burlesque is a hocus-pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hiccus-docius, topsy-turvy, they make a clever witty thing absolute nonsense! Do you know, Harcourt, that they ridiculed my last song, "Twang, twang," the best I ever wrote?

Har. That may be, and be very easily ridiculed for all that.

Bel. Favour me with it, Sir; I never heard it.

Spark. What, and have all the Park about us?

Har. Which you'll not dislike; and so, pr'y-thee, begin.

Spark. I never am ask'd twice, and so have at you.

*Tell me not of the roses and lilies
Which tinge the fair cheek of your Phillis;
Tell me not of the dimples and eyes,
For which silly Corydon dies,
Let all whining lovers go hang;
My heart would you hit,
Tip your arrow with wit,
And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang
And it comes to my heart with a twang.*

[*At the end of the song HARCOURT and BELVILLE steal away from SPARKISH, and leave him singing; he sinks his voice by degrees at the surprise of their being gone.*]

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE.

What the deuce did you go away for?

Har. Your mistress is coming.

Spark. The devil she is! O hide, hide me from her. [*Hides behind HARCOURT.*]

Har. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her; for I'm engaged, and at this instant. [*Looking at his Watch.*]

Har. Pray first take me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time; faith, it is the lady, and one cannot make excuses to a woman.

Bel. You have need of 'em, I believe.

Spark. Pshaw! pr'ythee, hide me.

Enter MOODY, PEGGY in Boy's clothes, and ALITHEA.

Har. Your servant, Mr. Moody.

Moo. Come along.

Peg. Lau! what a sweet delightful place this is! [*To PEGGY.*]

Moo. Come along, I say; don't stare about you so; you'll betray yourself.

[*Exeunt MOO. and PEGGY, ALI. follows.*]

Har. He does not know us.

Bel. Or he wont know us.

Spark. So much the better.

[*Exit BEL. after them.*]

Har. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. Some relation of Peggy's, I suppose; for he is something like her in face and gawkiness.

Re-enter BELVILLE.

Bel. By all my hopes, uncle, Peggy in boy's clothes. I am all over agitation.

[*Apart to HARCOURT.*]
Har. Be quiet, or you'll spoil all. They return.—Alithea has seen you, Sparkish, and will be angry if you don't go to her: besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, my dear friend.

Spark. Well, that 's a better reason, dear friend: I would not go near her now for her's or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing; for though I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Har. I am obliged to you, indeed, my dear friend: I will be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends.

Spark. But they sha'n't though. Come along.

[*They retire.*]

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, and ALITHEA.

Moo. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you. [*To ALITHEA.*] The fool, her gallant, and she, will muster up all the young saunterers of this place. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here! I begin to be uneasy. [*Aside.*] Come, let's be gone, Peggy.

Peg. Don't you believe that! I han't half my bellyfull of sights yet.

Moo. Then walk this way.

Peg. Lord, what a power of fine folks are here. And Mr. Belville, as I hope to be married.

[*Aside.*]

Moo. Come along; what are you muttering at?

Peg. There 's the young gentleman there, you were so angry about, that 's in love with me.

Moo. No, no; he 's a dangler after your sister, or pretends to be; but they are all bad alike. Come along, I say.

[*MOODY pulls PEGGY away. Exeunt PEGGY and MOODY, BELVILLE following. SPARKISH, HARCOURT, and ALITHEA come forward.*]

Spark. Come, dear Madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Ali. For your sake, I hate him.

Har. That 's something too cruel, Madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, Madam, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Ali. I hate him because he is your enemy; and you ought to hate him too, for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That 's a good one! I hate a man for loving you! If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you.

Ali. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow?

Har. But why, dearest Madam, will you be more concerned for his honour than he is himself? Let his honour alone, for my sake and his. He has no honour—

Spark. How 's that?

Har. But what my dear friend can guard himself?

Spark. O ho—that 's right again.

Ali. You astonish me, Sir, with want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, Madam, with your jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour. 'Gad, I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Har. Come, Madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me; my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear Madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: would you would do so!—Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and not walk away so; come back again.

[*ALITHEA walks carelessly to and fro.*]

Har. I love you, Madam, so—

Spark. How 's that? nay, now you begin to go too far indeed!

Har. So much I confess I say I love you, that

I would not have you miserable and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here.

[Claps his hand on his breast, and points to SPARKISH.]

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not; now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no, heavens forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the least of mankind—my dear friend here—I injure him.

[Embraces SPARKISH.]

Ali. Very well.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it: Madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me in giving himself such names.

Ali. Do you not understand him yet?

Spark. Come, come, you shall stay till he has saluted you.

Re-enter MOODY and PEGGY. BELVILLE at a distance.

Moo. What, invite your wife to kiss men? Monstrous! Are you not ashamed?

Spark. Are you not ashamed that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family than you have? You must not teach me: I am a man of honour, Sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, Sir—

Moo. Very frank, Sir, to share your wife with your friends.—You seem to be angry, and yet want go.

[To ALITHEA.]

Ali. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Moo. Because you like it—But you ought to blush at exposing your wife as you do.

[To SPARKISH.]

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't, as I have to show fine clothes at a playhouse the first day, and count money before poor rogues.

Moo. He that shows his wife or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I loved to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull as eating alone: and so good night, for I must to Whitehall—Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, Madam, and sleep if you can; for to-morrow, you know, I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear Harcourt—remember to send your brother.

[Exit.]

Har. You may depend upon me.—Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr. Sparkish?

Moo. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her.

Har. Must, Sir?

Moo. Yes, Sir, she is my sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, Sir; for I must be her servant, Sir.—Madam—

Moo. Come away, sister; we had been gone if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Har. I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Moo. I have business, Sir, and must mind it:

your business is pleasure; therefore you and I must go different ways.

Har. Well, you may go on; but this pretty young gentleman [Takes hold of PEGGY.] shall stay with us; for I suppose his business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Moo. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so sillily; yet if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. [Aside.] Come, come.

Har. Had you not rather stay with us? [To PEGGY.] Pr'ythee, who is this pretty young fellow?

[To MOODY.]

Moo. One to whom I am guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of your hands. [Aside.]

Har. Who is he? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Moo. Pshaw, do not look upon him so much; he's a poor bashful youth; you'll put him out of countenance. [Offers to take her away.]

Har. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance. You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another. Salute him, Dick, a la Française. [BELVILLE kisses her.]

Moo. I hate French fashions. Men kiss one another! [Endeavours to take hold of her.]

Peg. I am out of my wits. [Aside.] What do you kiss me for? I am no woman.

Har. But you are ten times handsomer.

Peg. Nay, now you jeer one; and pray don't jeer me.

Har. Kiss him again, Dick.

Moo. No, no, no;—come away, come away.

[To PEGGY.]

Har. Why, what haste you are in! Why want you let me talk with him?

Moo. Because you'll debauch him; he's yet young and innocent. How she gazes upon him! The devil! [Aside.] Come, pray let him go; I cannot stay fooling any longer; I tell you my wife stays supper for us.

Har. Does she? Come then, we'll all go sup with her.

Moo. No, no; now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed. I wish she and I were well out of your hands.

[Aside.]

Har. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Peg. Thank you heartily, Sir.

[Bows.]

Moo. 'Sdeath, she will discover herself yet in spite of me.

[Aside.]

Bel. And mine too, Sir.

Peg. That I will indeed.

[Bows.]

Har. Pray give her this kiss for me.

[Kisses her.]

Moo. O heavens! what do I suffer!

[Aside.]

Bel. And this for me.

[Kisses her.]

Peg. Thank you, Sir.

[Courtesies; BELVILLE and HARCOURT laugh, and exeunt.]

Moo. O the idiot!—Now 'tis out. Ten thousand cankers gnaw away their lips! [Aside.] Come, come, driveller. [MOODY, PEGGY, and ALITHEA, go out and return.] So they are gone at last. Sister, stay with Peggy, till I find my servant. Don't let her stir an inch; I'll be back directly. [Exit]

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE.

Har. What, not gone yet?—Nephew, show

the young gentleman Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady.

[*EXECUNT BELVILLE and PEGGY; ALITHEA and HARCOURT struggle.*]

Alithea. My brother will go distracted.

Re-enter MOODY.

Moo. Where? how?—What's become of—gone!—whither?

Alithea. In the next walk only, brother.

Moo. Only—only—where—where? [*Exit.*]

Har. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned?—But, dearest Madam—

Re-enter MOODY.

Moo. Gone, gone—not to be found—quite gone—ten thousand plagues go with 'em! Which way went they?

Alithea. But in t'other walk, brother.

Moo. T'other walk! t'other devil. Where are they, I say?

Alithea. You are too abusive, brother.

Moo. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family; which you do not dishonour enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of—

Alithea. Good brother—

Moo. Damned, damned sister! [*Execunt.*]

SCENE II.—Another part of the Park.

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY.

Bel. No disguise could conceal you from my heart: I pretended not to know you, that I might deceive the dragon that continually watches over you: but now he's asleep, let us fly from misery to happiness.

Peg. Indeed, Mr. Belville, as well as I like you, I can't think of going away with you so; and as much as I hate my guardian, I must take leave of him a little handsomely, or he will kill me, so he will.

Bel. But, dear Miss Peggy, think of your situation; if we don't make the best use of this opportunity, we never may have another.

Peg. Ay but, Mr. Belville, I am as good as married already; my guardian has contracted me, and there wants nothing but church ceremony to make us one: I call him husband, and he calls me wife already: he made me do so; and we had been married in church long ago, if the writings could have been finished.

Bel. That's his deceit, my sweet creature.—He pretends to have married you, for fear of your liking any body else. You have a right to choose for yourself; and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you before marriage to a man you cannot like.

Peg. I'fack, no more I believe it does; sister Alithea's maid has told me as much. She's a very sensible girl.

Bel. You are in the very jaws of perdition, and nothing but running away can avoid it: the law will finish your chains to-morrow, and the church will rivet them the day after. Let us secure our happiness by escape, and love and fortune will do the rest for us.

Peg. These are fine sayings, to be sure, Mr. Belville: but how shall we get my fortune out of

bud's clutches? We must be a little cunning; 'tis worth trying for. We can at any time run away without it.

Bel. I see by your fears, my dear Peggy, that you live in awe of this brutal guardian; and if he has you once more in his possession, both you and your fortune are secured to him for ever.

Peg. Ay, but it sha'n't though; I thank him for that.

Bel. If you marry without his consent, he can but seize upon half your fortune. The other half, and a younger brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are your own. Take it, my sweetest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever. [*Kneels and presses her hand.*]

Peg. I'fackins, but we wont. Your fine talk has bewitched me.

Bel. 'Tis you have bewitched me, thou dear, enchanting, sweet simplicity!—Let us fly with the wings of love to my house there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peg. And so we will then.—There, squeeze my hand again.—Now run away with me; and if my guardy follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say. [*Going.*]

Enter MOODY hastily, and meets them.

Moo. Oh! there's my strayed sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing.—Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again. [*Aside.*] Where have you been, you puppy?

Peg. Been, bud?—We have been hunting all over the Park to find you.

Bel. From one end to t'other, Sir.

[*Confusedly.*]
Moo. But not where I was to be found, you young devil you!—Why did you start when you saw me?

Peg. I'm always frightened when I see you; and if I did not love you so well, I should run away from you; so I should. [*Pouts.*]

Moo. But I'll take care you don't.

Peg. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, bud! [*BELVILLE makes signs of dislike.*]

Moo. I am not in the humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, though you may. What have you been doing with this young lady—gentleman, I would say?

Peg. Fy, bud, you have told all.

Bel. I have been as civil as I could to the young stranger; and if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and show the young spark Rosamond's pond; for he has not seen it yet.—Come, pretty youth, will you go with me? [*Goes to her.*]

Peg. As my guardian pleases.

Moo. No, no, it does not please me. Whatever I think he ought to see, I shall show him myself. You may visit Rosamond's pond, if you will; and the bottom of it, if you will.—And so, Sir, your servant.

[*Exit MOODY, with PEGGY under his arm; BELVILLE, a contrary way.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—MOODY'S House

Enter LUCY and ALITHEA.

Alithea. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, Madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Mr. Harcourt for

ever from your sight? how could you be so hard-hearted?

Ali. 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and kindness, I warrant.

Ali. It was so; I would see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey-day! a very pretty reason.

Ali. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Ali. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Ali. Hold your tongue.

Lucy. That you know I can't do, Madam; and upon this occasion, I will talk for ever. What, give yourself away to one, that poor I, your maid, would not accept of?

Ali. How, Lucy?

Lucy. I would not, upon my honour, Madam. 'Tis never too late to repent. Take a man, and give up your coxcomb, I say.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Sparkish, with company, Madam, attends you below.

Ali. I will wait upon 'em. [*Exit SERVANT.*] My heart begins to fail me, but I must go through with it. Go with me, Lucy. [*Exit.*]

Lucy. Not I indeed, Madam. If you will leap the precipice you shall fall by yourself. What excellent advice have I thrown away! So I'll e'en take it where it will be more welcome.—Miss Peggy is bent upon mischief against her guardian, and she can't have a better privy counsellor than myself.—I must be busy one way or another. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Another Chamber in MOODY'S House.

Enter MOODY and PEGGY.

Moo. I saw him kiss your hand before you saw me.—This pretence of liking my sister was all a blind—the young abandoned hypocrite! [*Aside.*] Tell me I say—for I know he likes you, and was hurrying you to his house—tell me, I say—

Peg. Lord, han't I told it a hundred times over?

Moo. I would try if, in the repetition of an ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least circumstance; for, if her story is false, she is so too. [*Aside.*] Come, how was't, baggage?

Peg. Lord, what pleasure you take to hear it sure?

Moo. No, you take more in telling it, I find; but speak, how was't? No lies; I saw him kiss you; he kissed you before my face.

Peg. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither; for, to say truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Moo. The devil!—You were satisfied with it then, and would do it again?

Peg. Not unless he should force me.

Moo. Force you, changeling?

Peg. If I had struggled too much, you know, he would have known had I been a woman; so I was quiet, for fear of being found out.

Moo. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knocked him down?

Peg. With what, bud?—I could not help myself; besides, he did it so modestly, and blushed so, that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon his mummery too as well as me; and if so, there was no harm done you know.

Moo. This is worse and worse. So 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him; and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love; 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding. I must strangle that little monster whilst I can deal with him. [*Aside.*] Go, fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peg. Yes, I will, bud.

Moo. Go then.

Peg. I'm going.

Moo. Why don't you go then?

Peg. Lord, I'm going. [*Exit.*]

Moo. This young fellow loves her, and she loves him; the rest is all hypocrisy.—How the young modest villain endeavoured to deceive me! But I'll crush this mischief in the shell. Why should women have more invention in love than men? It can only be because they have more desire, more soliciting passions, more of the devil

Re-enter PEGGY, with pen, ink, and paper.

Come, minx, sit down and write.

Peg. Ay, dear, dear bud! but I can't do't very well.

Moo. I wish you could not at all.

Peg. But what should I write for?

Moo. I'll have you write a letter to this young man.

Peg. O Lord, to the young gentleman a letter?

Moo. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peg. Lord, you do but jeer; sure, you jest.

Moo. I am not so merry. Come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peg. What, do you think I am a fool?

Moo. She's afraid I would not dictate my love to him, therefore she's unwilling. [*Aside.*] But you had best begin.

Peg. Indeed and indeed but I wont, so I wont.

Moo. Why?

Peg. Because he's in town. You may send for him here, if you will.

Moo. Very well, you would have him brought to you? Is it come to this? I say take the pen and ink, and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peg. Lord, what do you make a fool of me for?—Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country? Now he's in town, and I'm in town too; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Moo. So, I'm glad it's no worse; she is innocent enough yet. [*Aside.*] Yes, you may, when your husband bids, write letters to people that are in town.

Peg. O, may I so? then I am satisfied.

Moo. Come, begin—Sir—

Peg. Sha'n't I say, dear Sir? you know one says always something more than bare, Sir, up in a corner.

Moo. Write as I bid you, or I will write some thing with this penknife in your face.

Peg. Sir— [Writes.]

Moo. *Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loathed kisses and embraces—Write!*

Peg. Nay, why should I say so? you know, I told you he had a sweet breath.

Moo. Write!

Peg. Let me put out loathed.

Moo. Write, I say.

Peg. Well then. [Writes.]

Moo. Let me see what you have writ. [Reads.] *Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces—Thou impudent creature, where is nauseous and loathed?*

Peg. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Moo. Once more write as I'd have you, or I will spoil your writing with this; I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief.

[Holds up the penknife.]

Peg. O Lord, I will. [Writes.]

Moo. So—so—let's see now:—*though I suffered last night your nauseous, loathed kisses and embraces—go on—yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them—so—*

[PEGGY writes.]

Peg. I have writ it.

Moo. O then—I then concealed myself from your knowledge to avoid your insolencies—

[PEGGY writes.]

Peg. To avoid—

Moo. Your insolencies—

Peg. Your insolencies. [Writes.]

Moo. *The same reason, now I am out of your hands—*

Peg. So— [Writes.]

Moo. *Makes me own to you my unfortunate—though innocent frolic, in being in boy's clothes.*

[PEGGY writes.]

Peg. So—

Moo. *That you may for evermore—*

Peg. Evermore?

Moo. *Evermore cease to pursue her who hates and detests you—*

[PEGGY writes.]

Peg. So— [Sighs.]

Moo. *What do you sigh for?—detests you—as much as she loves her husband and her honour—*

Peg. I vow, husband, he'll never believe I should write such a letter. [Writes.]

Moo. What, he'd expect a kinder one from you? Come, now your name only.

Peg. What sha'n't I say—your most faithful humble servant till death?

Moo. No, tormenting fiend! [PEGGY writes.]—Her style, I find, would be very soft. [Aside.]

Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle, and write on the outside—*For Mr. Belville.*

[Exit.]

Peg. [Writes.] *For Mr. Belville.*—So—I am glad he is gone—Hark, I hear a noise.

Moo. [Within.] Well, well, but can't you call again—Well, walk in then.

Peg. [Goes to the door.] I'fack, there's folks with him—

Moo. [Within.] Very well—if he must see me, I'll come to him.

Peg. That's pure; now I may think a little—Why should I send dear Mr. Belville such a letter?—Can one have no shift? ah, a London woman would have had a hundred presently—Stay—what if I should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon it too?—Ay, but then my guardian would see't—I don't know what to do—But yet y'vads I'll try, so I will—for I will

not send this letter to poor Mr. Belville, come what will on't. [Writes, and repeats what she writes.]—*Dear, dear, dear, sweet Mr. Belville—so—My guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I wont—so—and would have me say I hate you, but I wont—there—for I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together—so—I could not help treading on your toe under the table—so pray keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can—so no more at present from one who am, dear, dear, poor dear Mr. Belville, your loving friend till death do us part, MARGARET THRIFT.*—So—now wrap it up just like t'other—so—now write *For Mr. Belville.*—But, oh! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian.

[Puts it in her bosom.]

Re-enter MOODY, with a candle and sealing-wax.

Moo. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me; but I fear 'twas to my wife. [Aside.] What, have you done?

Peg. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Moo. Let's see't; what d'ye tremble for?—

[He opens and reads the first letter.]

Peg. So, I had been finely served if I had given him this. [Aside.]

Moo. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Peg. Lord, what shall I do? [Aside.] Pray let me see't. Lord, you think I cannot seal a letter; I will do, so I will.

[Snatches the Letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.]

Moo. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I would not have you.

Peg. So, ha'n't I done it curiously? I think I have—there's my letter going to Mr. Belville, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks.

[Aside.]

Moo. 'Tis very well; but I warrant you would not have it go now?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I would, bud, now.

Moo. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street. [Puts her into the Chamber.] At least 'tis fit she thinks so; if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us.—Now I have secured all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—BELVILLE'S Lodgings.

Enter LUCY and BELVILLE.

Lucy. I run great risks, to be sure, to serve the young lady and you, Sir; but I know you are a gentleman of honour, and would scorn to betray a friend who means you well, and is above being mercenary.

Bel. As you are not mercenary, Mrs. Lucy, I ought to be the more generous; give me leave to present you with this trifle; [Gives her a ring.] not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

Lucy. Though I scorn to be bribed in any cause, yet I am proud to accept it as a mark of your regard, and as such shall keep it for your sake—and now to business.

Bel. But has the dear creature resolved?

Lucy. Has she? why she will run away and marry you, in spite of your teeth, the first moment she can break prison; so you, in your turn, must take care not to have your qualms: I have known several bold gentlemen not able to draw their swords, when a challenge has come too quick upon 'em.

Bel. I assure you, Mrs. Lucy, that I am no bully in love; and Miss Peggy will meet with her match, come when she will.

Lucy. Ay, so you all say; but talking does no business. Stay at home till you hear from us.

Bel. Blessings on thee, Lucy, for the thought.

Moo. [*Without.*] But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

Lucy. As I hope to be married, Mr. Belville, I hear Mr. Moody's voice. Where shall I hide myself?—if he sees me, we are all undone.

Bel. This is our cursed luck again. What the devil can he want here? Get into this closet till he is gone. [*Puts Lucy into the closet.*] Don't you stir, Lucy. I must put the best face upon the matter. Now for it.

[*Takes a Book, and reads.*]

Enter MOODY.

Moo. You will excuse me, Sir, for breaking through forms, and your servant's entreaties, to have the honour—but you are alone, Sir—your fellow told me below, that you were with company.

Bel. Yes, Sir, the best company. [*Shows his Book.*] When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

Moo. And I choose to interrupt your conversation! the business of my errand must plead my excuse.

Bel. You shall be always welcome to me; but you seem ruffled, Sir. What brings you hither, and so seemingly out of humour?

Moo. Your impertinency—I beg pardon—your modesty, I mean.

Bel. My impertinency!

Moo. Your impertinency!

Bel. Sir, from the peculiarity of your character, and your intimacy with my uncle, I shall allow you great privileges; but you must consider youth has its privileges too; and as I have not the honour of your acquaintance I am not obliged to bear with your ill humours, or your ill manners.

Moo. They who wrong me, young man, must bear with both: and if you had not made too free with me, I should have taken no liberties with you.

Bel. I could have wished, Sir, to have found you a little more civil, the first time I had the honour of a visit from you.

Moo. If that is all you want, young gentleman, you will find me very civil indeed! There, Sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether I want either kindness or civility. Look you there, Sir.

Bel. What is it? [*Gives him a letter.*]

Moo. Only a love-letter, Sir; and from my wife.

Bel. How, is it from your wife?—hum and hum.

Moo. Even from my wife, Sir; am not I wondrous kind and civil to you now too? But you'll not think her so.

Bel. Ha! is this a trick of his or hers? [*Aside.*]

Moo. The gentleman's surprised, I find! What, you expected a kinder letter!

Bel. No, faith, not I; how could I?

Moo. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did; a man so young and well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at the first sight or opportunity.

Bel. But what should this mean? It seems he knows not what the letter contains. [*Aside.*]

Moo. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Bel. Faith, I can't help it.

Moo. Now, I think, I have deserved your infinite friendship and kindness, and have shown myself sufficiently an obliging, kind friend and husband; am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant!

Bel. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging, kind friend and husband in the world; ha, ha, ha! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't: and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her and you.

Moo. Well then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine; kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome—so, Mr. Modesty, your servant. [*Going.*]

Enter SPARKISH, meeting him.

Spark. So brother-in-law that was to have been, I have followed you from home to Belville's; I have strange news for you.

Moo. What, are you wiser than you were this morning?

Spark. Faith, I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I sha'n't eat half an ounce the less at dinner for it; there's philosophy for you.

Moo. Insensibility, you mean. I hope you don't mean to use my sister ill, Sir?

Spark. No, Sir, she has used me ill; she's in her tantrums: I have had a narrow escape, Sir.

Moo. If thou art endowed with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this riddle.

Bel. Ay, ay, pr'ythee, Sparkish, condescend to be intelligible.

Spark. Why, you must know—we had settled to be married—it is the same thing to me whether I am married or not—I have no particular fancy one way or another, and so I told your sister; off or on, 'tis the same thing to me; but the thing was fixed, you know—You and my aunt brought it about; I had no hand in it. And, to show you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tie me up to hard terms; and the church would have finished me still to harder—but she was taken with her tantrums!

Moo. Damn your tantrums, come to the point.

Spark. Your sister took an aversion to the parson, Frank Harcourt's brother—abused him like a pickpocket, and swore 'twas Harcourt himself.

Moo. And so it was, for I saw him.

Spark. Why, you are as mad as your sister; I tell you it was Ned, Frank's twin brother.

Moo. What, Frank told you so?

Spark. Ay, and Ned too; they were both in a story.

Too. What an incorrigible fellow!—Come, come, I must be gone.

Spark. Nay, nay, you shall hear my story out—She walked up within pistol-shot of the church, then twirled round upon her heel, called me every

name she could think of; and when she had exhausted her imagination, and tired her tongue (no easy matter let me tell you,) she called her chair, sent her footman to buy a monkey before my face, then bid me good morrow with a sneer, and left us with our mouths open in the middle of a hundred people, who were all laughing at us! If these are not tantrums, I don't know what are.

Moo. Ha, ha, ha! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul; 'tis a most exquisite story; I have not had such a laugh for this half year. Thou art a most ridiculous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee; ha, ha, ha! *[Exit.]*

Spark. Did you ever hear the like, Belville?

Bel. O yes; how is it possible to hear such a foolish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at 'em? ha, ha, ha!

[Lucy in the closet laughs.]

Spark. Hey-day? what's that? What, have you raised a devil in the closet to make up a laughing chorus at me? I must take a peep—

[Going to the closet.]

Bel. Indeed, but you must not.

Spark. It was a woman's voice.

Bel. So much the better for me.

Spark. Pr'ythee, introduce me.

Bel. Though you take a pleasure in exposing your ladies, I choose to conceal mine; so, my dear Sparkish, lest the lady should be sick by too long a confinement, and laughing heartily at you, I must entreat you to withdraw. Pr'ythee, excuse me, I must laugh—ha, ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Do you know that I begin to be angry, Belville?

Bel. I can't help that—ha, ha, ha, ha!

Spark. My character's at stake; I shall be thought a damned silly fellow; I will call Alithea to an account directly. *[Exit.]*

Bel. Ha, ha, ha!

Lucy. *[Peeping out.]* Ha, ha, ha, ha! O dear, Sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst. What an adventure! *[Comes out, and laughs.]*

Bel. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter—and by the dragon himself: there's a spirit for you!

Lucy. There's simplicity for you! show me a town-bred girl with half the genius—Send you a love-letter, and by a jealous guardian too! ha, ha, ha! 'Tis too much—too much—Ha, ha, ha! —Well, Mr. Belville! the world goes as it should do—my mistress will exchange her fool for a wit; Miss Peggy her brute for a pretty young fellow; I shall dance at two weddings; be well rewarded by both parties; get a husband myself; and be as happy as the best of you; and so your humble servant. *[Exit.]*

Bel. Success attend you, Lucy. *[Exit.]*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Moody's House.

PEGGY discovered alone, leaning on her elbow on a table, with pen, ink, and paper.

Peg. Well, 'tis e'en so; I have got the London disease they call love; I am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr. Belville! I have heard this distemper called a fever, but methinks it is like an ague; for when I think of my guardian, I tremble, and am so cold; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Belville, my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed. Ah! poor Mr. Bel-

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ville! well, I will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like any thing. Oh! sick, sick!

Enter MOODY, who, seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her shoulder, snatches the paper from her.

Moo. What, writing more letters?

Peg. O Lord, bud! why d'y'e fright me so?

[She offers to run out; he stops her, and reads.]

Moo. How 's this! nay, you shall not stir, Madam. *[Reads.]* Dear, dear Mr. Belville—Very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose—but let's see't—*First I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done, had you not said first you loved me so extremely; which if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man's, who I loath, nauseate, and detest:—*Now you can write these filthy words. But what follows?—*therefore I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice; but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me as I do you, you will try what you can do; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—our—*what is to follow our?—*what? our journey into the country, I suppose—*Oh, woman! damned! woman and love, damned love! their old temper; for this is one of his miracles; in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before.—But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together. *[Draws his sword.]*

Peg. O Lord! O Lord! you are such a passionate man, bud!

Moo. Come, take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in a tittle I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this as you deserve. *[Lays his hand on his sword.]—*Write what was to follow—let's see—*You must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—*what follows our?—*[Peg. takes the pen, and writes.]*

Peg. Must all out then, bud?—Look you there then.

Moo. Let's see—for I can defer no longer our wedding—*Your slighted Alithea.*—What's the meaning of this? my sister's name to't? speak; unriddle.

Peg. Yes, indeed, bud.

Moo. But why her name to't? speak—speak, I say.

Peg. Ay, but you'll tell her again; if you would not tell her again—

Moo. I will not; I am stunned; my head turns round. Speak.

Peg. Wont you tell her indeed, and indeed?

Moo. No; speak, I say.

Peg. She'll be angry with me; but I would rather she should be angry with me than you, bud. And to tell the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Moo. Ha!—I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. *[Aside.]* Could she

come to you to teach you, since I had locked you up alone?

Peg. Oh, through the key-hole, bud.

Moo. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself?

Peg. Why she said because—

Moo. Because what—because—

Peg. Why because, bud—

Moo. Because what, I say?

Peg. Because, lest Mr. Belville, as he was so young, should be inconstant, and refuse her; or be vain afterwards, and show the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being hers.

Moo. Belville again!—Am I to be deceived again with that young hypocrite?

Peg. You have deceived yourself, bud; you have indeed. I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could—but you must know it—and shall know it too. [*Cries.*]

Moo. Dry your eyes.

Peg. You always thought he was hankering after me—Good law! he's dying for Alithea, and Alithea for him; they have had private meetings; and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the tavern window, when you thought it was me. I would have discovered all, but she made me swear to deceive you; and so I have finely; have not I, bud?

Moo. Why did you write that foolish letter to him then, and make me more foolish to carry it?

Peg. To carry on the joke, bud—to oblige them?

Moo. And will nothing serve her but that great baby?—he's too young for her to marry.

Peg. Why do you marry me then?—'Tis the same thing, bud.

Moo. No, no; 'tis quite different. How innocent she is! [*Aside.*—But hark you, Madam, your sister went out this morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Peg. Alack-a-day, she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Moo. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Peg. O Lord! then she'll discover all. [*Aside.*—Pray hold, bud; what, d'ye mean to discover me? she'll know I have told you then. Pray, bud, let me talk with her first.

Moo. I must speak with her to know whether Belville ever made her any promise, and whether she will be married to Sparkish or no.

Peg. Pray, dear bud, don't till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else.

Moo. Go then, and bid her come to me.

Peg. Yes, yes, bud.

Moo. Let me see—

Peg. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wits end.

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Moo. Well, I resolve it; Belville shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister, than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure: I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Re-enter PEGGY.

Peg. O Lord, bud, I told you what anger you would make with my sister.

Moo. Wont she come?

Peg. No, she wont, she's ashamed to look you in the face; she'll go directly to Mr. Belville, she

says. Pray let her have her way, bud—she wont be pacified if you don't—and will never forgive me. For my part, bud, I believe, but don't tell any body, they have broken a piece of silver between 'em—or have contracted one another, as we have done, you know, which is the next thing to being married.

Moo. Pooh! you fool—she is ashamed of talking with me about Belville, because I made the match for her with Sparkish; but Sparkish is a fool, and I have no objection to Belville's family or fortune—tell her so.

Peg. I will bud.

[*Going.*]

Moo. Stay, stay, Peggy, let her have her own way; she shall go to Belville herself, and I'll follow her—that, will be best—let her have her whim.

Peg. You're in the right, bud; for they have certainly had a quarrel, by her crying and hanging her head so: I'll be hanged if her eyes an't swelled out of her head, she's in such a piteous taking.

Moo. Belville sha'n't use her ill, I'll take care of that; if he has made her a promise, he shall keep to it: but she had better go first—I will follow her at a distance, that she may have no interruption; and I will wait in the Park before I see them, that they may come to a reconciliation before I come upon 'em.

Peg. Law, bud, how wise you are!—I wish I had half your wisdom; you see every thing at once. Stand a one side then—there, a little further that way.

Moo. And so I will; she sha'n't see me till I break in upon her at Belville's.

Peg. Now for it.

[*Exit.*]

Moo. My case is something better; for suppose the worst—should Belville use her ill—I had rather fight him for not marrying my sister, than for debauching my wife, for I will make her mine absolutely to-morrow; and of the two, I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife: I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, though differently, troublesome to their keeper. But here she comes. [*Steps on one side.*]

Re-enter PEGGY, dressed like ALITHEA; as she passes over the stage, she seems to sigh, sob, and wipe her eyes.

Peg. Heigho!

[*Exit.*]

Moo. [*Comes forward.*] There the poor devil goes, sighing and sobbing, a woful example of the fatal consequences of a town education; but I am bound in duty, as well as inclination, to do my utmost to save her—but first I'll secure my own property.—[*Opens the door and calls.*—Peggy! Peggy! my dear!—I will return as soon as possible—do you hear me? why don't you answer? you may read in the book I bought you till I come back.—As the Jew says in the play, "fast bind, fast find." [*Locks the door.*] This is the best and only security for female affections. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Park, before BELVILLE'S House.

Enter SPARKISH, fuddled.

Spark. If I can but meet with her, or any body

that belongs to her, they will find me a match for 'em. When a man has wit, and a great deal of it, champaign gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it—'tis a lighted match to gunpowder.—I was right to consult my friends, and they all agree with Moody, that I make a damned ridiculous figure, as matters stand at present. I'll consult Belville—this is his house—he's my friend too—and no fool—It shall be so—Damn it, I must not be ridiculous. [*Going to the door, sees PEGGY coming.*] Hold! hold! if the champaign does not hurt my eye-sight, while it sharpens my wit, the enemy is marching up this way.—Come on, Madam Alitheia; now for a smart fire; and then let's see who will be ridiculous.

Enter PEGGY.

Peg. Dear me, I begin to tremble; there is Mr. Sparkish, and I can't get to Mr. Belville's house without passing by him. He sees me, and will discover me; he seems in liquor too.—Bless me!

Spark. O ho! she stands at bay a little; she don't much relish the engagement. The first blow is half the battle. I'll be a little figurative with her. [*Aside; approaches her.*] I find, Madam, you like a solo better than a duet. You need not have been walking alone this evening, if you had been wiser yesterday.—What, nothing to say for yourself?—Repentance, I suppose, makes you as awkward and as foolish as the poor country girl your brother has locked up in Pall-mall.

Peg. I'm frightened out of my wits.

[*Tries to pass by him.*]

Spark. Not a step further shall you go till you give me an account of your behaviour, and make me reparation for being ridiculous.—What, dumb still! then if you wont, by fair means, I must squeeze you to a confession. [*As he goes to seize her, she slips by him; but he catches hold of her before she reaches BELVILLE'S door.*] Not quite so fast, if you please.—Come, come, let me see your modest face, and hear your soft tongue, or I shall be tempted to use you ill.

Enter MOODY.

Moo. Hands off, you ruffian! How dare you use a lady, and my sister, in this manner?

[*Takes her from SPARKISH.*]

Spark. She's my property, Sir; transferred to me by you: and though I would give her up to any body for a dirty sword-knot, yet I wont be bullied out of my right, though it is not worth that.—[*Snaps his fingers.*]

Moo. There's a fellow to be a husband!—You are justified in despising him and flying from him. I'll defend you with my purse and my sword.—Knock at that door, and let me speak to Belville. [*PEGGY knocks at the door; when the FOOTMAN opens it, she runs in.*]—Is your master at home, friend?

Foot. Yes, Sir.

Moo. Tell him then that I have rescued that lady from this gentleman, and that by her desire, and my consent, she flies to him for protection; if he can get a parson, let him marry her this minute; tell him so, and shut the door. [*Exit FOOTMAN.*] And now, Sir, if your wine has given you courage, you had better show it upon this occasion; for you are still damned ridiculous.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like?—Look-ye, Mr. Moody, we are in the Park, and to draw a

sword is an offence to the court; so you may vapour as long as you please. A woman of so little taste is not worth fighting for; she's not worth my sword! but if you'll fight me to-morrow morning for diversion, I am your man.

Moo. Relinquish your title in the lady to Belville peaceably, and you may sleep in a whole skin.

Spark. Belville! he would not have your sister with the fortune of a nabob; no, no, his mouth waters at your country tit-bit at home; much good may it do him.

Moo. And you think so, puppy—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Yes, I do, mastiff—ha, ha, ha!

Moo. Then thy folly is complete—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Thine will be so, when thou hast married thy country innocent—ha, ha, ha!

[*They laugh at each other.*]

Enter HARCOURT.

Spark. What, my boy Harcourt!

Moo. What brings you here, Sir?

Har. I followed you to Belville's to present a near relation of yours, and a nearer one of mine, to you. [*Exit.*]

Spark. What's the matter now!

Re-enter HARCOURT, with ALITHEA.

Har. Give me leave, gentlemen, without offence to either, to present Mrs. Harcourt to you!

Spark. Alitheia! your wife!—Mr. Moody, are you in the clouds too?

Moo. If I am not in a dream, I am the most miserable walking dog that ever ran mad with his misfortunes and astonishment!

Har. Why so, Jack? can you object to my happiness, when this gentleman was unworthy of it? [*MOODY walks about in a rage.*]

Spark. This is very fine, very fine indeed!—Where's your story about Belville now, 'squire Moody? prythee don't chafe, and stare, and stride, and beat thy head, like a mad tragedy poet—but out with thy tropes and figures.

Moo. Zounds! I can't bear it.

[*Goes hastily to BELVILLE'S door, and knocks hard.*]

Ali. Dear brother, what's the matter?

Moo. The devil's the matter! the devil and women together. [*Knocks again.*] I'll break the door down, if they wont answer. [*Knocks again.*]

FOOTMAN appears at the balcony.

Foot. What would your honour please to have?

Moo. Your master, rascal.

Foot. He is obeying your commands, Sir; and the moment he has finished, he will do himself the pleasure to wait on you.

Moo. You sneering villain you, if your master does not produce that she devil, who is now with him, and who, with a face of innocence, has cheated and undone me, I'll set fire to his house.

[*Exit FOOTMAN.*]

Spark. 'Gad so! now I begin to smoke the business. Well said, simplicity, rural simplicity! 'Egad! if thou hast tricked Cerberus here, I shall be so ravished that I will give this couple a wedding dinner. Pray, Mr. Moody, who's damned ridiculous now?

Moo. [*Going to SPARKISH.*] Look ye, Sir—don't grin, for if you dare to show your teeth at my misfortunes, I'll dash 'em down your impudent throat, you jackanapes.

Spark. [*Quite calm.*] Very fine, faith—but I have no weapons to butt with a mad bull, so you may toss and roar by yourself, if you please.

Enter BELVILLE, in the balcony.

Bel. What does my good friend want with me?

Moo. Are you a villain, or are you not?

Bel. I have obeyed your commands, Sir.

Moo. What have you done with the girl, Sir?

Bel. Made her my wife, as you desired.

Spark. Very true, I am your witness—

Moo. She's my wife, and I demand her.

Enter PEGGY, in the balcony.

Peg. No, but I an't though, bud.—What's the matter, dear, are you angry with me?

Moo. How dare you look me in the face, cockatrice?

Peg. How dare you look me in the face, bud? Have you not given me to another, when you ought to have married me yourself? have not you pretended to be married to me, when you knew in your conscience you was not? and have you not been shilly-shally for a long time; so that if I had not married dear Mr. Belville, I should not have married at all—so I should not.

[BELVILLE and PEGGY retire from the balcony.]

Spark. Extremely pleasant, faith; ha, ha, ha!

Moo. I am stupified with shame, rage, and astonishment—my fate has overcome me—I can struggle no more with it. [*Sighs.*] What is left me?—I cannot bear to look, or be looked upon—I will hurry down to my old house, take a twelve-month's provision into it—cut down my draw-bridge, run wild about my garden, which shall grow as wild as myself—then will I curse the world, and every individual in it—and when my rage and spirits fail me, I will be found dead among the nettles and thistles, a woful example of the baseness and treachery of one sex, and the falsehood, lying, perjury, deceit, impudence, and damnation, of the other. [*Exit.*]

Spark. Very droll, and extravagantly comic, I must confess; ha, ha, ha!

Re-enter BELVILLE and PEGGY.

Lookye, Belville, I wish you joy with all my heart—you have got the prize, and perhaps have caught a tartar—that's no business of mine—If you want evidence for Mr. Moody's giving his consent to your marriage, I shall be ready. I bear no ill will to that pair: I wish you happy; [*To ALITHEA and HARCOURT.*]—though I'm sure they'll be miserable—and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*]

Peg. I hope you forgive me, Alithea, for playing your brother this trick; indeed I should have only made him and myself miserable, had we married together.

Ali. Then 'tis much better as it is. But I am yet in the dark how this matter has been brought about; how your innocence, my dear, has outwitted his worldly wisdom?

Peg. I am sure I'll do any thing to please my bud, but marry him.

[*She comes forward, and addresses the Audience:*

But you, good gentry, what say you to this?

You are to judge me—have I done amiss?

I've reasons will convince you all, and strong ones;

Except old folks, who hanker after young ones;

Bud was so passionate, and grown so thrifty,

'Twas a sad life—and then, he was near fifty!

I'm but nineteen—my husband too is young,

So soft, so gentle, such a winning tongue!

Have I, pray ladies, speak, done very wrong?

As for poor bud, 'twas honest to deceive him!

More virtuous sure to cheat him than to grieve him.

Great folks, I know, will call me simple slut;

"Marry for love," they cry, "the country put!"

Marriage with them's a fashion—soon grows cool:

But I'm for loving always, like a fool.

With half my fortune I would rather part,

Than be all finery, with an aching heart.

For these strange awkward notions don't abuse me;

And, as I know no better, pray excuse me.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE IRISH WIDOW:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS after piece, by Garrick, was originally intended to introduce the celebrated Mrs. Barry, in a novel species of character; and the piece was indebted, for much of its early success, to the peculiar ability of that lady as the widow Brady. It is now occasionally produced, for the same purpose; and has never had a more lovely *chevalier* to protect it from the critics, than in the assumption of the breeches by Mrs. Mardyn.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN, 1807.

DRURY LANE, 1814.

SIR PATRICK O'NEALE,.....	Mr. Waddy.....	Mr. R. Palmer.
WHITTLE,.....	Mr. Emery.....	Mr. Hughes.
NEPHEW,.....	Mr. Claremont.....	Mr. Waldegrave.
BATES,.....	Mr. Davenport.....	Mr. Carr.
KECKSEY,.....	Mr. Simmons.....	Mr. Lovegrove.
THOMAS,.....	Mr. Blanchard.....	Mr. Knight.
FOOTMAN,.....	Mr. Trueman.....	Mr. Evans.

WIDOW BRADY,..... Mrs. Litchfield..... Mrs. Mardyn.

Black Boy, Servants, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—WHITTLE'S House.

Enter BATES and SERVANT.

Bates. Is he gone out? his card tells me to come directly—I did but lock up some papers, take my hat and cane, and away I hurried.

Serv. My master desires you will sit down, he will return immediately—he had some business with his lawyer, and went out in great haste, leaving the message I have delivered. Here is my young master. [Exit.]

Enter NEPHEW.

Bates. What, lively Billy!—Hold, I beg your pardon—melancholy William, I think—Here's a fine revolution—I hear your uncle, who was last month all gravity, and you all mirth, have changed characters; he is now all spirit, and you are in the dumps, young man.

Nep. And for the same reason—this journey to Scarborough will unfold the riddle.

Bates. Come, come, in plain English, and before your uncle comes, explain the matter.

Nep. In the first place, I am undone.

Bates. In love, I know—I hope your uncle is not undone too; that would be the devil!

Nep. He has taken possession of him in every sense. In short, he came to Scarborough to see the lady I had fallen in love with—

Bates. And fell in love himself?

Nep. Yes, and with the same lady.

Bates. That is the devil indeed!

Nep. O, Mr. Bates, when I thought my happiness complete, and wanted only my uncle's consent, to give me the independence he so often has promised me, he came to Scarborough for that purpose, and wished me joy of my choice; but, in less than a week, his approbation turned into a passion for her: he now hates the sight of me, and is resolved, with the consent of the father, to make her his wife directly.

Bates. So he keeps you out of your fortune, wont give his consent, which his brother's foolish will requires, and he would marry himself the same woman, because right, title, conscience, nature, justice, and every law divine and human, are against it.

Nep. Thus he tricks me at once both of wife and fortune, without the least want of either.

Bates. Well said, friend Whittle! but it can't be, it sha'n't be, and it must not be—this is murder and robbery in the strongest sense, and he sha'n't be hanged in chains to be laughed at by the whole town, if I can help it.

Nep. I am distracted, the widow is distressed, and we both shall run mad.

Bates. A widow too! 'gad a mercy, threescore and five!

Nep. But such a widow! She is now in town with her father, who wants to get her off his hands; 'tis equal to him who has her, so she is provided for—I hear somebody coming—I must away to her lodgings, where she waits for me to execute a scheme directly for our delivery.

Bates. What is her name, Billy?

Nep. Brady.

Bates. Brady! Is not she daughter to Sir Patrick O'Neale?

Nep. The same. She was sacrificed to the most senseless, drunken, profligate in the whole country. He lived to run out his fortune; and the only advantage she got from the union was, he broke that and his neck before he had broke her heart.

Bates. The affair of marriage is, in this country, put upon the easiest footing; there is neither love nor hate in the matter; necessity brings them together; they are united at first for their mutual convenience, and separated ever after for their particular pleasures—O rare matrimony!—Where does she lodge?

Nep. In Pall-Mall, near the hotel.

Bates. I'll call in my way, and assist at the consultation; I am for a bold stroke, if gentle methods should fail.

Nep. We have a plan, and a spirited one, if my sweet widow is able to go through it—pray let us have your friendly assistance—ours is the cause of love and reason.

Bates. Get you gone, with your love and reason, they seldom pull together now-a-days.—I'll give your uncle a dose first, and then I'll meet you at the widow's—What says your uncle's privy counsellor, Mr. Thomas, to this?

Nep. He is greatly our friend, and will enter sincerely into our service—he is honest, sensible, ignorant, and particular; a kind of half coxcomb, with a thorough good heart—but he's here.

Bates. Do you go about your business, and leave the rest to me. [Exit NEPHEW.]

Enter THOMAS with a pamphlet.

Mr. Thomas, I am glad to see you: upon my word, you look charmingly—you wear well, Mr. Thomas.

Tho. Which is a wonder, considering how times go, Mr. Bates—they'll wear and tear me too, if I don't take care of myself; my old master has taken the nearest way to wear himself out, and all that oelongs to him.

Bates. Why surely this strange story about town is not true, that the old gentleman is fallen in love?

Tho. Ten times worse than that!

Bates. The devil!

Tho. And his horns,—going to be married!

Bates. Not if I can help it.

Tho. You never saw such an altered man in your born days! he's grown young again; he

frisks, and prances, and runs about, as if he had a new pair of legs—he has left off his brown camlet surtout, which he wore all the summer: and now, with his hat under his arm, he goes open-breasted, and he dresses, and powders, and smirks, so that you would take him for the mad Frenchman in Bedlam—something wrong in his upper story—Would you think it?—he wants me to wear a pig-tail?

Bates. Then he is far gone indeed!

Tho. As sure as you are there, Mr. Bates, a pig-tail!—we have had sad work about it—I made a compromise with him to wear these ruffled shirts which he gave me; but they stand in my way—I am not so listless with them—though I have tied up my hands for him, I wont tie up my head, that I am resolute.

Bates. This it is to be in love, Thomas!

Tho. He may make free with himself, he sha'n't make a fool of me—he has got his head into a bag, but I wont have a pig-tail tacked to mine—and so I told him—

Bates. What did you tell him?

Tho. That as I and my father, and his father before me, had wore their own hair as heaven had sent it, I thought myself rather too old to set up for a monkey at my time of life, and wear a pig-tail—he, he, he!—he took it.

Bates. With a wry face, for it was wormwood.

Tho. Yes, he was frumped, and called me old blockhead, and would not speak to me the rest of the day—but the next day he was at it again—he then put me into a passion—and I could not help telling him, that I was an Englishman born, and had my prerogative as well as he; and that as long as I had breath in my body I was for liberty, and a straight head of hair.

Bates. Well said, Thomas—he could not answer that.

Tho. The poorest man in England is a match for the greatest, if he will but stick to the laws of the land, and the statute books, as they are delivered down to us from our forefathers.

Bates. You are right—we must lay our wits together, and drive the widow out of your old master's head, and put her into your young master's hands.

Tho. With all my heart—nothing can be more meritorious—marry at his years! what a terrible account would he make of it, Mr. Bates! Let me see—on the debtor side sixty-five—and per contra creditor, a buxom widow of twenty-three—He'll be a bankrupt in a fortnight—he, he, he!

Bates. And so he would, Mr. Thomas—what have you got in your hand?

Tho. A pamphlet, my old gentleman takes in—he has left off buying histories and religious pieces by numbers, as he used to do: and since he has got this widow in his head, he reads nothing but the Amorous Repository, Cupid's Revels, Call to Marriage, Hymen's Delights, Love lies a Bleeding, Love in the Suds, and such like tender compositions.

Bates. Here he comes, with all his folly about him.

Tho. Yes, and the first fool from Vanity-fair—Heaven help us—love turns man and woman topsy-turvy.

Whit. [Without.] Where is he? where is my good friend?

Enter WHITTLE.

Ha! here he is—give me your hand.

Bates. I am glad to see you in such spirits, my old gentleman.

Whit. Not so old neither; no man ought to be called old, friend Bates, if he is in health, spirits, and—

Bates. In his senses—which I should rather doubt, as I never saw you half so frolicsome in my life.

Whit. Never too old to learn, friend; and if I don't make use of my own philosophy now, I may wear it out in twenty years—I have been always bantered as of too grave a cast—you know, when I studied at Lincoln's Inn, they used to call me Young Wisdom.

Bates. And if they should call you Old Folly, it will be a much worse name.

Whit. No young jackanapes dares to call me so, while I have this friend at my side.

[*Touches his sword.*]

Bates. A hero too! What in the name of common sense, is come to you, my friend!—high spirits, quick honour, a long sword, and a bag!—you want nothing but to be terribly in love, and then you may sally forth Knight of the Woful Countenance. Ha, ha, ha!

Whit. Mr. Bates—the ladies who are the best judges of countenances, are not of your opinion; and unless you'll be a little serious, I must beg pardon for giving you this trouble, and I'll open my mind to some more attentive friend.

Bates. Well, come, unlock then, you wild, handsome, vigorous, young dog you—I will please you if I can.

Whit. I believe you never saw me look better, Frank, did you?

Bates. O yes, rather better forty years ago.

Whit. What, when I was at Merchant Tailors' School?

Bates. At Lincoln's Inn, Tom.

Whit. It can't be—I never disguise my age, and next February I shall be fifty-four.

Bates. Fifty-four! why I am sixty, and you always licked me at school—though I believe I could do as much for you now, and 'ecod I believe you deserve it too.

Whit. I tell you I am in my fifty-fifth year.

Bates. O, you are—let me see—we were together at Cambridge, Anno Domini twenty-five, which is near fifty years ago—you came to the college, indeed, surprisingly young; and, what is more surprising, by this calculation you went to school before you was born—you was always a forward child.

Whit. I see there is no talking or consulting with you in this humour; and so, Mr. Bates, when you are in temper to show less of your wit, and more of your friendship, I shall consult with you.

Bates. Fare you well, my old boy—young fellow, I mean—when you have done sowing your wild oats, and have been blistered into your right senses; when you have half killed yourself with being a beau, and return to your woollen caps, flannel waistcoats, worsted stockings, cork soles, and galoches, I am at your service again. So, *bon jour* to you, Monsieur Fifty-four—ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

Whit. He has certainly heard of my affair—but he is old and peevish—he wants spirits and strength of constitution to conceive my happiness—I am in love with the widow, and must have her: every man knows his own wants—let the world laugh, and my friends stare! let 'em call me imprudent, and mad, if they please—I live in good

times, and among people of fashion; so none of my neighbours, thank Heaven, can have the assurance to laugh at me.

Enter KECKSEY.

Keck. What, my friend Whittle! joy, joy! to you, old boy—you are going, a going, a going! a fine widow has bid for you, and will have you—hah, friend? all for the best—there is nothing like it—hugh, hugh, hugh!—a good wife is a good thing, and a young one is a better—hah—who's afraid? If I had not lately married one, I should have been at death's door by this time—hugh, hugh, hugh!

Whit. Thank, thank you, friend! I was coming to advise with you—I am got into the pond again—in love up to the ears—a fine woman, faith; and there's no love lost between us. Am I right, friend?

Keck. Right! ay, right as my leg, Tom! Life's nothing without love—hugh, hugh! I am happy as the day's long! My wife loves gadding, and I can't stay at home; so we are both of a mind—she's every night at one or other of the gay places; but among friends, I am a little afraid of the damp; hugh, hugh! she has got an Irish gentleman, a kind of cousin of hers, to take care of her; a fine fellow; and so good-natured—it is a vast comfort to have such a friend in a family! Hugh, hugh, hugh!

Whit. You are a bold man, cousin Kecksey.

Keck. Bold! ay, to be sure; none but the brave deserves the fair—Hugh, hugh! who's afraid?

Whit. Why your wife is five feet ten.

Keck. Without her shoes. I hate your little shrimps; none of your lean, meagre figures for me; I was always fond of the majestic: give me a slice of a good English surlin; cut and come again; hugh, hugh! that's my taste.

Whit. I'm glad you have so good a stomach. And so you would advise me to marry the widow directly?

Keck. To be sure—you have not a moment to lose; I always mind what the poet says,

'Tis folly to lose time,

When a man is in his prime.

Hugh, hugh, hugh!

Whit. You have an ugly cough, cousin.

Keck. Marriage is the best lozenge for it.

Whit. You have raised me from the dead—I am glad you came—Frank Bates had almost killed me with his jokes—but you have comforted me, and we will walk through the park; and I will carry you to the widow in Pall-mall.

Keck. With all my heart—I'll raise her spirits, and yours too—courage, Tom—come along—who's afraid? [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—The Widow's Lodging.

Enter WIDOW, NEPHEW, and BATES.

Bates. Indeed, Madam, there is no other way but to cast off your real character, and assume a feigned one; it is an extraordinary occasion, and requires extraordinary measures; pluck up a spirit, and do it for the honour of your sex.

Nep. Only consider, my sweet widow, that our all is at stake.

Wid. Could I bring my heart to act contrary to its feelings, would not you hate me for being a hypocrite, though it is done for your sake?

Nep. Could I think myself capable of such ingratitude—

Wid. Could we live upon affection, I would give your fortune to your uncle, and thank him for taking it; and then—

Nep. What then, my sweet widow?

Wid. I would desire you to run away with me as fast as you can.—What a pity it is that this money, which my heart despises, should hinder its happiness; or that, for the want of a few dirty acres, a poor woman must be made miserable, and sacrificed twice to those who have them.

Nep. Heaven forbid! these exquisite sentiments endear you more to me, and distract me with the dread of losing you.

Bates. Young folks, let an old man, who is not quite in love, and yet will admire a fine woman to the day of his death, throw in a little advice among your flames and darts.

Wid. Though a woman, a widow, and in love too, I can hear reason, Mr. Bates.

Bates. And that's a wonder—you have no time to lose; for want of a jointure you are still your father's slave; he is obstinate, and has promised you to the old man: now, Madam, if you will not rise superior to your sex's weakness, to secure a young fellow instead of an old one, your eyes are a couple of hypocrites.

Wid. They are a couple of traitors, I'm sure, and have led their mistress into a toil, from which all her wit cannot release her.

Nep. But it can, if you will but exert it; my uncle adored and fell in love with you for your beauty, softness, and almost speechless reserve. Now, if amidst all his rapturous ideas of your delicacy, you would bounce upon him a wild, ranting, buxom widow, he will grow sick of his bargain, and give me a fortune to take you off his hands.

Wid. I shall make a very bad actress.

Nep. You are an excellent mimic; assume but the character of your Irish female neighbour in the country, with which you astonished us so agreeably at Scarborough; you will frighten my uncle into terms, and do that for us which neither my love nor your virtue can accomplish without it.

Wid. Now for a trial [*Mimicking a strong brogue.*] Fait and trot, if you will be after bringing me before the old jontleman, if he loves music, I will trate his ears with a little of the brogue, and some dancing too into the bargain if he loves capering.—O bless me! my heart fails me, and I am frightened out of my wits; I can never go through it.

[*NEP. and BATES both laugh.*]

Nep. [*Kneeling and kissing her hand.*] O, 'tis admirable! Love himself inspires you, and we shall conquer; what say you, Mr. Bates?

Bates. I'll insure you success; I can scarce believe my own ears; such a tongue and a brogue would make Hercules tremble at five-and-twenty; but, away, away, and give him a broadside in the Park; there you'll find him hobbling with that old cuckold, Kecksey.

Wid. But will my dress suit the character I play.

Nep. The very thing; is your retinue ready, and your part got by heart?

Wid. All is ready: 'tis an act of despair to punish folly, and reward merit: 'tis the last effort of pure, honourable love: and if every woman would exert the same spirit for the same out-of-fashion rarity, there would be less business for Doctors'-commons. Now let the critics laugh at me if they dare.

[*Exit, with spirit.*]

Nep. Brava! bravissima! sweet widow! [*Exit.*]

Bates. Huzza! huzza!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—The Park.

Enter WHITTLE and KECKSEY.

Whit. Yes, yes, she is Irish, but so modest, so mild, and so tender, and just enough of the accent to give a peculiar sweetness to her words, which drop from her in monosyllables, with such a delicate reserve, that I shall have all the comfort, without the impertinence, of a wife.

Keck. There our taste differs, friend; I am for a lively, smart girl in my house, hugh, hugh! to keep up my spirits, and make me merry; I don't admire dumb waiters, not I, no still life for me; I love the prittle prattle, it sets me to sleep, and I can take a sound nap, while my Sally and her cousin are running and playing about the house like young cats.

Whit. I am for no cats in my house; I cannot sleep with a noise; the widow was made on purpose for me; she is so bashful, has no acquaintance, and she never would stir out of doors if her friends were not afraid of a consumption, and so force her into the air. Such a delicate creature! you shall see her; you were always for a tall, chattering, frisky wench; now, for my part, I am with the old saying,

*Wife a mouse,
Quiet house;
Wife a cat,
Dreadful that.*

Keck. I don't care for your sayings—who's afraid?

Whit. There goes Bates, let us avoid him, he will only be joking with us; when I have taken a serious thing into my head, I can't bear to have it laughed out again. This way, friend Kecksey.—What have we got here?

Keck. [*Looking out.*] Some fine prancing wench, with her lovers and footmen about her; she's a gay one by her motions.

Whit. Were she not so flaunting, I should take it for—No, it is impossible; and yet is not that my nephew with her? I forbade him speaking to her; it can't be the widow; I hope it is not.

Enter WIDOW, followed by NEPHEW, three Footmen, and a black Boy.

Wid. Don't bother me, young man, with your darts, your Cupids, and your pangs; if you had half of 'em about you that you swear you have, they would have cured you, by killing you long ago. Would you have me faithless to your uncle, hah! young man? Was not I faithful to you, till I was ordered to be faithful to him? But I must know more of your English ways, and live more among the English ladies, to learn how to be faithful to two at a time—and so there's my answer for you.

Nep. Then I know my relief, for I cannot live without you.

[*Exit.*]

Wid. Take what relief you please, young jontleman; what have I to do with dat? He is certainly mad, or out of his senses, for he swears he can't live without me, and yet he talks of killing himself! How does he make out dat? If a countryman of mine had made such a blunder, they would have put it into all the newspapers, and Faulkner's Journal beside; but an Englishman may look over the hedge, while an Irishman must not stale a horse.

Keck. Is this the widow, friend Whittle?

Whit. I don't know, [*Sighing.*] it is, and it is not.

Wid. Your servant, Mr. Whittol; I wish you would spake to your nephew not to be whining and dangling after me all day in his green coat. It is not for my reputation that he should follow me about like a beggar-man, and ask me for what I had given him along ago, but have since bestowed upon you, Mr. Whittol.

Whit. He is an impudent beggar, and shall be really so, for his disobedience.

Wid. As he can't live without me, you know, it will be charity to starve him: I wish the poor young man dead with all my heart, as he thinks it will do him a great deal of good.

Keck. [*To WHITTLE.*] She is tender, indeed! and I think she has the brogue a little—hugh, hugh!

Whit. 'Tis stronger to-day than ever I heard it.

[*Staring.*]

Wid. And are you now talking of my brogue? It is always the most fullest when the wind is aesterly; it has the same effect upon me, as upon stammering people—they can't spake for their impediment, and my tongue is fixed so loose in my mouth I can't stop it for the life of me.

Whit. What a terrible misfortune, friend Kecksey!

Keck. Not at all; the more tongue the better, say I.

Wid. When the wind changes, I have no brogue at all, at all. But come, Mr. Whittol, don't let us be vulgar, and talk of our poor relations. It is impossible to be in this metropolis of London, and have any thought but of operas, plays, masquerades, and pantaons, to keep up one's spirits in the winter; and Vauxhall fire-works to cool and refresh one in the summer.—La, la, la! [*Sings.*]

Whit. I protest, she puts me into a sweat; we shall have a mob about us.

Keck. The more the merrier, I say—who's afraid?

Wid. How the people stare! as if they never saw a woman's voice before; but my vivacity has got the better of my good manners. This, I suppose, this strange gentleman is a near friend and relation, and as such, notwithstanding his appearance, I shall always trate him, though I might dislike him upon a nearer acquaintance.

Keck. Madam, you do me honour; I like your frankness, and I like your person, and I envy my friend Whittle; and if you were not engaged, and I were not married, I would endeavour to make myself agreeable to you, that I would—hugh, hugh!

Wid. And, indeed, Sir, it would be very agreeable to me; for if I did hate you as much as I did my first dare husband, I should always have the comfort, that in all human probability my torments would not last long.

Keck. She utters something more than monosyllables, friend; this is better than bargain: she has a fine bold way of talking.

Whit. More bold than welcome! I am struck all of a heap.

Wid. What, are you low-spirited, my dare Mr. Whittol? When you were at Scarborough, and winning my affections, you were all mirth and gayety: and now you have won me, you are as thoughtful about it as if we had been married some time.

Whit. Indeed, Madam, I can't but say I am a little thoughtful—we take it by turns; you were

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very sorrowful a month ago for the loss of your husband, and that you could dry up your tears so soon, naturally makes me a little thoughtful.

Wid. Indeed I could dry up my tears for a dozen husbands, when I was sure of having a twentieth like Mr. Whittol; that's very natural sure both in England and Dublin too.

Keck. She wont die of a consumption; she nas a fine full-toned voice, and you'll be very happy, Tom—Hugh, hugh!

Whit. O, yes, very happy.

Wid. But come, don't let us be melancholy before the time; I am sure I have been moped up for a year and a half—I was obliged to mourn for my first husband, that I might be sure of a second; and my father kept my spirits in subjection, as the best recipe (he said) for changing a widow into a wife; but now I have my arms and legs at liberty, I must and will have my swing: now I am out of my cage, I could dance two nights together, and a day too, like any singing bird; and I'm in such spirits that I have got rid of my father, I could fly over the moon without wings, and back again, before dinner. Bless my eyes, and don't I see there Miss Nancy O'Flarty, and her brother, Captain O'Flarty? He was one of my dying Strephons at Scarborough—I have a very grate regard for him, and must make him a little miserable, with my happiness. [*Courtesies.*] Come along, skips, [*To the servants.*] don't you be gosting there; show your liveries, and bow to your master that is to be, and to his friend, and hold up your heads, and trip after me as lightly as if you had no legs to your feet. I shall be with you again, jontlemen, in the crack of a fan—O, I'll have a husband, ay, marry.

[*Exit singing, followed by Footmen.*]

Keck. A fine buxom widow, faith! no acquaintance—delicate reserve—mopes at home—forced into the air—inclined to a consumption.—What a description you gave of your wife! Why, she beats my Sally, Tom.

Whit. Yes, and she'll beat me if I don't take care! What a change is here! I must turn about, or this will turn my head. Dance for two nights together, and leap over the moon! you shall dance and leap by yourself, that I am resolved.

Keck. Here she comes again; it does my heart good to see her—you are in luck, Tom.

Whit. I'd give a finger to be out of such luck.

Re-enter WIDOW, &c.

Wid. Ha, ha, ha! the poor captain is marched off in a fury. He can't bear to hear that the town has capitulated to you, Mr. Whittol. I have promised to introduce him to you. He will make one of my dangles to take a little exercise with me, when you take your nap in the afternoon.

Whit. You sha'n't catch me napping, I assure you. What a discovery and escape I have made! I tremble with the thought of my danger! [*Aside.*]

Keck. I protest, cousin, there goes my wife, and her friend, Mr. Mac Brawn. What a fine stately couple they are! I must after 'em, and have a laugh with them—now they giggle and walk quick, that I mayn't overtake 'em. Madam, your servant. You're a happy man, Tom. Keep up your spirits, old boy. Hugh, hugh!—Who's afraid?

[*Exit.*]

Wid. I know Mr. Mac Brawn extremely well—he was very intimate at our house, in my first

husband's time; a great comfort he was to me to be sure! He would very often leave his claret and companions for a little conversation with me. He was bred at the Dublin university, and being a very deep scholar, has fine talents for a tate-a-tate.

Whit. She knows him too! I shall have my house overrun with the Mac Brawns, O'Shoulders, and the blood of the Backwells. Lord have mercy upon me!

[*Aside.*]

Wid. Pray, Mr. Whittol, is that poor spindle-legged crater of a cousin of yours lately married? ha, ha, ha! I don't pity the poor crater his wife, for that agreeable cough of his will soon reward her for all her sufferings.

Whit. What a delivery! a reprieve before the knot was tied.

[*Aside.*]

Wid. Are you unwell, Mr. Whittol? I should be sorry you would fall sick before the happy day. Your being in danger afterwards would be a great consolation to me, because I should have the pleasure of nursing you myself.

Whit. I hope never to give you that trouble, Madam.

Wid. No trouble at all, at all; I assure you, Sir, from my soul, that I shall take great delight in the occasion.

Whit. Indeed, Madam, I believe it.

Wid. I don't care how soon, the sooner the better; and the more danger the more honour; I spake from my heart.

Whit. And so do I from mine, Madam.

[*Sighs.*]

Wid. But don't let us think of future pleasure, and neglect the present satisfaction. My mantuamaker is waiting for me to choose my clothes, in which I shall forget the sorrows of Mrs. Brady, in the joys of Mrs. Whittol. Though I have no fortune myself, I shall bring a tolerable one to you, in debts, Mr. Whittol, and which I will pay you tinfold in tenderness; your deep purse, and my open heart, will make us the envy of the little grate ones, and the grate little ones; the people of quality with no souls, and grate souls with no cash at all. I hope you'll meet me at the Pantaon this evening. Lady Rantion and her daughter, Miss Nettledown, and Nancy Tittup, with half a dozen macaroonies, and two savoury vivers, are to take me there, and we propose a grate deal of chat and merriment, and dancing all night, and all other kind of recreations. I am quite another kind of a crater, now I am a bird in the fields; I can junket about a week together; I have a fine constitution, and am never molested with your nasty vapours; are you ever troubled with vapours, Mr. Whittol?

Whit. A little, now and then, Madam.

Wid. I'll rattle 'em away like smoke! there are no vapours where I come; I hate your dumps, and your nerves, and your megrims; and I had much rather break your rest with a little racketting, than let any thing get into your head that should not be there, Mr. Whittol.

Whit. I will take care that nothing shall be in my head, but what ought to be there. What a deliverance!

[*Aside.*]

Wid. [*Looking at her watch.*] Bless me! how the hours of the clock creep away when we are pleased with our company: but I must leave you, for there are half a hundred people waiting for me to pick your pocket, Mr. Whittol; and there is my own brother, lieutenant O'Neale, is to arrive this morning, and he is so like me you would not

know us asunder when we are together; you will be very fond of him, poor lad! he lives by his wits, as you do by your fortune, and so you may assist one another. Mr. Whittol, your obedient, till we meet at the Pantaon. Follow me, Pompey; and, skips, do you follow him.

Pomp. The Baccararo whiteman not let blacky boy go first after you, Missis, they pull and pinch me.

Foot. It is a shame, your ladyship, that a black negro should take place of English Christians—we can't follow him, indeed.

Wid. Then you may follow one another out of my service; if you follow me, you shall follow him, for he shall go before me; therefore, resign as fast as you please; you sha'n't oppose government and keep your places too, that is not good politics in England or Ireland either; so come along, Pompey, be after going before me.—Mr. Whittol, most tenderly yours.

[*Exeunt WIDOW and attendants.*]

Whit. Most tenderly yours! [*Mimicks her.*] 'Ecod, I believe you are, and any body's else, O, what an escape have I had! But how shall I clear myself of this business? I'll serve her as I would bad money, put her off into other hands: my nephew is fool enough to be in love with her, and if I give him a fortune he'll take the good and the bad together—he shall do so or starve. I'll send for Bates directly, confess my folly, ask his pardon, send him to my nephew, write and declare off with the widow, and so get rid of her tenderness as fast as I can.

[*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in WHITTOL'S House.

Enter BATES and WHITTOL.

Whit. Well, Mr. Bates, have you talked with my nephew; is not he overjoyed at the proposal?

Bates. The demon of discord has been among you, and has untuned the whole family; you have screwed him too high; the young man is out of his senses, I think; he stares, mopes about, and sighs; looks at me indeed, but gives very absurd answers; I don't like him.

Whit. What is the matter, think you?

Bates. What I have always expected; there is a crack in your family, and you take it by turns! you have had it, and now transfer it to your nephew; which, to your shame be it spoken, is the only transfer you have ever made him.

Whit. But, am I not going to do him more than justice?

Bates. As you have done him much less than justice hitherto, you can't begin too soon.

Whit. Am not I going to give him the lady he likes, and which I was going to marry myself?

Bates. Yes; that is, you are taking a perpetual blister off your own back, to clap it upon his. What a tender uncle you are!

Whit. But you don't consider the estate which I shall give him.

Bates. Restore to him, you mean—'tis his own, and you should have given it up long ago; you must do more, or old Nick will have you; your nephew wont take the widow off your hands without a fortune: throw him ten thousand into the bargain.

Whit. Indeed but I sha'n't; he shall run mad, and I'll marry her myself rather than do that.

Mr. Bates, be a true friend, and sooth my nephew to consent to my proposal.

Bates. You have raised the fiend, and ought to lay him; however, I'll do my best for you; when the head is turned, nothing can bring it right again so soon as ten thousand pounds; shall I promise for you?

Whit. I'll sooner go to Bedlam myself. [*Exit BATES.*] Why, I'm in a worse condition than I was before. If this widow's father will not let me off without providing for his daughter, I may lose a great sum of money, and none of us be the better for it; my nephew half mad; myself half married; and no remedy for either of us.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Patrick O'Neale is come to wait upon you, would you please to see him?

Whit. By all means, the very person I wanted; don't let him wait. [*Exit SERVANT.*] I wonder if he has seen my letter to the widow; I will sound him by degrees, that I may be sure of my mark before I strike the blow.

Enter SIR PATRICK O'NEALE.

Sir P. Mr. Whizzle, your humble servant; it gives me great pleasure, that an old jontleman of your property, will have the honour of being united with the family of the O'Neales; we have been too much jontlemen not to spend our estate, as you have made yourself a kind of jontleman by getting one; one runs out one way, and t'other runs in another, which makes them both meet at last, and keeps up the balance of Europe.

Whit. I am much obliged to you, Sir Patrick: I am an old gentleman, you say true; and I was thinking—

Sir P. And I was thinking if you was ever so old, my daughter can't make you young again; she has as fine, rich, tick blood in her veins, as any in all Ireland. I wish you had a swate crater of a daughter like mine, that we might make a double cross of it.

Whit. That would be a double cross indeed!

[*Aside.*]

Sir P. Though I was miserable enough with my first wife, who had the devil of a spirit, and the very model of her daughter, yet a brave man never shrinks from danger, and I may have better luck another time.

Whit. Yes, but I am no brave man, Sir Patrick, and I begin to shrink already.

Sir P. I have bred her up in great subjection; she is as tame as a young colt, and as tinder as a sucking chicken; you will find her a true jontlewoman, and so knowing that you can teach her nothing; she brings every thing but money, and you have enough of that, if you have nothing else, and that is what I call the balance of things.

Whit. But I have been considering your daughter's great deserts, and my great age—

Sir P. She is a charming crater; I would venture to say that, if I was not her father.

Whit. I say, Sir, as I have been considering your daughter's great deserts, and as I own I have great demerits—

Sir P. To be sure you have, but you can't help that; and if my daughter was to mention any thing of fleeing at your age, or your stinginess, by the balance of power, but I would make her repate it a hundred times to your face, to make her ashamed of it; but mum, old gentleman, the

devil a word of your infirmities will she touch upon; I have brought her up to softness and to gentleness, as a kitten to new milk; she will spake nothing but no and yes, as if she were dumb; and no tame rabbit or pigeon will keep house, or be more injanious with her needle and tambourine.

Whit. She is vastly altered then since I saw her last, or I have lost my senses, and in either case we had much better, since I must speak plain, not come together—

Sir P. Till you are married, you mean—with all my heart, it is the more gentale for that, and like our family: I never saw Lady O'Neale, your mother-in-law, who, poor crater, is dead, and can never be a mother-in-law again, till the week before I married her; and I did not care if I had never seen her then, which is a comfort too in case of death, or accidents in life.

Whit. But you don't understand me, Sir Patrick, I say—

Sir P. I say, how can that be, when we both spake English?

Whit. But you mistake my meaning, and don't comprehend me.

Sir P. Then you don't comprehend yourself, Mr. Whizzle, and I have not the gift of prophecy to find out, after you have spoke, what never was in you.

Whit. Let me entreat you to attend to me a little.

Sir P. I do attend, man; I don't interrupt you—out with it.

Whit. Your daughter—

Sir P. Your wife that is to be. Go on.

Whit. My wife that is not to be—Zounds! will you hear me?

Sir P. To be or not to be, is that the question? I can swear too, if it wants a little of that.

Whit. Dear Sir Patrick, hear me. I confess myself unworthy of her; I have the greatest regard for you, Sir Patrick; I should think myself honoured by being in your family, but there are many reasons—

Sir P. To be sure there are many reasons why an old man should not marry a young woman; but that was your business, and not mine.

Whit. I have wrote a letter to your daughter, which I was in hopes you had seen, and brought me an answer to it.

Sir P. What the devil, Mr. Whizzle, do you make a letter-porter of me? Do you imagine, you dirty fellow, with your cash, that Sir Patrick O'Neale would carry your letters? I would have you know that I despise letters, and all that belong to 'em; nor would I carry a letter to the king, Heaven bless him, unless it came from myself.

Whit. But, dear Sir Patrick, don't be in a passion for nothing.

Sir P. What, is it nothing to make a penny-postman of me? But I'll go to my daughter directly, for I have not seen her to-day; and if I find that you have written any thing that I wont understand, I shall take it as an affront to my family; and you shall either let out the noble blood of the O'Neales, or I will spill the last drop of the red puddle of the Whizzles. [*Going, returns.*—Harkye, you Mr. Whizzle, Wheezle, Whistle what's your name? You must not stir till I come back; if you offer to ate, drink, or sleep till my honour is satisfied, 'twill be the worst male you ever took in your life; you had better fast a year, and die at the end of six months, than dare to lave

your house. So now, Mr. Wheeze, you are to do as you please. [*Exit.*]

Whit. Now the devil is at work indeed! If some miracle don't save me, I shall run mad like my nephew, and have a long Irish sword through me into the bargain.

Enter THOMAS.

Sad work, Thomas!

Tho. Sad work, indeed! why would you think of marrying? I knew what it would come to.

Whit. Why, what is it come to?

Tho. It is in all the papers.

Whit. So much the better; then nobody will believe it.

Tho. But they come to me to inquire.

Whit. And you contradict it?

Tho. What signifies that? I was telling lady Gabble's footman, at the door just now, that it was all a lie, and your nephew looks out of the two-pair-of-stairs window, with eyes all on fire, and tells the whole story; upon that there gathered such a mob!

Whit. I shall be murdered, and have my house pulled down into the bargain!

Tho. It is all quiet again. I told them the young man was out of his senses, and that you were out of town; so they went away quietly, and said they would come and mob you another time.

Whit. Thomas, what shall I do?

Tho. Nothing you have done, if you will have matters amend.

Whit. I am out of my depth, and you wont lend me your hand to draw me out.

Tho. You were out of your depth to fall in love; swim away as fast as you can, you'll be drowned if you marry.

Whit. I'm frightened out of my wits; yes, yes, 'tis all over with me; I must not stir out of my house; but am ordered to stay to be murdered in it for aught I know;—what are you muttering, Thomas? Prythee speak out and comfort me.

Tho. It is all a judgment upon you; because your brother's foolish will says the young man must have your consent, you wont let him have her, but will marry the widow yourself; that's the dog in the manger; you can't eat the oats, and wont let those who can.

Whit. But I consent that he shall have both the widow and the fortune, if we can get him into his right senses.

Tho. For fear I should lose mine, I'll get out of Bedlam as soon as possible; you must provide yourself with another servant.

Whit. The whole earth conspires against me! you shall stay with me till I die, and then you shall have a good legacy, and I wont live long I promise you. [*Knocking at the door.*]

Tho. Here are the undertakers already. [*Exit.*]

Whit. What shall I do? my head can't bear it; I will hang myself for fear of being run through the body.

Re-enter THOMAS, with bills.

Tho. Half a score people I never saw before, with these bills and drafts upon you for payment, signed Martha Brady.

Whit. I wish Martha Brady was at the bottom of the Thames! what an impudent extravagant baggage, to begin her tricks already! Send them to the devil, and say I wont pay a farthing.

Tho. You'll have another mob about the door.

[*Going.*]

Whit. Stay, stay, Thomas; tell them I am very busy, and they must come to-morrow morning;—stay, stay, that is promising payment; no, no, no—tell 'em they must stay till I am married, and so they will be satisfied, and tricked into the bargain.

Tho. When you are tricked we shall all be satisfied. [*Aside and exit.*]

Whit. That of all dreadful things, I should think of a woman, and that woman should be a widow, and that woman should be an Irish one.—Who have we here? Another of the family, I suppose. [*Retires.*]

Enter WIDOW as Lieutenant O'Neale, seemingly flustered, and putting up his sword, THOMAS following.

Tho. I hope you are not hurt, captain.

Wid. O, not at all, at all; 'tis well they run away, or I should have made them run faster; I shall teach them how to snigger and look through glasses at their betters; these are your maccaroons, as they call themselves; by my soul but I would have taught them better manners, if they would have stood still till I had overtaken them; these whipper-snappers look so much more like girls in breeches, than those I see in petticoats, that fait and trot, it is a pity to hurt 'em; but to business; friend, where is your master?

Tho. There, captain; I hope he has not offended you.

Wid. If you are impatient, Sir, you will offend me; lave the room.

Tho. I value my life too much not to do that—what a raw-boned Tartar! I wish he had not been caught and sent here.

[*Aside to WHITTLE; exit.*]

Whit. Her brother, by all that's terrible! and as like her as two tigers! I sweat at the sight of him; I'm sorry Thomas is gone; he has been quarrelling already. [*Aside.*]

Wid. Is your name Whittol?

Whit. My name is Whittle, not Whittol.

Wid. We sha'n't stand for trifles—and you were born and christened by the name of Thomas?

Whit. So they told me, Sir.

Wid. Then they told no lies, fait; so far, so good. [*Takes out a letter.*] Do you know that handwriting?

Whit. As well as I know this good friend of mine, who helps me upon such occasions.

[*Showing his right hand, and smiling.*]

Wid. You had better not show your teeth, Sir, till we come to the jokes—the hand-writing is yours.

Whit. Yes, Sir, it is mine. [*Sighs.*]

Wid. Death and powder! what do you sigh for? Are you ashamed, or sorry, for your handy-works?

Whit. Partly one, partly t'other.

Wid. Will you be pleased, Sir, to rade it aloud, that you may know it again when you hare it.

Whit. [*Takes the letter and reads.*] “Madam”—

Wid. Would you be pleased to let us know what Madam you mean? for woman of quality, and woman of no quality, and woman of all qualities, are so mixed together, that you don't know one from t'other, and all are called madams; you should always read the superscription before you open the letter.

Whit. I beg your pardon, Sir.—I don't like

this ceremony. [*Aside.*] "*To Mrs. Brady, in Pall-mall.*"

Wid. Now prosade—fire and powder, but I would—

Whit. Sir, what's the matter?

Wid. Nothing at all, Sir; pray go on.

Whit. "*Madam,—As I prefer your happiness to the indulgence of my own passions*"—

Wid. I will not prefer your happiness to the indulgence of my passions—Mr. Whittol, rade on.

Whit. "*I must confess that I am unworthy of your charms and virtues.*"

Wid. Very unworthy indeed; rade on, Sir.

Whit. "*I have, for some days, had a severe struggle between my justice and my passion*"—

Wid. I have had no struggle at all: my justice and passion are agreed.

Whit. "*The former has prevailed, and I beg leave to resign you, with all your accomplishments, to some more deserving, though not more admiring servant, than your miserable and devoted,*"

THOMAS WHITTOL."

Wid. And miserable and devoted you shall be—to the postscript: rade on.

Whit. "*Postscript:—let me have your pity, but not your anger.*"

Wid. In answer to this love epistle, [*Snatches the letter.*] you pitiful fellow, my sister presents you with her tenderest wishes, and assures you that you have, as you desire, her pity, and she generously throws her contempt too into the bargain. [*Tears the letter, and throws it at him.*]

Whit. I'm infinitely obliged to her.

Wid. I must beg leave in the name of all our family to present the same to you.

Whit. I am ditto to all the family.

Wid. But as a brache of promise to any of our family was never suffered without a brache into somebody's body, I have fixed upon myself to be your operator; and I believe that you will find that I have as fine a hand at this work, and will give you as little pain, as any in the three kingdoms. [*Sits down and looses her knee-bands.*]

Whit. For Heaven's sake, captain, what are you about?

Wid. I always loosen my garters for the advantage of lunging; it is for your sake as well as my own, for I will be twice through your body, before you shall feel me once.

Whit. What a terrible fellow it is! I wish Thomas would come in. [*Aside.*]

Wid. Come, Sir, prepare yourself; you are not the first, by half a score, that I have run through and through the heart, before they knew what was the matter with them.

Whit. But, captain, suppose I will marry your sister?

Wid. I have not the laste objection, if you recover of your wounds. Callaghan O'Connor lives very happy with my great aunt, Mrs. Deborah O'Neale in the county of Gallway; except a small asthma he got by my running him through the lungs, at the Currough: he would have forsaken her, if I had not stopped his perfidy by a famous family stytic I have here: O, ho! my little old boy, but you shall get it. [*Draws.*]

Whit. What shall I do?—well, Sir, if I must, I must; I'll meet you to-morrow morning in Hyde-Park, let the consequence be what it will.

Wid. For fear you might forget that favour, I must beg to be indulged with a little pushing now; I have set my heart upon it; and two

birds in hand is worth one in the bushes, Mr. Whittol—come, Sir.

Whit. But I have not settled my matters.

Wid. O, we'll settle them in a trice, I warrant you. [*Puts herself in a position.*]

Whit. But I don't understand the sword; I had rather fight with pistols.

Wid. I am very happy it is in my power to oblige you; there, Sir, take your choice; I will please you if I can. [*Offers pistols.*]

Whit. Out of the pan into the fire! there's no putting him off; if I had chosen poison, I dare swear he had arsenic in his pocket. [*Aside.*] Look ye, young gentleman, I am an old man, and you'll get no credit by killing me; but I have a nephew as young as yourself, and you'll get more honour in facing him.

Wid. Ay, and more pleasure too—I expect ample satisfaction from him, after I have done your business; prepare, Sir.

Whit. What the devil; wont one serve your turn? I can't fight, and I wont fight; I'll do any thing rather than fight; I'll marry your sister; my nephew shall marry her; I'll give him all my fortune; what would the fellow have? Here, nephew! Thomas! murder! murder!

[*He flies, and she pursues.*]

Enter BATES and NEPHEW.

Nep. What's the matter, uncle?

Whit. Murder, that's all; that ruffian there would kill me, and eat me afterwards.

Nep. I'll find a way to cool him! come out, Sir, I am as mad as yourself; I'll match you, I warrant you.

Wid. I'll follow you ail the world over.

Whit. Stay, stay, nephew, you sha'n't fight; we shall be exposed all over the town, and you may lose your life, and I shall be cursed from morning till night; do, nephew, make yourself and me happy; be the olive-branch, and bring peace into my family; return to the widow; I will give you my consent, and your fortune, and a fortune for the widow, five thousand pounds! Do persuade him, Mr. Bates.

Bates. Do, Sir; this is a very critical point of your life; I know you love her; 'tis the only method to restore us all to our senses.

Nep. I must talk in private first with this hot young gentleman.

Wid. As private as you please, Sir.

Whit. Take their weapons away, Mr. Bates; and do you follow me to my study, to witness my proposal; it is all ready, and only wants signing; come along, come along. [*Exit.*]

Bates. Victoria! victoria! give me your swords and pistols; and now do your worst, you spirited, loving, young couple; I could leap out of my skin! [*Exit.*]

Nep. O my charming widow; what a day have we gone through!

Wid. I would go through ten times as much to deceive an old, amorous spark, like your uncle, to purchase a young one, like his nephew.

Nep. I listened at the door all this last scene; my heart was agitated with ten thousand fears; suppose my uncle had been stout, and drawn his sword

Wid. I should have run away as he did; when two cowards meet, the struggle is who shall run first; and sure I can beat an old man at any thing.

Nep. Permit me thus to seal my happiness.

[*Kisses her.*]

Enter WHITTLE and BATES; WHITTLE stares.

Bates. Confusion!

Whit. [*Turning to BATES.*] Hey-day! I am afraid his head is not right yet! he was kneeling and kissing the captain's hand.

Bates. Take no notice, all will come about.

Whit. I find, Mr. Whittol, your family loves kissing better than fighting; he swears, I am as like my sister as two pigeons.

Enter SIR PATRICK O'NEALE.

Sir P. I hope, Mr. Whizzle, you'll excuse my coming back to give you an answer, without having any to give; I hear a grate dale of news about myself, and came to know if it be true; they say my son is in London, when he tells me himself, by letter here, that he's at Limerick; and I have been with my daughter to tell her the news, but she would not stay at home to receive it, so I am come—O gramachree! my little din ousil craw, what have we got here? a piece of mummery! here is my son and daughter too, fait; what are you waring the breeches, Pat, to see how they become you when you are Mrs. Weezel?

Whit. I beg your pardon for that, Sir! I wear them before marriage, because I think they become a woman better than after.

Whit. What, is not this your son? [*Astonished.*]

Sir P. No, but it is my daughter, and that is the same thing.

Whit. And your niece, Sir, which is better than either.

Whit. Mighty well! and I suppose you have not lost your wits, young man?

Nep. I sympathize with you, Sir; we lost 'em together, and found 'em at the same time.

Whit. Here's villany! Mr. Bates, give me the paper; not a farthing shall they have till the law gives it 'em.

Bates. We'll cheat the law, and give it them now.

[*Gives NEPHEW the paper.*]

Whit. He may take his own, but he sha'n't have a sixpence of the five thousand pounds I promised him.

Bates. Witness, good folks, he owns to the promise.

Sir P. Fait, I'll witness dat, or any thing else in a good cause.

Whit. What, am I choused again?

Bates. Why, should not my friend be choused out of a little justice for the first time? Your hard usage has sharpened your nephew's wits; therefore, beware, don't play with edge-tools, you'll only cut your fingers.

Sir P. And your trote too, which is all one; therefore, to make all asy, marry my daughter first, and then quarrel with her afterwards; that will be in the natural course of things.

Whit. Here, Thomas! where are you?

Enter THOMAS.

Here are fine doings! I am deceived, tricked, and cheated!

Tho. I wish you joy, Sir; the best thing that could have happened to you; and as a faithful servant I have done my best to check you.

Whit. To check me!

Tho. You were galloping full speed, and down hill too; and if we had not laid hold of the bridle, being a bad jockey, you would have hung by your horns in the stirrup, to the great joy of the whole town.

Whit. What, have you helped to trick me?

Tho. Into happiness. You have been foolish a long while, turn about and be wise; he has got the woman and his estate, give them your blessing, which is not worth much, and live like a Christian for the future.

Whit. I will, if I can: but I can't look at 'em; I can't bear the sound of my voice, nor the sight of my own face; look ye, I am distressed and distracted! and can't come to yet; I will be reconciled if possible; but don't let me see or hear from you, if you would have me forget and forgive you—I shall never lift up my head again!

Whit. I hope, Sir Patrick, that my preferring the nephew to the uncle will meet with your approbation?

Sir P. You are out of my hands, Pat, so if you wont trouble me with your afflictions, I shall sincerely rejoice at your felicity.

Nep. It would be a great abatement of my present joy, could I believe that this lady should be assisted in her happiness, or be supported in her afflictions, by any one but her lover and husband.

Sir P. Fine notions are fine tings, but a fine estate gives every ting but ideas, and them too, if you'll appale to those who help you to spend it—what say you, widow?

Whit. By your and their persuasion I will tell my mind to this good company; and for fear my words should want ideas too, I will add an Irish tune, that may carry off a bad voice, and bad matter.

A widow bewitch'd with her passion,

Though Irish, is now quite asham'd,

To think that she's so out of fashion,

To marry, and then to be tamed.

'Tis love, the dear joy,

That old fashion'd boy,

Has got in my breast with his quiver;

The blind urchin he,

Struck the cush la maw cree,

And a husband secures me for ever!

Ye, fair ones, I hope, will excuse me,

Though vulgar, pray do not abuse me.

I cannot become a find lady,

O love has bewitch'd widow Brady.

Ye critics, to murder so willing,

Pray see all our errors with blindness,

For once change your method of killing,

And kill a fond widow with kindness;

If you look so severe,

In a fit of despair,

Again will I draw forth my steel, Sirs;

You know I've the art,

To be twice through your heart,

Before I can once make you feel, Sirs.

Brother soldiers, I hope you'll protect me.

Nor let cruel critics dissect me;

To favour my cause be but ready,

And grateful you'll find widow Brady

To all that I see here before me,

The bottom, the top, and the middle,

For music we now must implore ye,

No wedding without pipe and fiddle;

If all are in tune,

Pray let it be soon,

My heart in my bosom is prancing!

If your hands should unite,

To give us delight,

O, that's the best piping aud dancing!

Your plaudits to me are a treasure,

Your smiles are a dow'r for a lady,

O, joy to you all in full measure,

So wishes, and prays, widow Brady.

ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GEORGE LILLO.

REMARKS.

WE have before alluded to this Play, (in our remarks on the Author's Tragedy of *Fatal Curiosity*,) as founded on a well-known domestic trouble, recorded by Hollinshed, in his chronicle; and by Jacob, in his History of Feversham.—In 1592, a tragedy under the same title was published, by an anonymous writer; and in 1770 was reprinted by Edward Jacob, with an absurd preface, imputing it to Shakspeare. From this, Mr. Lillo formed the present tragedy, which he is said to have left unfinished to the care of Dr. John Hoadley, by whom it was completed.

With some alteration, this piece might be well adapted for modern representation; it is pathetic and interesting, with many well-written passages. The last act in particular, with the death of Arden by the villany of Mosby, and the despair of Alicia, is not only deeply affecting, but is a sad proof of the folly and danger of the slightest acquaintance or association with the depraved. In 1790, Mr. Holman produced this tragedy, with alterations, for his benefit.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.
THE MAYOR OF FEVERSHAM,.....	<i>Mr. Burton.</i>
ARDEN, a Gentleman of Feversham,.....	<i>Mr. Havard.</i>
FRANKLIN, his Friend,.....	<i>Mr. Scrase.</i>
MICHAEL, Arden's Servant,.....	<i>Mr. Wignell.</i>
GREEN,.....	<i>Mr. Packer.</i>
MOSBY,.....	<i>Mr. Bransby.</i>
BRADSHAW,.....	<i>Mr. Johnston.</i>
BLACK WILL, } Ruffians.....	{ <i>Mr. Phillips.</i>
GEORGE SHAKEBAG, }	{ <i>Mr. Vaughan.</i>
ADAM FOWL, an Innkeeper.	
OFFICERS, &c.	
A SERVANT to Arden.	
ALICIA, Wife to Arden,.....	<i>A young Gentlewoman.</i>
MARIA, Sister to Mosby,.....	<i>Miss Barton.</i>

SCENE.—Feversham in Kent.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street before ARDEN's door.*
MOSBY alone.

Mos. The morning's dark, and horrid as my purpose.
Thrice have my snare's been laid for Arden's life,
And thrice has he escap'd.—I am not safe:
The living may revenge.—Oh! could I win
Alicia to conspire her husband's fall,
Then might I say, security, thou'rt mine,

And laugh at all to come.—For other instruments, [suit
There's Green: he bears him hard about this
For th' abbey-lands, to which the hot youth [fav'rite;
pleads
Some fancied right.—Michael, the trencher-
A bastard, bred of Arden's charity:
He has been privy to our secret joys,
And, on that trust presuming, loves my sister
Winks at adultery, and may at murder
Maria is his price. I've plac'd her here,
Companion of my sweet Alicia's hours,

To spread her charms for ever in his eye :
 To her are all my visits. But—Alicia—
 She must, she shall comply : when to my arms
 Her honour she resign'd, her fond reluctance
 whisper'd,
 She could deny me nothing. [*Exit into ARDEN'S.*]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter ARDEN, in his night gown.

Arden. Unhappy Arden, whither canst thou
 wander
 To lay thy heavy load of sorrows down !
 Will change of place relieve th' afflicted mind ;
 Or does all nature yield a balm to cure
 The pangs of slighted love and broken faith ?
 Ungrateful, false Alicia ! false with Mosby,
 The vile dependent of my foe profess'd,
 Lord Clifford's full-fed flatterer !—
 Come, Franklin, come : Arden, thy friend, in-
 vites thee ;
 And let me pour my griefs into thy bosom,
 And find in friendship what I've lost in love.

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Why, Arden, do you leave your bed thus
 early ?
 Have cold and darkness greater charms than I ?
 There was a time when winter nights were short,
 And Arden chid the morn that call'd him from
 me.
Arden. This deep dissembling, this hypocrisy,
 (The last worst state of a degenerate mind)
 Speaks her in vice determin'd and mature.

[*Aside.*]
Alic. What maid, that knows man's variable
 nature,
 Would sell her free estate for marriage bonds ?
 From vows and oaths, and every servile tie,
 The tyrant man at pleasure is set free ;
 The holy nuptial bond leaves him at large ;
 Yet vests him with a power that makes us slaves.—
Arden. To stop my just reproach,
 Art thou the first to tax the marriage state ?
Alic. Are you not jealous ? do you not give ear
 To vain surmises and malicious tongues,
 That hourly wound my yet untainted fame ?
Arden. And wouldst thou make me author of
 the shame

Thy guilt has brought on us !—I'll bear no longer.
 The traitor, Mosby : curs'd, detested, Mosby,
 Shall render an account for both your crimes.

Alic. What do I hear ? [*Aside.*]
Arden. That base, mechanic slave
 Shall answer with his blood.

Alic. O hear me speak.
Arden. No, I am deaf : as thou hast ever been
 To fame, to virtue, and my just complaints.

Alic. Thus on my knees—
Arden. Adulteress ! dost thou kneel, [*heart*]
 And weep, and pray, and bend thy stubborn
 (Stubborn to me) to sue for him ?—Away,
 Away this instant, lest I kill thee too.

[*Recovers himself.*]
 No—Not the hell thou'st kindled in this bosom
 Shall make me shed thy blood.

Alic. I do not hope it.
Arden. For me, be as immortal as thy shame.
Alic. I see your cruel purpose : I must live,
 To see your hand and honour stain'd with blood.
 Your ample fortune seiz'd on by the state,
 Your life a forfeit to the cruel laws.

O Arden, blend compassion with your rage,
 And kindly kill me first.

Arden. Not for my sake
 Are all thy tears (then had you felt them sooner
 Plead not the ruin you have made ; but say
 Why have you driven me to these extremes ?
 Why sacrific'd my peace, and your own fame.
 By corresponding with a menial slave ?

Alic. Thou can'st not think, that I have
 wrong'd thy bed ?

Arden. Would, I could not !

Alic. By Heavens !

Arden. No perjuries.

But now, as you lay slumbering by my side,
 I still awake, anxious, and full of thought,
 (For thou hast banish'd sleep from these sad
 eyes,)

With gentle accents, thrilling with desire,
 You call'd on Mosby : love made me doubt my
 ears,

And question if the dark and silent night
 Conspir'd not with my fancy to deceive me :
 But soon I lost the painful, pleasing hope ;
 Again you call'd upon your minion Mosby.
 Confirm'd, I strove to fly your tainted bed,
 But, wanting strength, sunk lifeless on my pillow.
 You threw your eager arms about my neck,
 You press'd my bloodless cheeks with your warm
 lips,

Which glow'd, adulterous ! with infernal heat ;
 And call'd a third time on the villain Mosby.

Alic. A dream, indeed, if I e'er call'd on him.

Arden. Thy guilty dreams betray thy waking
 thoughts.

Alic. I know I'm simple, thoughtless, and un-
 guarded ;

And what is carelessness, you construe guilt.
 Yet were I weak as those fantastic visions,
 Sure I could never have condemn'd you, Arden,
 On circumstances and an idle dream.

Arden. But such a dream.—

Alic. Yet was it but a dream,
 Which, though I not remember, I abhor ;
 And mourn with tears, because it gives you pain.
 Arden, you do not wish me innocent,
 Or on suspicions could you doom me guilty ?

Arden. Not wish thee innocent ! do sinking
 mariners,

When struggling with the raging seas for life,
 Wish the assistance of some friendly plank ?
 'Tis that, and that alone, can bring me comfort.

Alic. O jealousy ! thou fierce, remorseless fiend,
 Degenerate, most unnatural, child of love ;
 How shall I chase thee from my Arden's bosom ?

Arden. There is a way, an easy way, Alicia.—

Alic. O name it—speak.

Arden. What's past may be forgotten.

Your future conduct.—

Alic. You distract me, Arden.

Say, how shall I convince you of the truth ?

Arden. I ask but this : never see Mosby more.

By Heaven, she's dumb !

Alic. O how shall I conceal

My own confusion, and elude his rage ? [*Aside.*]
Arden. Thou'rt lost, Alicia !—lost to me—and
 Heaven.

Alic. Indeed I'm lost, if you unkindly doubt
 me.

Arden. Wilt thou then ne'er converse with
 Mosby more ?

Alic. If e'er I do, may Heaven, and you for-
 sake me !

Arden. You'll keep your word, Alicia!—Pr'ythee, say.

Alic. You'll break my heart.

Arden. I'd rather break my own.

Then thou art innocent, and lov'st me still.

Alic. And ever will.

Arden. Give me thy hand—thy heart,
O give me that!

Alic. That always was your own.

Arden. Thou flatterer—then whence this cruel strife?

Still art thou cold: nor warm are thy embraces,
Nor sparkle in thine eyes the fires of love:
Cold, cold, and comfortless.

Alic. Indeed, you fright me.

Arden. 'Tis possible.

Alic. What?

Arden. That thou may'st yet deceive me.

Alic. O! I am wretched!

Arden. Both perhaps are so.

But if thou ever lov'dst, thou'lt not despise me,
And wilt forgive me, if indeed I've wrong'd thee,
As I've forgiven thee—Pity, I'm sure, I need.

[*Exit.*]

Alic. Thou hast it, Arden, even from her that wrongs thee.

All, all shall pity thee, and curse Alicia.
Can I feel this, and farther tempt the stream
Of guilty love! O, whither am I fallen!

Enter MARIA.

Mar. A happy day, Alicia—and may each morn

Of coming life be usher'd with like joy.

Franklin, from court return'd, has brought the grant

Of the abbey-lands confirm'd by the young king,
To Arden, for his life; nor will deliver
But to himself the deed.

Alic. A worthy friend?

The grant is not more welcome to my husband,
Than Franklin's company.

Mar. He's flown to meet him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Parlour in ARDEN'S House.

Enter ALICIA, meeting MOSBY.

Alic. Mosby, that brow befits our wayward fate.
The evil hour, long fear'd, is fallen upon us,
And we shall sink beneath it. Do not frown—
If you're unkind, to whom shall I complain?

Mos. Madam, it was my sister I expected—

Alic. Am I forgotten then? Ungrateful man!
This only could have added to my woes.

Did you but know what I have borne for you,
You would not thus, unmov'd, behold my tears.

Mos. Madam, you make me vain.

Alic. Insult not, Mosby.

You were the first dear object of my love,
And, could my heart have made a second choice,
I had not been the object of your scorn:

But duty, gratitude, the love of fame,
And pride of virtue, were too weak to erase
The deep impression of your early vows.

Mos. Therefore you kindly chose to wed another.

Alic. Reproach me not with what I deem'd my duty.

Oh! had I thought I could assume the name,
And never know the affection, of a wife,
I would have died ere giv'n my hand to Arden.

Mos. You gave him all.

Alic. No, no, I gave him nothing:

Words without truth—a hand without a heart.

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But he has found the fraud—the slumbering lion
At length has rous'd himself—

Mos. And I must fall

The victim.

Alic. No, he knows not yet his wrongs.

Mos. But quickly will.

Alic. That, that's my greatest fear.

Mos. Then, branded with a strumpet's hated name.

The cause abhor'd of shame, of blood, and ruin,
Thou'lt be exposed and hooted through the world.

Alic. O hide the dreadful image from my view!
Chaste matrons, modest maids, and virtuous wives,
Scorning a weakness which they never knew,
Shall blush with indignation at my name.

Mos. My death—but that—though certain—

Alic. Labour not

To drive me to despair. Fain would I hope—

Mos. You may—and be deceiv'd. For me, I know

My fate resolv'd—and thee the instrument;

The willing instrument of Mosby's ruin.

Inconstant, false Alicia!

Alic. False, indeed;

But not to thee, cruel, injurious Mosby!

Mos. Injurious!—False one! might not all these dangers,

That threaten to involve us both in ruin,

Ere this have been prevented?

Alic. Ha!—say on.

Mos. And, not preventing, art thou not the cause?

Alic. Ah! whither, Mosby—whither wouldst thou drive me?

Mos. Nay, didst thou love, or wouldst secure thy fame,

Preserve my life, and bind me yours for ever,

'Tis yet within your power.—

Alic. By Arden's death!

Mean'st thou not so? speak out, and be a devil.

Mos. Yes, 'tis for thee I am so—But your looks
Declare, my death would please you better, Madam.

Alic. Exaggerating fiend! be dumb for ever.

His death! I must not cast a glance that way.

Mos. Is there another way?—O think, Alicia.

Alic. I will, for that will make me mad: and madness

Were some excuse. Come, kind distraction! come,
And Arden dies—my husband dies, for Mosby.

[*Shrieks, and runs to MOSBY.*]

Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN.

He's here! O save me! tell me, did he hear?

Arden. [*Starting.*] Franklin, support your friend.
I shake with horror.

Frank. What moves you thus?

Arden. See—Mosby—with my wife?

Mos. But, Madam, I shall spare you farther trouble;

In happy time, behold my neighbour here.

[*As taking leave of ALICIA.*]

Alic. Mischief and wild confusion have begun,
And desolation waits to close the scene. [*Exit.*]

Mos. Sir, I would gladly know, whether your grant

Of the rich abbey-lands of Feversham

Be yet confirm'd or not?

Arden. What if I tear

Her faithless heart, ev'n in the traitor's sight,

Who taught it falsehood. [*Aside*]

Frank. He is lost in thought.

But I can answer that : it is confirm'd—
I brought the deed, with the great seal annex'd,
Sign'd by our pious Edward, and his council.

Mos. I'm satisfied.—

Arden. So am not I—By hell,
There's justice in the thought.—I'm strangely
tempted. [Aside.]

Mos. My friend seems wrapt in thought—I
came to advise him,
That Green, by virtue of a former grant
His father long enjoy'd—

Arden. For my estate,
The law, and this good seal, is my security ;
To them I leave Green and his groundless claim.
But my just right to false Alicia's heart,
(So dearly purchas'd with a husband's name,
And sacred honour of a gentleman,)
I shall assert myself, and thus secure
From farther violation. [Draws.]

Mos. Her known virtue
Renders the injury, your fancy forms,
A thing of air.

Frank. Impossible to thought.
Whence, Arden, comes this sudden madness on
thee,

That your Alicia, ever dear esteem'd,
And deeply lov'd—

Arden. Out on the vile adult'ress !
But thou, demure, insinuating slave,
Shalt taste my vengeance first. Defend thyself.

Mos. I scorn to take advantage of your rage.

Arden. A coward too ! O my consummate shame !

Mos. This I can bear from you.

Arden. Or any man.

Why hangs that useless weapon by thy side,
Thou shame to manhood ?—Draw.—Will no-
thing move thee ? [Strikes him.]

Frank. Hold. Whither would your mad re-
venge transport you ?

Arden. Shall shameful cowardice protect a villain ?

Mos. You choose a proper place to show your
courage !

Arden. Go on. I'll follow to the ocean's brink,
Or to the edge of some dread precipice,
Where terror and despair shall stop thy flight,
And force thy trembling hand to guard thy life.

Mos. What I endure, to save a lady's honour !

[To FRANKLIN.]

Frank. Your longer stay will but incense him
more ;

Pray, quit the house.

Mos. Sir, I shall take your counsel. [Exit.]

Arden. He hath escap'd me then.—But, for my
wife—

Frank. What has she done ?

Arden. Done ! must I tell my shame ?

Away, begone—lest from my prey withheld
I turn, and tear th' officious hand that lets me.
Soft ! art thou Franklin ? Pardon me, sweet
friend ;—

My spirits fail—I shake—I must retire.

Frank. To your Alicia.

Arden. To my lonely couch ;

For I must learn to live without her, Franklin,

Frank. Pray, Heaven, forbid !

Arden. To hate her, to forget her—if I can ;
No easy task for one who dotes like me.
From what a height I'm fallen ! Once, smiling
love

Of all its horrors robb'd the blackest night,
And gilt with gladness every ray of light ;
Now, tyrant-like, his conquest he maintains,

And o'er his groaning slave with rods of iron
reigns. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Street.

Enter GREEN and MOSBY.

Green. You pity me, and know not my estate.
I'm ruin'd, Mosby : thoughtless and ill advis'd,
My riotous youth will leave my age a beggar.
These abbey-lands were all the hopes I'd left ;
My whole support.

Mos. Base and ungen'rous Arden,
To force a man born equal to himself,
To beg, or starve.

Green. By Heaven, I will do neither
I'll let the proud oppressor know—

Mos. How blind his rage !
Who threatens his enemy, lends him a sword
To guard himself—

Green. Robb'd of the means of life,
What's life itself ? a useless load, a curse :
Which yet I'll dearly sell to my revenge.

Mos. You mean to kill him, then ? [Eagerly.]

Green. I do, by Heaven.

Mos. Suppose you fail—

Green. I can but lose my life. [secure,]

Mos. Then where is your revenge, when he,
Riots unbounded in his ill-got wealth !

Green. What can I do ?

Mos. 'Tis plain, you wish him dead.

Green. Each moment of his life is to my soul

A tedious age of pain ; for, while he lives,

Contempt, and all the ills a lazar knows,

Must be my wretched lot, and lengthen out

The miserable hours. What groveling wretch

Would wish to hold his life on such conditions ?

Mos. But change the scene : suppose but Ar-
den dead,

Your land restor'd, and fortune in your power ;

Honour, respect, and all the dear delights

That wait on wealth, shall wing the joyful hours,

And life contracted seem one happy day.

I hate this Arden, and have stronger motives

Than any you can urge to wish his death :

He has accus'd, insulted, struck me ;

Nay, his fair, virtuous wife, on my account—

Green. If fame speaks true, you're to be envied
there.

Mos. The world will talk—But be that as it
may ; [friends—]

I want not cause, nor will, nor means, nor

Green. Nor opportunity shall long be wanting.

Mos. Enough : his fate is fix'd. See ! Brad-
shaw's here.

Enter BRADSHAW.

Brad. Save, save you, gentlemen.

Mos. We thank you, neighbour.

But whither in such haste ?

Brad. To the isle of Sheppy,

To wait on good Lord Cheyney. As he holds

In high esteem our worthy townsman Arden,

I shall first call on him.—'Tis well I met you,

For yonder two were but bad road-companions.

Green. They seem of desperate fortunes.

Mos. Have they names ?

Brad. One I know not : but judge him from
his comrade.

The foremost of the two I knew at Boulogne,

Where in the late king's reign I serv'd myself.

He was a corporal then, but such a villain—

Beneath a soldier's name.—A common cut-throat,

That preys on all mankind, and knows no party.

Mos. A horrid character you give him, Bradshaw?

Brad. No worse than he deserves.

Mos. [*Aside.*] A useful hint:

He shall not want employment.—What's his name?

Brad. Black Will. His family-name I never heard.

Mos. [*To GREEN.*] A word—write you a letter to Alicia: [it.

Disguise your hand.—This honest fool may bear hint at these men.—In case her courage fail, She will be glad to shift the deed on them.

Enter BLACK WILL and SHAKEBAG.

B. Will. What, comrade Bradshaw! How fare you, man? S'blood! dost not remember honest Black Will? Why, thou'rt grown purse proud, sure.

Brad. Why, you're not easily forgotten, Will. But, prythee, what brings thee to Feversham?

B. Will. A soldier, you know, is at home wherever he comes. *Omne solum forti patria.* There's Latin—Give's a taster.

Brad. In time of peace we should apply to some honest creditable business, and not turn the name of soldier into vagabond.

B. Will. Yes, as you have done. I'm told, you keep a goldsmith's shop here in Feversham; and, like a mechanical rogue, live by cheating. I have more honour.

Brad. Would thou had'st honesty.

B. Will. Where do our honesties differ? I take a purse behind a hedge, and you behind a counter.

Brad. Insolent slave!

B. Will. You cent. per cent. rascal! I may find a time to teach you better manners.

Brad. Go, mend thy own.

B. Will. Thou wert always a sneaking fellow, Bradshaw, and couldst never swear, nor get drunk. Come, shall I and my comrade Shakebag taste your ale?

Brad. My house entertains no such guests. Farewell, gentlemen.

Mos. Along with Bradshaw, And leave the management of these to me.

[*Aside to GREEN.*

Green. It shall be done.—Bradshaw, a word with thee.

Brad. Your pardon, gentlemen.

[*Exeunt GREEN and BRAD.*

B. Will. He was a cadet in the last French war, like other soldiers then; but now he has got a nest, and feathered it a little, he pretends to reputation. S'blood! had this been a fit place, he had not 'scaped me so. You have surveyed us well. [*To MOSBY.*] How do you like us?

Mos. Methinks, I read truth, prudence, secrecy, And courage, writ upon your manly brows.

B. Will. What villany has this fellow in hand, that makes him fawn upon us? [*Aside.*

Mos. I fear the world's a stranger to your merit. If this may recommend me to your friendship—

[*Gives a purse.*

B. Will. Of what dark deed is this to be the wages? [cut?

Shake. Hast ever an elder brother's throat to *B. Will.* Or an old peevish father to be buried?

Mos. Neither of these.

Shake. A rival, then, mayhap—

Mos. There you come nearer to me.

Shake. Then, speak out.

We're honest, Sir.

B. Will. Trusty, and very poor.

Mos. Metal too fit for me. [*Aside.*] Then hear me, Sirs.—

In Feversham there lives a man, call'd Arden; In general esteem, and ample means; And has a wife, the very pride of nature. I have been happy long in her affections, [tunes. And, he, once dead, might with her share his for— He's jealous too of late, and threatens me.

Love, int'rest, self-defence, all, ask his death.—

B. Will. This man you'd have dispatched?

Mos. I would.

B. Will. Rich, you say?

Mos. Immensely so.

B. Will. And much beloved?

Mos. By all degrees of men. [of work.

B. Will. 'George! this will be a dangerous piece

Shake. Very dangerous. A man so known; and of his reputation too.

B. Will. And then the power and number of his friends must be considered. [Sirs?

Mos. What! does your courage shrink already,

Shake. No.

B. Will. This is ever the curse of your men of true valour; to be the tools of crafty cowardly knaves, who have not the heart to execute what their heads have projected. It is a sad ungrateful world.—What money have you more about you?

Mos. Ten pieces.

B. Will. I've had as much for stealing a dog.

Mos. I give you that as a retaining fee:

When the deed's done, each shall have twice that sum,

And a good horse to further his escape.

B. Will. Sir, will you have him murdered in a church?

Shake. Or on the altar; say the word, and it shall be done.

Mos. Some safer place, the street, highway, or fields,

Will serve my turn as well.

Shake. Just as you please.

Mos. Where may I find you, gentlemen?

B. Will. At Adam Fowl's, the Flower-de-luce.

Mos. I have confederates in this design; When we have contriv'd the manner of his death, I'll send you word.

B. Will. You'll find us always ready.

Mos. And determined?

B. Will. Ay, fear it not. Farewell. [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—A Room in ARDEN'S House.

Enter ALICIA, with a letter.

Alic. He doubts me; yet he dares not tell me so, But thus, by Green, whets my unsettled mind.

[*Reads.*

"Strike home, or not at all. In case you fail, We have found instruments, by means of Brad— He shall not find me undetermin'd now. [*shaw.*" Hark! Michael's on the watch.—If Arden sleeps, (For so he seem'd dispos'd,) he'll bring me word. That, that's the safest time. This promis'd marriage

With Mosby's sister has remov'd his qualms.

Enter MICHAEL.

Why dost thou break upon me unawares?

What of your master?

Mich. He's scarce sunk to rest, But full of meditated rage 'gainst Mosby.

Alic. He'll sleep in peace, ere long.—
Mich. Think not on that.
 O, did Maria bless me with her smiles,
 As you do Mosby, had I twenty lives,
 I'd risk 'em all to win her to my arms.

Alic. I pr'ythee leave me, Michael.

[*Exit* MICHAEL.]

What is nature?
 There is a power in love, subdues to itself
 All other passions in the human mind. [*derer,*
 This wretch, more fearful than the lonely mur-
 Whom with inquiring eyes some stranger views,
 Would meet the king of terrors undismay'd,
 For her he loves, and dare him to the combat.
 And shall not I preserve my Mosby's life,
 And shall not I?—A husband!—What's a hus-
 band?

I have a soul above th' unnatural tie,
 That tells me, I'm his right, and only his,
 Who won my virgin heart.—Ye tender parents,
 Whose cruel kindness made your child thus
 wretched, [*scene;*
 Turn not your eyes toward earth to view this
 T'will make you sad in heaven. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—Another Room.

ARDEN sleeping on a couch.—*Enter ALICIA,*
with a dagger in her hand.

Alic. See!—Jealousy, o'erwatch'd, is sunk to rest,
 While fearful guilt knows no security,
 But in repeated crimes. My weary eyes,
 Each moment apprehensive of his vengeance,
 Must seek for rest in vain 'till his are clos'd.
 Then for our mutual peace, and Mosby's love—
 [*Approaching to stab him, starts.*
 He wakes—defend me from his just revenge!
 And yet he sees me not, nor moves a finger
 To save his threaten'd life. Then whence that
 voice,

That pierc'd my ears, and cried, Alicia hold!
 Can mimic fancy cheat the outward sense,
 And form such sounds? If these heart-racking
 thoughts

Precede the horrid act, what must ensue?
 Worse plague I cannot fear from Arden's death,
 But from his life—the death of him I love.
 Perish the hated husband—Wherefore hated?
 Is he not all that my vain sex could wish?
 My eyes, while they survey his graceful form,
 Condemn my heart, and wonder how it stray'd.
 He sighs—he starts—he groans. His body sleeps,
 But restless grief denies his mind repose.
 Perhaps he dreams of me; perhaps he sees me,
 Thus, like a fury broke from deepest hell,
 Lust in my heart, and murder in my hand,—

[*She drops the dagger, ARDEN starts up.*
Arden. Her dagger, Michael—seize it, and I'm
 safe.

How strong she is!—Oh!—what a fearful dream,
 Before me still! speak, vision—art thou Alicia,
 Or but the coinage of my troubled brain?

Alic. O Arden—husband—lord—

Arden. Art thou my wife?

Thou'rt substance—I'm wrapp'd in wonder—
 hence—

Hast lost all sense of fear, as well as shame,
 That thou durst haunt me thus, asleep and waking,
 Thou idol, and thou torment of my soul.

Alic. My bleeding heart—

Arden. Away, begone, and leave me:
 Lest, in the transports of unbounded rage,

I rush upon thee, and deface those charms,
 That first enslav'd my soul; mangle that face,
 Where, spite of falsehood, beauty triumphs still;
 Mar that fair frame, and crush thee into atoms.
 Avoid me, and be safe—Nay, now you drive me
 hence. [*ALICIA kneels, he turns away.*

Cruel and false as thou hast been to me,
 I cannot see thee wring thy suppliant hands,
 And weep, and kneel in vain.— [*Exit.*

Alic. This, this is he

I came prepar'd to murder. Curs'd Alicia!
 In thy own bosom plunge the fatal steel,
 Or his, who robb'd thee of thy fame and virtue.—
 It will not be—fear holds my dastard hand:
 Those chaster powers that guard the nuptial bed
 From foul pollution, and the hand from blood,
 Have left their charge, and I am lost for ever.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Road near Feversham.

Enter BLACK WILL, SHAKEBAG, and GREEN.

Green. Well, is Arden, at last, despatched?

Shake. Yes, safe to Feversham.

Green. Safe, say you! his good fortune mocks
 us all.

His strange escape has almost stagger'd me;
 But, thinking of my wrongs, I'm more confirm'd.

B. Will. Well said, my man of resolution! A
 gentleman commits a murder with double the sa-
 tisfaction, for such a heart. We must lay our snares
 more cunning for the future.

Green. We should consult with Michael, Ar-
 den's man—

The pigmy-hearted wretch, though long ago
 He swore his master dead, acts with reluctance.

Shake. The coward must be spurred.—He does
 it, or he dies.

Green. I wonder at his absence.—As he knew
 Of our attempt, and promis'd to be here.

Enter MICHAEL.

Mich. I saw my master and Lord Cheyney pass,
 And my heart leap'd for joy. [*Apart.*

B. Will. What says the villain?

Mich. Would I were gone. [*Aside.*] Sir, if I
 give offence— [*Going.*

Green. Michael, come back; you must not
 leave us so?

Mich. What is your pleasure?

Green. Why, we understand

You are in love with Mosby's beauteous sister.

Mich. Suppose I am.

B. Will. You deal too mildly with the peasant.
 You swore to kill your master, villain. Be an ho-
 nest man of your word, and do it then, white liver!

Mich. Sir, I repented.

B. Will. Repented! What's that? Dog, know
 your rank, and act as we command, or your heart's
 blood—

Mich. What must I do? [*Frighted.*

B. Will. Do! you must show us the house, ap-
 point the time and place, and lure your master
 thither—We'll take care of him without your
 trouble.

Green. So shall you purchase noble Mosby's
 friendship,

And, by his friendship, gain his sister's love.

Mich. They'll murder me too, should I not
 comply— [*Aside.*

Green. Think on your love, your interest.

B. Will. Or your death.

Mich. To-night, soon as the abbey-clock strikes ten,
[*Trembling.*

Come to his house: I'll leave the doors unbarr'd;
The left-hand stairs lead to my master's chamber;
There take him, and dispose him as you please.

Green. This cannot fail.

Shake. Unless this love-sick coward thinks to deceive us.

Mich. I will not, by Heaven!

B. Will. I believe thee; for, by hell, thou daarest not.
[*Exeunt.*

Mich. Master, thy constant love and daily bounty

Deserve more grateful offices from Michael.

[*Exit, in tears.*

SCENE II.—A Room in ARDEN'S House.

ALICIA alone.

Alic. When vice has spread her poison through the soul,

How lifeless, slow, confus'd, and insincere,
Are our resolves in the pursuits of virtue!
What wonder, then, Heaven should refuse its aid
To thoughts, that only blossom for a time;
Look blooming to the eye, but yield no fruit.

Enter MOSBY.

Mos. I come, Alicia, to partake thy griefs:
For fire, divided, burns with lesser force. [*flame*

Alic. I know thee: thou art come to fan the
Thy breath hath kindled here, till it consume us.
But tears and sighs shall stifle in my heart
The guilty passion.

Mos. Is heroic love,
That form'd the bright examples of thy sex,
Made their lives glorious, and their fame immortal,
A crime in thee? Art thou not mine by oaths,
By mutual sufferings, by contract, mine?

Alic. Why do you urge a rash, a fatal, promise,
I had no right to make, or you to ask?
Why did you practise on my easy heart?
Why did I ever listen to your vows?

In me, 'twas foolish guilt and disobedience;
In you 'twas avarice, insolence, and pride.

Mos. 'Twas love in me, and gratitude in you.

Alic. 'Twas insolence in you, meanness in me,
And madness in us both. My careful parents,
In scorn of your presumption and my weakness,
Gave me in marriage to a worthy gentleman,
Of birth and fortune equal to my own.

Three years I liv'd with him without reproach,
And made him in that time the happy father
Of two most lovely children. I too was happy;
At least, I liv'd in hopes I might be so:
For time, and gratitude, and Arden's love,
I hop'd, might quench my guilty flame for you,
And make my heart a present worthy him.

Mos. And dost thou glory in thy perjuries?
In love, inconstancy alone 's a crime.

Think on the ardour of our youthful passion,
Think how we play'd with love; nor thought it
guilt,

Till thy first falsehood (call it not obedience,)
Thy marriage with this Arden, made me despe-
rate;

Think on the transports of our love renew'd,
And——
[*hear,*

Alic. Hide the rest, lest list'ning winds should
And publish to the world our shameful tale.
Here let remembrance of our follies die.

Mos. Shall our loves wither in their early bloom?

Alic. Their harvest else will be to both our
shames.

Hast thou not made a monster of me, Mosby?
You should abhor me, I abhor myself.
When unperceiv'd I stole on Arden's sleep,
(Hell steel'd my heart, and death was in my hand,)
Pale anguish brooded on his ashy cheek,
And chilly sweats stood shivering on his brow.
Relentless murder, at a sight so sad,
Gave place to pity; and, as he wak'd, I stood
Irresolute, and drown'd in tears.

Mos. She's lost.

And I, in vain, have stain'd my soul with blood.
[*Aside.*

Alic. Give o'er, in time: in vain are your attempts
Upon my Arden's life; for Heaven, that wrested
The fatal weapon from my trembling hand,
Still has him in its charge.

Mos. Little she thinks,

That Arden's dead ere now.—It must be so;
I've but that game to play, ere it be known.

[*Aside.*

Alic. I know our dang'rous state; I hesitate;
I tremble for your life; I dread reproach.
But we've offended, and must learn to suffer.

Mos. Then Arden lives in his Alicia bless'd,
And Mosby, wretched. Yet should chance or
Lay Arden gently in a peaceful grave, [nature
Might I presume to hope? Alicia, speak.

Alic. How shall I look into my secret thoughts,
And answer what I fear to ask myself?

[*A long pause.*

Mos. Silence speaks best for me. His death
once known,

I must forswear the fact, and give these tools
To public justice—and not live in fear. [*Aside.*
Thy heart is mine. I ask but for my own. [*To her.*
Truth, gratitude, and honour, bind you to me,
Or else you never lov'd.

Alic. Then why this struggle?
Not lov'd! O had my love been justly plac'd,
As sure it was exalted and sincere,
I should have gloried in it, and been happy.
But I'll no longer live the abject slave
Of loose desire—I disclaim the thought

Mos. I'll ask no more what honour should deny;
By Heaven, I never will.

Alic. Well, then, remember,
On that condition only, I renew
My vows. If time and the event of things
Should ever make it lawful, I'll be yours.

[*Gives her hand.*

Mos. O, my full joys!

Alic. Suppress thy frantic transports,
My heart recoils; I am betray'd.—O give me back
My promis'd faith.

Mos. First, let the world dissolve.

Alic. There is no joy, nor peace, for you or me.
All our engagements cannot but be fatal.

Mos. The time may come when you'll have
other thoughts;

'Till then, farewell.—[*Aside.*] Now, fortune, do
thy worst. [*Exit.*

Alic. Mosby, return: he's gone, and I am
wretched.

I should have banish'd him my sight for ever.
You happy fair ones, whose untainted fame
Has never yet been blasted with reproach,
Fly from th' appearance of dishonour, far.
Virtue is arbitrary, nor admits debate:
To doubt, is treason in her rigid court;
But, if ye parley with the foe, you're lost. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—A Room in ARDEN's House.

ARDEN and FRANKLIN sitting together on a couch; ARDEN, thoughtful.

Frank. Nay, wonder not.—Though every circumstance

Thus strangely met to prove the lady false,
And justify the husband's horrid vengeance;
Yet it appears to every honest eye,
(Too late for the poor lady,) she was wrong'd.

Arđ. Is 't possible?

Frank. Ay, very possible:

He lives that proves it so. Conceal'd from justice,
He pines with ceaseless sorrow for his guilt,
And each hour bends him lower towards his grave.

Arđ. I know thy friendship, and perceive its drift.
I'll bear my wrongs—for sure I have been wrong'd.
Do I but think so, then! What fools are men,
Whom love and hatred, anger, hope, and fear,
And all the various passions, rule by turns,
And in their several turns alike deceive?

Frank. To cast away, and on suspicion only,
A jewel, like Alicia, were to her
Unjust, and cruel to yourself. [Clock strikes ten.
Good night,

The clock has stricken ten.

Arđ. I thought it more.

Frank. I thought it not so much.

Arđ. Why, thus it is:

Our happy hours are few, and fly so swift,
That they are past ere we begin to count 'em:
But, when with pain and misery oppress'd,
Anticipating Time's unvarying pace,
We think each heavy moment is an age. [grave,

Frank. Come, let's to rest. Impartial as the
Sleep robs the cruel tyrant of his power,
Gives rest and freedom to the o'erwrought slave,
And steals the wretched beggar from his want.
Droop not, my friend; sleep will suspend thy
And time will end them. [cares,

Arđ. True, for time brings death,
The only certain end of human woes.
Sleep interrupts, but waking, we're restor'd
To all our griefs again. Watching and rest,
Alternately succeeding one another,
Are all the idle business of dull life.
What shall we call this undetermin'd state,
This narrow isthmus 'twixt two boundless oceans,
That whence we came, and that to which we tend?
Is it life, chequer'd with the sleep of death?
Or death, enliven'd by our waking dreams?
But we'll to bed. Here, Michael, bring the lights.

Enter MICHAEL, with lights.

Heaven send you good repose.

[Gives FRANKLIN a candle.

Frank. The like to you.

Mich. Shall I attend you, Sir?

Frank. No, no, I choose to be alone. Good night.

[Exit FRANKLIN. MICHAEL attends his master with the other light, and returns.

Mich. I, who should take my weapon in my hand,

And guard his life with hazard of my own,
With fraudulent smiles have led him, unsuspecting,
Quite to the jaws of death—But I've an oath.
Mosby has bound me with a horrid vow, [death.
Which if I break, these dogs have sworn my
I've left the doors unbarr'd.—Hark! 'twas the latch.
They come—I hear their oaths, and see their dag-
Insulting o'er my master's mangled body, [gers
While he for mercy pleads. Good master, live:
I'll bar the doors again. But, should I meet 'em—

What's that?—I heard 'em cry, where is this coward?

Arden once dead, they'll murder me for sport
Help—call the neighbours—Master—Franklin—help.

Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN, undressed.

Arđ. What dismal outcry 's this?

Frank. What frights thee, Michael?

Mich. My master!—Franklin!

Arđ. Why dost tremble so?

Mich. I dream'd the house was full of thieves and murderers. [Trembling.

Arđ. Dream'd! what, awake! Are all the doors made fast?

Mich. I think they are.

Arđ. I'll go and see myself. [Exit ARDEN.

Frank. You made a fearful noise.

Mich. Did I?—

Arđ. [Within.] Why, Michael!

Frank. You tremble still.—Has any one been here?

Mich. No, I hope not. My master will be angry.

Enter ARDEN.

Arđ. This negligence not half contents me, Sir:
The doors were all left open.

Mich. Sir—

Arđ. To bed,
And, as you prize my favour, be more careful.

Frank. 'Tis very cold. Once more, my friend—

Arđ.—Good night. [Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An Inn, the Flower-de-luce.

Enter MOSBY and MICHAEL.

Mich. Though I with oaths appeal'd to conscious Heaven,
That Arden rose and shut the doors himself,
Yet, but for Green, these bloody rogues had kill'd me.

We must desist—Franklin and sweet Maria
Have promis'd, at Alicia's own request,
To interfere—

Mos. —Such ever be the employ
Of him I hate.

Mich. —The mourning fair, all chang'd,
By me conjures you, (and with tears she spake it,)
Not to involve yourself and her in ruin,
By seeking to renew a correspondence,
She has renounc'd for ever.

Mos. How! confusion! [her prayers,

Mich. And hopes, (as Heaven, in answer to
Hath reconcil'd her duty and affection,)
You will approve her resolution—

Mos. Doubtless!

Mich. And learn, by her example, to subdue
Your guilty passion—

Mos. Ha, ha, ha! exquisite woman! [band!
So! rather than not change, she'll love her hus-
But she will not persevere.

Mich. Yes, sure, she will. [sex,

Mos. Have I then slighted her whole sighing
Bid opportunity and fortune wait;
And all, to be forsaken for a husband!
By Heaven, I am glad he has so oft escap'd,
That I may have him murder'd in her sight.

Enter GREEN.

Green. How strange a providence attends this man!

'Tis vain to strive with Heaven—Let's give it o'er

Mos. No : when I do, may I be curs'd for ever,
 Hopeless to love, and hate without revenge :
 May I ne'er know an end of disappointment,
 But, press'd with hard necessity, like thee,
 Live, the contempt of my insulting foe. [life

Green. I scorn the abject thought—Had he a
 Hung on each hair, he dies—If we succeed,
 This very night Maria shall be thine. [To *MICH.*

Mich. I am a man again.

Mos. I've thought a way—
 That may be easy under friendship's mask,
 Which, to a foe suspected, may be hard.

Green. Friendship ! Impossible—

Mos. —You know him not. [him.
 You, with your ruffians, in the street shall seek
 I follow at some distance. They begin
 (No matter how,) a quarrel, and at once
 Assault him with their swords. Straight I appear,
 Forget all wrongs, and draw in his defence ; [fly,
 Mark me, be sure, with some slight wound ; then
 And leave the rest to me.

Mich. I know his temper.
 This seeming benefit will cancel all
 His former doubts, and gain his easy heart.

Green. Perhaps so—yet—

Mos. Farther debates are needless. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—A Room in ARDEN'S House.

Enter FRANKLIN and MARIA.

Frank. Well, in what temper did you find
 Alicia ?

Mar. Never was anguish, never grief, like hers :
 She eats, nor sleeps. Her lovely, downcast eyes,
 That us'd to gladden each beholder's heart,
 Now wash the flinty bosom of the earth.
 Her troubled breast heaves with incessant sighs,
 Which drink the purple streams of life, and blast
 Her bloom, as storms the blossoms of the spring.
 But sure her prayers must quickly reach high
 Heaven,

Relenting Arden kindly sooth her sorrows,
 And her lost peace restore.

Frank. Their mutual peace, Maria !
 For his can ne'er be found but in Alicia.
 Asham'd to view the face of man or day,
 As Mosby's name was written on his brow,
 He cheerless wanders ; seeks the darkest gloom
 To hide his drooping head, and grieve alone.
 With a full heart, swol'n eyes, and falt'ring
 tongue,

He sometimes, seeking to beguile his grief,
 Begins a mournful tale : but straight, a thought
 Of his imagin'd wrongs crossing his memory,
 Ends his sad story ere the half be told.
 O may our pains with wish'd success be crown'd.

Enter ARDEN.

Arden. No, Franklin, no ; your friendly cares
 are vain :

Were I but certain she had wrong'd my bed,
 I then might hate her, and shake off my woes ;
 But, thus perplex'd, can never taste of comfort.

Frank. O jealousy ! thou bane of social joy !
 Oh ! she's a monster, made of contradictions !
 Let truth in all her native charms appear,
 And with the voice of harmony itself
 Plead the just cause of innocence traduc'd ;
 Deaf as the adder, blind as upstart greatness,
 She sees nor hears. And yet, let slander whisper,
 Rumour has fewer tongues than she has ears ;
 And Argus' hundred eyes are dim and slow,
 To piercing jealousy's.—

Arden. —No more, no more—

I know its plagues, but where 's the remedy ?

Mar. In your Alicia.

Frank. She shall heal these wounds.

Arden. She's my disease, and can she be my cure ?
 My friends should rather teach me to abhor her,
 To tear her image from my bleeding heart.

Mar. We leave that hateful office to the fiends.

Frank. If you e'er lov'd, you'll not refuse to
 see her :

You promis'd that.

Arden. Did I ?

Frank. Indeed, you did.

Arden. Well, then, some other time.

Frank. No, see her now. [see her :

Arden. Franklin, I know my heart, and dare not
 I have a husband's honour to maintain,
 I fear the lover's weakness may betray.
 Let me not do what honour must condemn,
 And friendship blush to hear.

Frank. That Arden never will.

Mar. Did you but know her grief—

Arden. Am I the cause ?

Have I, just Heaven, have I e'er injur'd her ?

Yet I'm the coward. O prepost'rous fear !

See, where she comes—Arm'd with my num'rous
 wrongs,

I'll meet with honourable confidence

Th' offending wife, and look the honest husband.

Frank. Maria, we'll withdraw—even friendship
 here

Would seem impertinence. [Exeunt.

Arden. Be still, my heart.

[ALICIA enters, not seeing ARDEN.

Alic. How shall I bear my Arden's just re-
 proaches !

Or can a reconciliation long continue,
 That's founded on deceit ! Can I avow
 My secret guilt ?—No—At so mean a thought
 Abandon'd infamy herself would blush.
 Nay, could I live with public loss of honour,
 Arden would die to see Alicia scorn'd.
 He's here ; earth, open—hide me from his sight.

Arden. Guilt chains her tongue. Lo ! silent, self-
 condemn'd,

With tearful eyes and trembling limbs she stands.

Alic. Fain would I kiss his footsteps—but that
 look,

Where indignation seems to strive with grief,
 Forbids me to approach him.

Arden. Who would think,

That anguish were not real ?

Alic. I'm rooted here. [were certain,

Arden. Those tears, methinks, even if her guilt
 Might wash away her pains.

Alic. Support me, Heaven !

Arden. Curse on the abject thought. I shall re-
 lapse

To simple dotage. She steals on my heart,
 She conquers with her eyes. If I but hear her
 voice,

Nor earth nor heaven can save me from her snares.
 O ! let me fly—If I have yet the power.

Alic. O Arden ! do not, do not leave me thus.
 [Kneels, and holds him.

Arden. I pray thee, loose thy hold.

Alic. O never, never.

Arden. Why should I stay to tell thee of my
 wrongs,

To aggravate thy guilt, and wound thy soul ?

Thyself, if all these agonizing struggles

Of tears, of sighs, of groans, of speechless sorrow

Be but sincere—thyself, will do it better.
One thing I'll tell thee (for perhaps 'twill please thee,)

Thou'st broke my heart, Alicia.

Alic. Oh! [*She falls to the ground.*]

Ard. And canst thou,

Can woman pity whom she hath undone?

Why dost thou grasp my knees? what wouldst thou say,

If thou couldst find thy speech?

Alic. O! mercy, mercy!

Ard. Thou hast had none on me, let go my hand:

Why dost thou press it to thy throbbing heart,
That beats—but not for me?

Alic. Then may it ne'er beat more.

Ard. At least, I'm sure it did not always so.

Alic. For that, my soul is pierc'd with deep remorse;

For that, I bow me to the dust before thee,

And die to be forgiven. O, Arden! Arden!

Ard. Presumptuous fool! what business hast thou here?

Did I not know my weakness, and her power!
[*Aside.*]

Rise—rise—Alicia.

Alic. No: here let me lie
On the bare bosom of this conscious earth,

'Till Arden speak the words of peace and comfort,
Or my heart break before him.

Ard. O, Alicia,
Thou inconsistent spring of grief and joy,
Whence bitter streams and sweet alternate flow,
Come to my arms, and in this too fond bosom
Disburden all the fulness of thy soul.

Alic. Let me approach with awe that sacred temple,

Resume my seat, and dwell for ever there.

Ard. There ever reign, as on thy native throne,
Thou lovely wanderer.

Alic. Am I at last,
In error's fatal mazes long bewilder'd,
Permitted here to find my peace and safety!

Ard. Dry up thy tears; and tell me, truly tell me,

Has my long-suffering love at length prevail'd,
And art thou mine, indeed?

Alic. Heaven is my witness,
I love thee, Arden; and esteem thy love
Above all earthly good. Thy kind forgiveness
Speaks to my soul that peaceful calm confirm'd,
Which reason and reflection had begun.

Ard. Thou'rt cheaply purchas'd with unnumber'd sighs,

With many a bitter tear, and years of patience,
Thou treasure of more worth than mines of gold.
I will not doubt my happiness. Thou art,
Thou wilt be mine, ever and only mine.

Alic. I am, I will. I ne'er knew joy till now.

Ard. This is our truest, happiest nuptial day.
To-night, thou knowest, according to my custom,
Our yearly fair returning with St. Valentine,
I treat my friends. I go to countenance
Their honest mirth, and cheer them with my bounty.

'Till happy night, farewell. My best Alicia,
How will our friends rejoice, our foes repine,
To see us thus?

Alic. Thus ever may they see us!
The wandering fires, that have so long misled me,
Are now extinguish'd, and my heart is Arden's.
The flowery path of innocence and peace

Shines bright before, and I shall stray no longer.
Whence then these sighs, and why these floods
of tears?

Sighs are the language of a broken heart,
And tears the tribute each enlighten'd eye
Pays, and must pay, for vice and folly past.
And yet the painful'st virtue hath its pleasure:
Though dangers rise, yet, peace restor'd within,
My soul collected shall undaunted meet them.
Though trouble, grief, and death, the lot of all,
On good and bad, without distinction, fall;
The soul which conscious innocence sustains,
Supports with ease these temporary pains;
But, stung with guilt, and loaded by despair,
Becomes itself a burden none can bear. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—The Street.

People at a distance, as at a Fair.

Enter ARDEN on one side, and BLACK WILL and SHAKBAG on the other, GREEN directing them.

B. Will. Shakebag, you'll second me—S'blood give the way. [*Jostles ARDEN.*]

Shake. May we not pass the streets?

Ard. I saw you not.

B. Will. Your sight perhaps is bad, your feeling may be better. [*Strikes him.*]

Ard. Insolent villains! [*Draws.*]

B. Will. Come, we'll teach you manners.

Ard. Both at once! barb'rous cowards!

Enter MOSBY.

Mos. O, bloody dogs! attempt a life so precious!—

B. Will. This is a fury, George.

[*BLACK WILL and SHAKBAG beaten off.*]

Shake. I've pink'd him though—

Ard. Villains, come back; and finish your design.

Mos. Shall I pursue them, Sir?

Ard. Not for the world—

Mosby! amazing generosity!

Mos. I hope you are not hurt.

Ard. Pierc'd to the heart—

Mos. Forbid it, Heaven! quick, let me fly for help.

Ard. With sharp reflection:—Mosby, I can't bear

To be so far oblig'd to one I've wrong'd.

Mos. Who would not venture life, to save a friend?

Ard. From you I've not deserv'd that tender name.

Mos. No more of that—would I were worthy of it!

Ard. I own my heart, by boiling passions torn,
Forgets its gentleness—yet is ever open
To melting gratitude. O say, what price
Can buy your friendship?

Mos. Only think me yours.

Ard. Easy, indeed. I am too much oblig'd.

Why wreak'd not your good sword its justice on me,

When, mad with jealous rage, in my own house,
I urg'd you to my ruin?

Mos. I lov'd you then

With the same warmth as now.

Ard. What's here? you bleed!

Let me bind up your wound.

Mos. A trifle, Sir.

Ard. Your friendship makes it so.—See, Franklin, see,

Enter FRANKLIN.

The man I treated as a coward, bleeding,
(Wretch that I am!) for his defence of me.
Look to your wound. And, Mosby, let us hope
You'll sup with me. There will be honest Brad-

shaw,
And Franklin here, and——

Mos. Sir, I will not fail.
Frank. I shall not come.

Arden. Nay, Franklin; that's unkind.
Prythee——

Frank. Nay, urge me not.—I have my reasons.

Mos. Avoids my company!—So much the better.

His may not be so proper. [*Aside.*]—An hour hence,

If you are not engag'd, we'll meet at Fowl's.

Arden. I will be there.

Mos. 'Till then I take my leave. [*Exit MOSBY.*]

Arden. How have I been mistaken in this man?

Frank. How are you sure, you're not mistaken now? [*think*]

Arden. No doubt he loves me; and I blush to
How I've suspected him, and wrong'd Alicia.

Frank. May you be ever happy in your wife:
But—— [*here.*]

Arden. Speak—But what? Let's have no riddles
Can she be innocent, and Mosby guilty?

Frank. To speak my thoughts, this new officious fondness

Makes me suspect:—I like him worse than ever.

Arden. Because I like him better. What a churl!

Frank. You're credulous, and treat my serious doubts

With too much levity. You vex me, Arden.

Arden. Believe me, friend, you'll laugh at this hereafter. [*Exit.*]
[*Exit the other way.*]

MOSBY, *having watched FRANKLIN out, re-enters with GREEN.*

Mos. The surly friend has left him—As I wish'd——

You see how eagerly the foolish fowl
Flies headlong to our snare: now to inclose him.
At eight the guests are bidden to his banquet,
And only Michael, of his numerous train,
Keeps home with his Alicia. He'll secure
The keys of all the doors, and let you in
With my two trusty blood-hounds. Alicia seems
Averse at present——

Green. She'll not dare betray us.

Mos. Not when the deed is done. We know too much;

She'll be our prisoner, and shall be observ'd.
Towards evening, then upon a slight pretence
To pass an hour at draughts, (a game he loves,)
I'll draw this husband home. You'll be prepar'd
In th' inner room, (Michael will show it you,)
'Till, at a signal given, you all rush forth,
And strangle him.

Green. Good—'tis a death that leaves
No bloody character to mark the place.

Mos. Howe'er, come all provided with your daggers.

Do you seek Michael, I'll instruct the rest

Green. What shall the signal be?

Mos. These words in the game,

"I take you now."

Green. Arden! thou'rt taken now indeed.

Mos. His body, thrown behind the abbey-wall,
Shall be descried by the early passenger

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Returning from the Fair.—My friend, thy hand—
Shakes it?—Be firm, and our united strength
With ease shall cast dead Arden to the earth.

Green. Thanks to his foolish tenderness of soul.

Mos. True; he, who trusts an old inveterate foe,
Bares his own breast, and courts the fatal blow.

[*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ARDEN'S House.

ALICIA, *alone.*

What have I heard! Is this the house of Arden?
Oh! that the power which has so often sav'd him,
Would send his guardian angel to him now,
To whisper in his ear his present danger!

Fly, Arden, fly; avoid this fatal roof, [*thee:*]
Where murder lurks, and certain death awaits
Wander—no matter where—Turn but from hence,
Thou canst not miss thy way.—The house is theirs.—

I am suspected—Michael guards the door—
And even Maria's absent. Bloody Mosby,
These are the fruits of thy detested lust. [*manity,*]
But, hark, the fiends approach.—Green and hu-

Enter GREEN, BLACK WILL, SHAKEBAG, and MICHAEL.

Could I prevail on him!—O, Sir—

[*Talks apart with GREEN.*]

B. Will. What a fair house! rich furniture,
what piles of massy plate. And, then, yon iron chest. Good plunder, comrade.

Shake. And Madam Arden there—A prize worth them all, to me.

B. Will. And shall that fawning, white-livered, coward, Mosby, enjoy all these?

Shake. No doubt, he would, were we the fools he thinks us.

Green. Had he as many lives as drops of blood I'd have them all. [*To ALICIA*]

Alic. But for one single night——

Green. I'd not defer his fate a single hour,
Though I were sure myself to die the next.

So, peace, irresolute woman—and be thankful
For thy own life.

Alic. O mercy, mercy——

Green. Yes,
Such mercy as the nursing lioness,

When drain'd of moisture by her eager young,
Shows to the prey that first encounters her.

B. Will. Who talks of mercy, when I am here
Green. She would prevent us; but our steady courage

Laughs at her coward arts.

[*Knocking gently at the gate*]

Why, Michael?

Mich. Sir!

Green. Thou bloodless coward, what dost tremble at?

Dost thou not hear a knocking at the gate?

[*Exit MICHAEL*]

Mosby, no doubt. How like a sly adulterer,
Who steals at midnight, and with caution gives
Th' appointed signal to his neighbour's wife!

B. Will. Which is the place where we're to be concealed?

Green. This inner room.

B. Will. 'Tis well.—The word is, now I take you. [*Knocking louder than before*]

Green. Ay, there's authority. That speaks the master

He seems in haste: 'twere pity he should wait,
Now we're so well prepar'd for his reception.

[GREEN, BLACK WILL, and SHAKEBAG, go
into the inner room.]

ALICIA remains alone.

Alic. Now, whither are they gone?—The door's
unbar'd.

I hear the sound of feet. Should it be Arden,
And Mosby with him—I can't bear the doubt,
Nor would I be resolv'd. Be hush'd, my fears,
'Tis Mosby, and alone. [Enter MOSBY.] Sir;
hear me, Mosby.

Mos. Madam, is this a time?

Alic. I will be heard;

And mark me, when I swear, never hereafter,
By look, word, act—

Mos. Your husband comes—

Alic. Ha!— [She screams.]

Enter ARDEN and MICHAEL.

Arđ. Am I a monster, that I fright thee thus?

[To MICHAEL.]

Say, what has happen'd since I left the house?
Thou look'st, Alicia, as if wild amazement
Had chang'd thee to the image of herself.

Alic. Is Franklin with you?

Arđ. No.

Alic. Nor Fowl, nor Bradshaw?

Arđ. Neither, but both expected.—

Alic. Merciful Heaven!

[Aside.]

Arđ. I meant to dedicate this happy night
To mirth and joy, and thy returning love.

[She sighs.]

Make me not sad, Alicia: for my sake,
Let discontent be banished from your brow,
And welcome Arden's friend with laughing eyes.
Among the first let Mosby be enroll'd—

Alic. The villain!

[Aside.]

Arđ. Nay, I am too well convinc'd
Of Mosby's friendship, and Alicia's love,
Ever to wrong them more by weak suspicions.
I've been indeed to blame, but I will make thee
A large amends, Alicia.—Look upon him,
As on the man that saved your husband's life.

Alic. Would take my husband's life!—I'll tell
him all, [Aside.]

And cast this load of horror from my soul:
Yet 'tis a dreadful hazard. Both must die.
A fearful thought! Franklin may come, or Brad-
shaw—

O let me not precipitate his fate!

[Aside.]

Mos. I see my presence is offensive there.

[Going.]

Arđ. Alicia! No—she has no will but mine.

Mos. It is not fit she should:—and yet—per-
haps—

'Twere better, Sir—permit me to retire.

Arđ. No more—our friendship publicly avow'd,
Will clear her injur'd virtue to the world.

Mos. Something there is in that—

Arđ. It is a debt

I owe to both your fames, and pay it freely.

Mos. For her sake, then, not for my own.

Alic. O vile dissembler.

[Aside.]

Arđ. Come, take your seat; this shall not save
your money.

Bring us the tables, Michael—

[They sit and play.]

Alic. [Aside.] O just Heaven!

Wilt thou not interpose?—How dread this pause!
'Ten thousand terrors crowd the narrow space.

Arđ. Your thoughts are absent, Mosby.

B. Will. Blood! why don't Mosby give the word?

Mich. Give back; the game's against him.

Alic. Fly, Franklin! fly, to save thy Arden's
life:

Murder herself, that chases him in view,

Beholding me, starts back, and for a moment

Suspends her thirst of blood. [Aside.]

Arđ. Come, give it up; I told you I should win.

[Rises.]

Mos. No, I see an advantage; move again.

Arđ. There.

Mos. Now I take you.

[BLACK WILL throws a scarf over ARDEN's head,
in order to strangle him; but ARDEN disen-
gages himself, wrests a dagger from SHAKE-
BAG, and stands on his defence, till MOSBY
getting behind, and seizing his arm, the rest
assassinate him.]

Alic. O power Omnipotent! make strong his arm,
Give him to conquer. Ha! my prayers are curses,
And draw down vengeance where they meant a
blessing.

Arđ. Inhospitable villain!

Alic. O! he dies.

Arđ. O hold your bloody—Mosby, too! Nay
then [Falling.]

I yield me to my fate.—Is this, Alicia,
This, the return for my unequal love?

Alic. Or death, or madness, would be mercies
now;

Therefore, beyond my hopes.

Arđ. O Mosby, Michael, Green,

Why have you drawn my blood upon your souls?

Mos. Behold her there, to whom I was betroth'd,
And ask no farther—

Green. Think on thy abbey-lands
From injur'd Green.

Arđ. You now are your own judges,
But we shall meet again where right and truth—
Who—who are these? But I forgive you all.
Thy hand, Alicia—

Alic. I'll not give it thee. [too?]

Arđ. O wretched woman! have they kill'd thee
A deadly paleness, agony, and horror,
On thy sad visage sit. My soul hangs on thee,
And, though departing—just departing—loves
Is loath to leave, unreconcil'd to thee, [thee:]
This useless, mangled tenement of clay.

Dismiss her pleas'd, and say thou'rt innocent.

Alic. All hell contains not such a guilty wretch.

Arđ. Then, welcome death! I though in the shape
of murder.

How have I doted to idolatry!

Vain, foolish wretch, and thoughtless of hereafter,
Nor hoped, nor wish'd, a heaven beyond her love.

Now, unprepar'd, I perish by her hate.

Alic. Though blacker, and more guilty, than the
My soul is white from this accursed deed. [friends,
O Arden! hear me—

Arđ. Full of doubts I come,

O thou Supreme, to seek thy awful presence.

My soul is on the wing. I own thy justice.

Prevent me, with thy mercy. [Dies.]

Alic. Turn not from me:

Behold me, pity me, survey my sorrows,

I, who despis'd the duty of a wife,

Will be thy slave.—Spit on me, spurn me, Sir,

I'll love the still.—O couldst thou court my scorn,

And now abhor me, when I love thee more,

If possible, than e'er thou lov'dst Alicia!

Mos. Mad fool! he's dead and hears thee not.

Alic. 'Tis false—

He smiles upon me, and applauds my vengeance.

[*Snatches a dagger, and strikes at Mosby.*
—*A knocking at the gate.*

Mos. Damnation!—

B. Will. 'Sdeath! we shall leave our work unfinished, and be betrayed at last.—Let's hide the body.

Mos. Force her away.

Alic. Inhuman, bloody villains!

[*She swoons, as she is forced from the body.*

Enter MARIA.

Mar. Mosby here!—

My sliding feet, as I move trembling forwards,
Are drench'd in blood. O may I only fancy,
That Arden there lies murder'd—

Mos. How fares Alicia?—

[*hell—*

Alic. As the howling damn'd; and thou my

Mar. Unhappy brother!

If thou hast done this deed, hope not to 'scape:
Mercy herself, who only seeks for crimes,
That she may pardon and reform the guilty,
Would change her nature at a sight like this.

Enter MICHAEL.

Mich. The guests are come—the servants all return'd.

Mos. Alicia, be thyself; and mask thy heart,

[*Lifts up ALICIA.*

From every prying eye, with courteous smiles.

Alic. Thou canst not think me mean enough to live.

Mos. You would not choose an ignominious death?

Alic. That's all I dread—might but the silent grave,

When it receives me to its dark abode,
Hide, with my dust, my shame! O might that be,
And Arden's death reveng'd—'Tis my sole prayer.
If not, may awful justice have her course. [*Exit.*

Mos. Sister! our lives are thine—

Mar. Though Mosby has shook off humanity,
I can't be his accuser. [*Exit.*

Mos. Follow them, Green, and watch Alicia's conduct.

Green. I will, but cannot answer for my own.
O Arden! Arden! could we change conditions!

[*Exit.*

B. Will. Why, what a crew of cowards!

In the same moment, murdering and repenting.

Mos. Give me the ring that is on Arden's finger.

Shake. There. Will you have his purse too?

Mos. No, keep that.

B. Will. Thanks for our own: we should have kept the ring.

Were it not too remarkable.

But how must we dispose of the body?

Mos. Convey it through the garden, to the field
Behind the abbey-wall: Michael will show the way.

The night is dark and cloudy—yet, take heed—
The house is full of company.

B. Will. Sir, if you doubt our conduct, do't yourself.

Mos. Nay, gentlemen—

Shake. Pretend to direct us!

Mos. For your own sakes—Arden will soon be miss'd.

Shake. We know our business, Sir.

Mos. I doubt it not.

There's your reward. The horses both are saddled,
And ready for your flight.

B. Will. Use them yourself:

I hope we're as safe as you.

Mos. Why, gentlemen—Arden, I us'd thee worse!

[*Aside.*

B. Will. We shall take care, however, for our own sakes.

Mos. 'Tis very well—I hope we all are friends.
So—softly—softly—Michael, not that door—

[*MICHAEL going out at the wrong door*
So—make what speed you can: I'll wait you there.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Hall in ARDEN'S House.

MOSBY alone.

They must pass undescri'd: gardens and fields
Are dreary deserts now. Night-fowls and beasts
of prey

Avoid the pinching rigour of the season,
Nor leave their shelter at a time like this.
And yet this night, this lingering winter night,
Hung with a weight of clouds that stops her course,
Contracts new horrors, and a deeper black
From this damn'd deed.—Mosby, thou hast thy wish.

Arden is dead; now count thy gains at leisure.
Dangers without, on every side suspicion;
Within, my starting conscience makes such wounds,

As hell can equal, only murderers feel. [*A pause.*
This, this the end of all my flattering hopes!

O! happiest was I in my humble state:
Though I lay down in want, I slept in peace:

My daily toil begat my night's repose,
My night's repose made day-light pleasing to me.
But now I've climb'd the top-bough of the tree,
And sought to build my nest among the clouds,
The gentlest gales of summer shake my bed,
And dreams of murder harrow up my soul.
But hark!—Not yet!—'tis dreadful being alone.
This awful silence, that unbroken reigns
Through earth and air, awakes attention more
Than thunder bursting from ten thousand clouds:
'Sdeath!—'tis but Michael—say—

Enter MICHAEL.

Mich. Dead Arden lies
Behind the abbey—'tis a dismal sight!
It snow'd apace while we dispos'd the body.

Mos. And not as you return'd?

Mich. No, Sir—

Mos. That's much—

Should you be question'd as to Arden's death,
You'll not confess?

Mich. No, so Maria's mine.

Mos. She's thine, if all a brother can—

Mich. What's if?

I bought her dear, at hazard of my soul,
And force shall make her mine.—

Mos. Why, how now, coward!

Enter MARIA.

Mar. The guests refuse to take their seats
without you.

Alicia's grief, too, borders on distraction.

Thy presence may appease—

Mos. Increase it, rather.

Mar. Michael, your absence too has been ob-
serv'd.

Mos. Say, we are coming. [*Exit MARIA.*

Mich. One thing I'd forgot. [*Returning*
Soon as the company have left the house,
The ruffians will return.

Mos. What would the villains?

Mich. They mutter'd threats and curses,
And seem'd not satisfied with their reward.

[*Exit.*]

Mos. Let them take all.—Ambition, av'rice, lust,
That drove me on to murder, now forsake me.
O Arden! if thy discontented ghost
Still hovers here to see thy blood reveng'd,
View, view the anguish of this guilty breast,
And be appeas'd. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Room in ARDEN'S House.

A table, &c. spread for supper.

GREEN, BRADSHAW, ADAM FOWL, ALICIA,
MARIA, &c.

Brad. Madam, be comforted.

A. Fowl. Some accident, or business unfore-
seen, detains him thus.

Brad. I doubt not of his safety.

Alic. I thank you, gentlemen; I know you lov'd
My Arden well, and kindly speak your wishes.

Enter MOSBY.

Mos. I am asham'd I've made you wait: be
seated.

Green. Madam, first take your place.

Alic. Make me not mad—

To me all places are alike. [*Sits.*]

Mos. Come, since we want the master of the
house,

I'll take his seat for once.

Alic. Dares he do this? [*Aside.*]

Mos. I'm much afflicted that he stays so late;
The times are perilous.

Green. And he has enemies,

Tho' no man, sure, did e'er deserve them less.

Mos. This day he was assaulted in the street.

Green. You sav'd him then.

Mos. Would I were with him now!

Mar. She starts, her looks are wild. [*Aside.*]

How fare you, Madam?

Alic. I'm lost in admiration of your brother.

Mar. I fear her more than ever. [*Aside.*]

Madam, be merry.

Mos. Michael, some wine. Health and long

life to Arden. [*Drinks.*]

Alic. The good you wish, and have procur'd for

Arden,

Light on thyself! [*Rising, in desperation.*]

Mar. For Heaven's sake!—

Alic. Give me way. [*Comes forward.*]

Let them despatch, and send me to my husband:

I've liv'd too long with falsehood and deceit. [*All rise.*]

[*Knocking at the gate.*]

A. Fowl. What noise is that? [*Exit MICHAEL.*]

Brad. Pray Heaven, that all be right.

Mos. Bar all the doors.

Enter MICHAEL.

Mich. We are discover'd, Sir. [*To MOSBY.*]

The mayor, with officers and men in arms.

Enter MAYOR, &c.

Mayor. Go you with these, and do as I directed.

[*Eseunt Officers and others.*]

I'm sorry that the duty of my office

Demands a visit so unseasonable.

Mos. Your worship doubtless were a welcome

guest

At any hour; but wherefore thus attended?

Mayor. I have received a warrant from the

council

To apprehend two most notorious ruffians;

And, information being made on oath,

That they were seen to enter here to-night,

I'm come to search.

Green. I'm glad it is no worse.

[*Aside.*]

Mos. And can you think that Arden entertains

Villains like those you speak of? were he here,

You'd not be thank'd for this officiousness.

Mayor. I know my duty, Sir, and that respect,

So justly due to our good neighbour's worth.—

But where is Arden?

Alic. Heavens! where, indeed!

Mar. Alicia, for my sake—

[*Aside.*]

Alic. If I were silent,

Each precious drop of murder'd Arden's blood

Would find a tongue, and cry to Heaven for ven-

geance.

Mayor. What says the lady?

Mos. Oh! Sir, heed her not:

Her husband has not been at home to-night,

And her misboding sorrow for his absence

Has almost made her frantic.

Mayor. Scarce an hour,

Since I beheld him enter here with you.

Mos. The darkness of the night deceiv'd you,

Sir:

It was a stranger, since departed hence.

Mayor. That's most surprising. No man

knows him better.

Frank. [*Without.*] Within there—ho!—bar

up your gates with care,

And set a watch—Let not a man go by—

[*FRANKLIN and others enter, with lights.*]

And every tongue, that gave not its consent

To Arden's death, join mine and cry aloud

To Heaven and earth for justice. Honest Arden,

My friend—is murder'd.

Mayor. Murder'd!

Green. How?

Mos. By whom?

Frank. How shall I utter what my eyes have

seen!

Horrid with many a gaping wound he lies

Behind the abbey, a sad spectacle!

O vengeance! vengeance!

Mayor. Justly art thou mov'd.

Passion is reason in a cause like this.

Frank. Eternal Providence, to whose bright eye

Darkness itself is as the noon-day blaze,

Who brings the midnight murder and his deeds

To light and shame, has in their own security

Found these.

Mayor. Here, seize them all—this instant:

[*ALICIA faints.*]

Look to the lady. This may be but feign'd.

Your charge but goes along with my suspicions.

Brad. And mine.

A. Fowl. And mine.

Frank. First hear me; and then judge,

Whether on slight presumptions I accuse them.

These honest men, (neighbours and townsmen

all)

Conducted me, dropping with grief and fear,

To where the body lay;—with them, I took these

notes,

Not to be trusted to the faithless memory.

"Huge clots of blood and some of Arden's hair

May still be seen upon the garden wall;

Many such rushes, as these floors are strew'd with,

Stick to his shoes and garments: and the prints

Of several feet may in the snow be trac'd,

From the stark body to the very door."—

These are presumptions he was murder'd here,
And that the assassins, having borne his corse
Into the fields, hither return'd again.

Mos. Are these your proofs?

Green. These are but circumstances,

And only prove thy malice.

Frank. And this scarf,
Known to be Arden's, in the court was found,
All blood.

Mayor. Search 'em.—

Mich. I thought I'd thrown it down the well.

[*Aside.*

Mayor. [*To an OFFICER.*] Enter that room,
search the lady there;

We may perhaps discover more.

[*OFFICER goes out, and re-enters; in the
mean time another OFFICER searches
MOSBY and GREEN.*

1st Officer. On Arden's wife I found this letter.

2d Officer. And I, this ring on Mosby.

Mayor. Righteous Heaven!

Well may'st thou hang thy head, detested villain:
This very day did Arden wear this ring,
I saw it on his hand.—

Mos. I freely yield me to my fate.

Enter another OFFICER.

Officer. We've seiz'd two men behind some
stacks of wood.

Mayor. Well, bring 'em in.

[*BLACK WILL and SHAKESBAG brought in.*

They answer the description:

But let them wait 'till I have done with these.

Heavens! what a scene of villany is here!

[*Having read the letter.*

B. Will. Since we're sure to die, though I could
wish 'twere in better company, (for I hate that
fawning rascal, Mosby,) I'll tell the truth for once.
He has been long engaged in an affair with Ar-
den's wife there; but fearing a discovery, and
hoping to get into his estate, hired us to hide him.
—That's all.

Mayor. And you the horrid deed perform'd?

Shake. We did, with his assistance, and Green's,
and Michael's.

Mayor. This letter proves, Alicia, from the first,
Was made acquainted with your black design.

B. Will. I know nothing of that: but, if she
was, she repented of it afterwards. So I think,
you call that a change of mind.

Mayor. That may avail her at the bar of
Heaven,

But is no plea at ours. [*ALICIA brought in.*]

Bear them to prison;

Load them with irons, make them feel their guilt,

And groan away their miserable hours,

Till sentence of the law shall call them forth

To public execution.

Alic. I adore

Th' unerring hand of justice; and with silence

Had yielded to my fate, but for this maid,

Who, as my soul dreads justice on her crimes,

Knew not, or e'er consented to this deed.

Mayor. But did she not consent to keep it
secret?

Mos. To save a brother and most wretched
friend.

Mayor. She has undone herself—Behold how
innocence

May suffer in bad fellowship.—And Bradshaw,
My honest neighbour Bradshaw too—I read it
With grief and wonder.—

Brad. Madam, I appeal

To you; as you are shortly to appear

Before a Judge that sees our secret thoughts,

Say, had I knowledge, or—

Alic. You brought the letter;

But I hope, you knew not the contents.

Mayor. Hence with them all, 'till time and far-
ther light

Shall clear these mysteries.

A. Fowl. If I'm condemn'd,

My blood be on his head that gives the sentence.

I'm not accus'd, and only ask for justice.

Frank. You shall have justice all, and rig'rous
justice.

So shall the growth of such enormous crimes,

By their dread fate be check'd in future times.

Of avarice, Mosby a dread instance prove;

And poor Alicia, of unlawful love. [*Exeunt.*]

THE JEALOUS WIFE:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GEORGE COLEMAN, Esq.

REMARKS.

This piece was originally performed at Drury-lane, and met with astonishing success. The plot is taken from Fielding's "*Tom Jones*," at the period when Sophia takes refuge at the house of Lady Bellaston. The portion of plot borrowed from that work, however, only serves to introduce Mr. and Mrs. Oakly, the jealous wife and her husband. The passions of the lady are certainly worked up to a sufficient height, and Mr. Oakly's vexation and domestic misery, in consequence of her behaviour, very strongly supported; yet, perhaps, the author would have better answered his purpose with respect to exposing the absurdity of the passion, had he made her appear somewhat less of the virago, and Mr. Oakly not so much of the hen-pecked husband. Mrs. Oakly now rather appears a lady, who, from a consciousness of her own power, is desirous of supporting the appearance of jealousy, to procure an undue influence over her husband and family, than one who, feeling the reality of that turbulent yet fluctuating passion, becomes equally absurd in the suddenness of forming unjust suspicions, and in that hastiness of being satisfied, which love, the only true basis of jealousy, will constantly occasion.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.
OAKLY,	Mr. Wroughton.
MAJOR OAKLY,	Mr. Palmer.
CHARLES,	Mr. Holland.
RUSSET,	Mr. Downton.
SIR HARRY BEAGLE,	Mr. Wrench.
CAPTAIN O'CUTTER,	Mr. Johnstone.
LORD TRINKET,	Mr. Decamp.
PARIS,	Mr. Wewitzer.
WILLIAM,	Mr. Evans.

	DRURY LANE.
JOHN,	Mr. Maddocks.
TOM,	Mr. Chatterley.
SERVANT,	Mr. West.
MRS. OAKLY,	Mrs. Davison.
LADY FREELOVE,	Mrs. Harlowe.
HARRIET,	Mrs. Orger.
TOILET,	Miss Tidswell.
CHAMBERMAID,	Miss Jones.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in OAKLY's House.

Noise heard within.

Mrs. O. [*Within.*] Don't tell me—I know it is so—it's monstrous, and I will not bear it.

Oak. [*Within.*] But my dear!

Mrs. O. Nay, nay, &c. [*Squabbling within.*]

Enter MRS. OAKLY with a letter, followed by OAKLY.

Mrs. O. Say what you will, Mr. Oakly, you shall never persuade me but this is some filthy intrigue of yours.

Oak. I can assure you, my love—

Mrs. O. Your love!—Don't I know your—

Tell me, I say, this instant, every circumstance relating to this letter.

Oak. How can I tell you, when you will not so much as let me see it?

Mrs. O. Look you, Mr. Oakly, this usage is not to be borne. You take a pleasure in abusing my tenderness and soft disposition.—To be perpetually running over the whole town, nay, the whole kingdom too, in pursuit of your amours!—Did not I discover that you was great with Mademoiselle, my own woman?—Did not you contract a shameful familiarity with Mrs. Freeman? Did not I detect your intrigue with Lady Wealthy? Was not you—

Oak. Oons! Madam, the grand Turk himself has not half so many mistresses. You throw me out of all patience. Do I know any body but our common friends? Am I visited by any body that

does not visit you? Do I ever go out, unless you go with me? And am I not as constantly by your side, as if I were tied to your apron-strings?

Mrs. O. Go, go, you are a false man; have not I found you out a thousand times? and have not I this moment a letter in my hand, which convinces me of your baseness? Let me know the whole affair, or I will—

Oak. You know! let me know what you would have of me; you stop my letter before it comes to my hands, and then expect that I should know the contents of it!

Mrs. O. Heaven be praised, I stopped it! I suspected some of these doings for some time past—But the letter informs me who she is, and I'll be revenged on her sufficiently. Oh, you base man, you!

Oak. I beg, my dear, that you would moderate your passion! show me the letter, and I'll convince you of my innocence.

Mrs. O. Innocence! abominable! innocence! but I am not to be made such a fool; I am convinced of your perfidy, and very sure that—

Oak. 'Sdeath and fire! your passion hurries you out of your senses. Will you hear me?

Mrs. O. No, you are a base man: and I will not hear you.

Oak. Why then, my dear, since you will neither talk reasonably yourself, nor listen to reason from me, I shall take my leave till you are in a better humour. So your servant! [*Going.*]

Mrs. O. Ay, go, you cruel man! go to your mistresses, and leave your poor wife to her miseries. How unfortunate a woman am I! I could die with vexation.

[*Throwing herself into a chair.*]

Oak. There it is. Now dare not I stir a step further. If I offer to go, she is in one of her fits in an instant. Never sure was woman at once of so violent and so delicate a constitution! what shall I say to sooth her? [*Aside.*] Nay, never make thyself so uneasy, my dear; come, come, you know I love you.

Mrs. O. I know you hate me; and that your unkindness and barbarity will be the death of me.

[*Whining.*]

Oak. Do not vex yourself at this rate. I love you most passionately, indeed I do. This must be some mistake.

Mrs. O. Oh, I am an unhappy woman!

[*Weeping.*]

Oak. Dry up thy tears, my love, and be comforted! You will find that I am not to blame in this matter. Come, let me see this letter; nay, you shall not deny me.

[*Takes the letter.*]

Mrs. O. There! take it; you know the hand, I am sure.

Oak. [Reads.] *To Charles Oakly, Esq.—Hand!* 'Tis a clerk-like hand, a good round text; and was certainly never penned by a fair lady.

Mrs. O. Ay, laugh at me, do.

Oak. Forgive me, my love, I did not mean to laugh at thee. But what says the letter? [*Reads.*] *Daughter eloped—you must be privy to it—scandalous—dishonourable—satisfaction—revenge—um, um, um—injured father.*

HENRY RUSSET.

Mrs. O. [*Rising.*] Well, Sir, you see I have detected you. Tell me this instant where she is concealed.

Oak. So, so, so; this hurts me. I'm shocked.

[*To himself.*]

Mrs. O. What, are you confounded with your guilt? Have I caught you at last?

Oak. O that wicked Charles! to decoy a young lady from her parents in the country! The profligacy of the young fellows of this age is abominable.

[*To himself.*]

Mrs. O. [*Half aside, and musing.*] Charles! let me see! Charles! no! impossible! This is all a trick.

Oak. He has certainly ruined this poor lady.

[*To himself.*]

Mrs. O. Art! art! all art! There's a sudden turn now! You have ready wit for an intrigue, I find.

Oak. Such an abandoned action! I wish I had never had the care of him.

Mrs. O. Mighty fine, Mr. Oakly! Go on, Sir, go on! I see what you mean. Your assurance provokes me beyond your very falsehood itself. So you imagine, Sir, that this affected concern, this flimsy pretence about Charles, is to bring you off. Matchless confidence! But I am armed against every thing; I am prepared for all your dark schemes: I am aware of all your low stratagems.

Oak. See there now! Was ever any thing so provoking? to persevere in your ridiculous—For Heaven's sake, my dear, don't distract me. When you see my mind thus agitated and uneasy, that a young fellow, whom his dying father, my own brother, committed to my care, should be guilty of such enormous wickedness; I say, when you are witness of my distress on this occasion, how can you be weak enough and cruel enough to—

Mrs. O. Prodigious! well, Sir! You do it very well. Nay, keep it up, carry it on; there's nothing like going through with it. O, you artful creature! But, Sir, I am not to be so easily satisfied. I do not believe a syllable of all this. Give me the letter. [*Snatches the letter.*] You shall sorely repent this vile business, for I am resolved that I will know the bottom of it.

[*Exit.*]

Oak. This is beyond all patience. Provoking woman! Her absurd suspicions interpret every thing the wrong way. But this ungracious boy! In how many troubles will he involve his own and this lady's family! I never imagined that he was of such abandoned principles.

Enter MAJOR OAKLY and CHARLES.

Char. Good morrow, Sir.

Maj. O. Good morrow, brother, good morrow.—What! you have been at the old work, I find. I heard you, ding! dong! i'faith! She has rung a noble peal in your ears. But how now? Why sure you've had a remarkable warm bout on't, you seem more ruffled than usual.

Oak. I am, indeed, brother! Thanks to that young gentleman there. Have a care, Charles! you may be called to a severe account for this. The honour of a family, Sir, is no such light matter.

Char. Sir!

Maj. O. Hey-day! What, has a curtain lecture produced a lecture of morality? What is all this?

Oak. To a profligate mind, perhaps, these things may appear agreeable in the beginning. But don't you tremble at the consequences?

Char. I see, Sir, that you are displeased with me; but I am quite at a loss to guess at the occasion.

Oak. Tell me, Sir! where is Miss Harriet Russet?

Char. Miss Harriet Russet! Sir, explain.

Oak. Have not you decoyed her from her father?

Char. I! Decoyed her—Decoyed my Harriet! I would sooner die than do her the least injury. What can this mean?

Maj. O. I believe the young dog has been at her, after all.

Oak. I was in hopes, Charles, you had better principles. But there's a letter just come from her father—

Char. A letter! What letter? Dear Sir, give it me. Some intelligence of my Harriet, major! The letter, Sir, the letter this moment, for Heaven's sake!

Oak. If this warmth, Charles, tends to prove your innocence—

Char. Dear Sir, excuse me; I'll prove any thing. Let me but see this letter, and I'll—

Oak. Let you see it! I could hardly get a sight of it myself. Mrs. Oakly has it.

Char. Has she got it? Major, I'll be with you again directly. *[Exit hastily.]*

Maj. O. Hey-dey! The devil's in the boy! What a fiery set of people! By my troth, I think the whole family is made of nothing but combustibles.

Oak. I like this emotion; it looks well: it may serve too to convince my wife of the folly of her suspicions. Would to Heaven I could quiet them for ever.

Maj. O. Why pray now, my dear, naughty brother, what heinous offence have you committed this morning? What new cause of suspicion? You have been asking one of the maids to mend your ruffle, I suppose, or have been hanging your head out at the window, when a pretty young woman has passed by, or—

Oak. How can you trifle with my distresses, major? Did not I tell you it was about a letter?

Maj. O. A letter! hum. A suspicious circumstance, to be sure! What, and the seal a true lover's knot now, hey? or a heart transfixed with darts; or possibly the wax bore the industrious impression of a thimble; or perhaps the folds were lovingly connected by a wafer, pricked with a pin, and the direction written in a vile scrawl, and not a word spelt as it should be! ha, ha, ha!

Oak. Pooh! brother; whatever it was, the letter, you find, was for Charles, not for me. This outrageous jealousy is the devil.

Maj. O. Mere matrimonial blessings and domestic comfort, brother! jealousy is a certain sign of love.

Oak. Love! it is this very love that hath made us both so miserable. Her love for me has confined me to my house, like a state prisoner, without the liberty of seeing my friends, or the use of pen, ink, and paper; while my love for her has made such a fool of me, that I have never had the spirit to contradict her.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, there you've hit it; Mrs. Oakly would make an excellent wife, if you did but know how to manage her.

Oak. You are a rare fellow indeed to talk of managing a wife! A debauched bachelor; a rattle-brained, rioting fellow, who has picked up your common-place notions of women in bagnios, taverns, and the camp; whose most refined commerce with the sex has been in order to delude country girls at your quarters, or to besiege the

virtue of abigails, milliners, or mantua-makers' prentices.

Maj. O. So much the better! so much the better! women are all alike in the main, brother, high or low, married or single, quality or no quality. I have found them so, from a duchess down to a milk-maid; every woman is a tyrant at the bottom. But they could never make a fool of me. No, no! no woman should ever domineer over me, let her be mistress or wife.

Oak. Single men can be no judges in these cases. They must happen in all families. But when things are driven to extremities—to see a woman in uneasiness—a woman one loves too—one's wife—who can withstand it? You neither speak nor think like a man that has loved and been married, major!

Maj. O. I wish I could hear a married man speak my language. I'm a bachelor, it's true; but I am no bad judge of your case for all that. I know yours and Mrs. Oakly's disposition to a hair. She is all impetuosity and fire; a very magazine of touchwood and gunpowder. You are hot enough too, upon occasion, but then it's over in an instant. In comes love and conjugal affection, as you call it; that is, mere folly and weakness: and you draw off your forces, just when you should pursue the attack, and follow your advantage. Have at her with spirit, and the day's your own, brother.

Oak. Why, what would you have me do?

Maj. O. Do as you please for one month, whether she likes it or not: and I'll answer for it she will consent you shall do as you please all her life after. In short, do but show yourself a man of spirit, leave off whining about love and tenderness, and nonsense, and the business is done, brother.

Oak. I believe you are in the right, major! I see you are in the right. I'll do it, I'll certainly do it. But then it hurts me to the soul, to think what uneasiness I shall give her. The first opening of my design will throw her into fits, and the pursuit of it, perhaps, may be fatal.

Maj. O. Fits! ha, ha, ha! I'll engage to cure her of her fits. Nobody understands hysterical cases better than I do; besides, my sister's symptoms are not very dangerous. Did you ever hear of her falling into a fit when you was not by? Was she ever found in convulsions in her closet? No, no, these fits, the more care you take of them, the more you will increase the distemper: let them alone, and they will wear themselves out, I warrant you.

Oak. True, very true; you are certainly in the right—I'll follow your advice. Where do you dine to-day? I'll order the coach, and go with you.

Maj. O. O brave! keep up this spirit, and you are made for ever.

Oak. You shall see now, major. Who's there?

Enter SERVANT.

Order the coach directly. I shall dine out to-day.

Serv. The coach, Sir?—Now, Sir?

Oak. Ay, now, immediately.

Serv. Now, Sir?—the—the—coach, Sir?—that is—my mistress—

Maj. O. Sirrah! do as you are bid. Bid them put to this instant.

Serv. Ye—yes, Sir—yes, Sir.

Oak. Well, where shall we dine?

[Exit.]

Maj. O. At the St. Albans, or where you will. This is excellent, if you do but hold it.

Oak. I will have my own way, I am determined.

Maj. O. That's right.

Oak. I am steel.

Maj. O. Bravo!

Oak. Adamant.

Maj. O. Bravissimo!

Oak. Just what you'd have me.

Maj. O. Why, that's well said. But will you do it?

Oak. I will.

Maj. O. You wont.

Oak. I will, I'll be a fool to her no longer. But harkye, major, my hat and cane lie in my study. I'll go and steal them out, while she is busy talking with Charles.

Maj. O. Steal them! for shame! Pr'ythee take them boldly; call for them; make them bring them to you here; and go out with spirit, in the face of your whole family.

Oak. No, no; you are wrong; let her rave after I am gone, and when I return, you know, I shall exert myself with more propriety, after this open affront to her authority.

Maj. O. Well, take your own way.

Oak. Ay, ay; let me manage it, let me manage it. *[Exit.]*

Maj. O. Manage it! ay, to be sure, you are a rare manager! It is dangerous, they say, to meddle between man and wife. I am no great favourite of Mrs. Oakly's already; and in a week's time I expect to have the door shut in my teeth.

Enter CHARLES.

How now, Charles, what news?

Char. Ruined and undone! She's gone, unclean! my Harriet's lost for ever.

Maj. O. Gone off with a man? I thought so; they are all alike.

Char. Oh, no! Fled, to avoid that hateful match with Sir Harry Beagle.

Maj. O. Faith, a girl of spirit; but whence comes all this intelligence?

Char. In an angry letter from her father. How miserable I am! If I had not offended my Harriet, much offended her, by that foolish riot and drinking at your house in the country, she would certainly, at such a time, have taken refuge in my arms.

Maj. O. A very agreeable refuge for a young lady to be sure, and extremely decent!

Char. What a heap of extravagancies was I guilty of!

Maj. O. Extravagancies with a witness! Ah! you silly young dog, you would ruin yourself with her father, in spite of all I could do. There you sat, as drunk as a lord, telling the old gentleman the whole affair, and swearing you would drive Sir Harry Beagle out of the country, though I kept winking and nodding, pulling you by the sleeve, and kicking your shins under the table, in hopes of stopping you; but all to no purpose.

Char. What distress may she be in at this instant! Alone and defenceless! Where, where can she be?

Maj. O. What relations or friends has she in town?

Char. Relations! let me see. Faith, I have it! If she is in town, ten to one but she is at her aunt's, Lady Freelove's. I'll go thither immediately.

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Maj. O. Lady Freelove's! Hold, hold, Charles! do you know her ladyship?

Char. Not much! but I'll break through all, to get to my Harriet.

Maj. O. I do know her ladyship.

Char. Well, and what do you know of her?

Maj. O. O, nothing! Her ladyship is a woman of the world, that's all.

Char. What do you mean?

Maj. O. That lady Freelove is an arrant—By the by, did not she, last summer, make formal proposals to Harriet's father from Lord Trinket?

Char. Yes; but they were received with the utmost contempt. The old gentleman, it seems, hates a lord, and he told her so in plain terms.

Maj. O. Such an aversion to the nobility may not run in the blood. The girl, I warrant you, has no objection. However, if she's there, watch her narrowly, Charles. Lady Freelove is as mischievous as a monkey, and as cunning too. Have a care of her, I say, have a care of her.

Char. If she's there, I'll have her out of the house within this half hour, or set fire to it.

Maj. O. Nay, now you are too violent—stay a moment, and we'll consider what's best to be done.

Enter OAKLY.

Oak. Come, is the coach ready? Let us be gone. Does Charles go with us?

Char. I go with you! What can I do? I am so vexed and distracted, and so many thoughts crowd in upon me, I don't know which way to turn myself.

Mrs. O. *[Within.]* The coach!—dines out!—where is your master?

Oak. Zounds, brother, here she is!

Re-enter MRS. OAKLY.

Mrs. O. Pray, Mr. Oakly, what is the matter you cannot dine at home to-day?

Oak. Don't be uneasy, my dear! I have a little business to settle with my brother; so I am only just going to dinner, with him and Charles, to the tavern.

Mrs. O. Why cannot you settle your business here, as well as at a tavern? but it is some of your ladies' business, I suppose, and so you must get rid of my company. 'Tis is chiefly your fault, Major Oakly.

Maj. O. Lord, sister, what signifies it, whether a man dines at home, or abroad? *[Coolly.]*

Mrs. O. It signifies a great deal, Sir; and I don't choose—

Maj. O. Phoo! let him go, my dear sister, let him go; he will be ten times better company when he comes back. I tell you what, sister, you sit at home till you are quite tired of one another, and then you grow cross, and fall out. If you would but part a little now and then, you might meet again in humour.

Mrs. O. I beg, Major Oakly, that you would trouble yourself about your own affairs; and let me tell you, Sir, that I—

Oak. Nay, do not put thyself into a passion with the major, my dear.—It is not his fault; and I shall come back to thee very soon.

Mrs. O. Come back! why need you go out? I know well enough when you mean to deceive me; for then there is always a pretence of dining with Sir John, or my lord, or somebody; but when you tell me that you are going to a tavern, it's such a bare-faced affront.

Oak. This is so strange now! Why, my dear, I shall only just—

Mrs. O. Only just go after the lady in the letter, I suppose.

Oak. Well, well, I wont go then. Will that convince you? I'll stay with you, my dear. Will that satisfy you?

Maj. O. For shame; hold out, if you are a man.

[*Apart.*]

Oak. She has been so much vexed this morning already, I must humour her a little now. [*Apart.*]

Maj. O. Fy, fy! go out, or you are undone.

[*Apart.*]

Oak. You see it's impossible. I'll dine at home with thee, my love. [*Apart to Mrs. OAKLY.*]

Mrs. O. Ay, ay, pray do, Sir. Dine at a tavern, indeed! [*Going.*]

Oak. [*Returning.*] You may depend on me another time, major.

Maj. O. Steel and adamant!—Ah!

Mrs. O. [*Returning.*] Mr. Oakly.

Oak. O, my dear. [*Exit, with Mrs. OAKLY.*]

Maj. O. Ha, ha, ha! there's a picture of resolution! there goes a philosopher for you! ha! Charles!

Char. O, uncle, I have no spirits to laugh now.

Maj. O. So! I have a fine time on't between you and my brother. Will you meet me to dinner at the St. Albans by four? We'll drink her health, and think of this affair.

Char. Don't depend on me. I shall be running all over the town, in pursuit of my Harriet; at all events I'll go directly to Lady Freeloove's. If I find her not there, which way I shall direct myself, Heaven knows.

Maj. O. Harkye, Charles; if you meet with her, you may be at a loss. Bring her to my house; I have a snug room, and—

Char. Phoo! prythee, uncle, don't trifle with me now.

Maj. O. Well, seriously, then, my house is at your service.

Char. I thank you; but I must be gone.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, bring her to my house, and we'll settle the whole affair for you. You shall clap her into a post-chaise, take the chaplain of our regiment along with you, wheel her down to Scotland, and when you come back, send to settle her fortune with her father; that's the modern art of making love, Charles. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Bull and Gate Inn.

Enter Sir HARRY BEAGLE and TOM.

Sir H. Ten guineas a mare, and a crown the man? hey, Tom!

Tom. Yes, your honour.

Sir H. And are you sure, Tom, that there is no flaw in his blood?

Tom. He's a good thing, Sir, and as little beholden to the ground, as any horse that ever went over the turf upon four legs. Why here's his whole pedigree, your honour.

Sir H. Is it attested?

Tom. Very well attested; it is signed by Jack Spur and my Lord Startal.

[*Giving the pedigree.*]
Sir H. Let me see. [*Reads.*] *Tom-come-tickle-me* was out of the famous *Tantwivy* mare, by *Sir Aaron Driver's* chesnut horse, *White Stockings*, his dam, was got by *Lord Hedge's* South Barb full sister to the *Proserpine Filly*, and his sire

Tom Jones; his grandam was the Irish Duchess, and his grandsire 'squire Sportley's *Trajan; his great and great great grandam were Newmarket Peggy and Black Moll; and his great grandsire, and great great grandsire, were Sir Ralph Whip's* *Regulus* and the famous *Prince Anamaboo*.

his
JOHN + SPUR.
mark
STARTAL.

Tom. All fine horses, and won every thing! a foal out of your honour's bald-faced *Venus*, by this horse, would beat the world.

Sir H. Well then, we'll think on't. But, plague on't, Tom, I have certainly knocked up my little roan gelding in this damned wildgoose chase of threescore miles an end.

Tom. He's deadly blown, to be sure, your honour; and I am afraid we are upon a wrong scent after all. Madam Harriet certainly took across the country, instead of coming on to London.

Sir H. No, no, we traced her all the way up. But d'ye hear, Tom, look out among the stables and repositories here in town, for a smart road nag, and a strong horse to carry a portmanteau.

Tom. Sir Roger Turf's horses are to be sold; I'll see if there's ever a tight thing there. But I suppose, Sir, you would have one somewhat stronger than Snip; I don't think he's quite enough of a horse for your honour.

Sir H. Not enough of a horse! Snip's a powerful gelding; master of two stone more than my weight. If Snip stands sound, I would not take a hundred guineas for him. Poor Snip! go into the stable, Tom, see they give him a warm mash, and look at his heels and his eyes. But where's Mr. Russet all this while?

Tom. I left the 'squire at breakfast on a cold pigeon pie, and inquiring after Madam Harriet, in the kitchen. I'll let him know your honour would be glad to see him here.

Sir H. Ay, do; but harkye, Tom, be sure you take care of Snip.

Tom. I'll warrant your honour.

Sir H. I'll be down in the stables myself by and by. [*Exit TOM.*] Let me see—out of the famous *Tantwivy* by *White Stockings*; *White Stockings*, his dam, full sister to the *Proserpine Filly*; and his sire—pox on't, how unlucky it is that this damned accident should happen in the Newmarket week!—ten to one I lose my match with Lord Chokejade, by not riding myself, and I shall have no opportunity to hedge my bets neither—what a damned piece of work have I made on't. I have knocked up poor Snip, shall loose my match, and as to Harriet, why the odds are that I lose my match there too—a skittish young tit! If I once get her tight in hand, I'll make her wince for it. Her estate, joined to my own, I would have the finest stud and the noblest kennel in the whole country. But here comes her father, puffing and blowing, like a broken-winded horse up hill.

Enter RUSSET.

Rus. Well, Sir Harry, have you heard any thing of her?

Sir H. Yes, I have been asking Tom about her, and he says you may have her for five hundred guineas.

Rus. Five hundred guineas! how d'ye mean? where is she? which way did she take?

Sir H. Why, first she went to Epsom, then to

Lincoln, then to Nottingham, and now she is at York.

Rus. Impossible! she could not go over half the ground in the time. What the devil are you talking of?

Sir H. Of the mare you was just now saying you wanted to buy.

Rus. The devil take the mare!—who would think of her, when I am mad about an affair of so much more consequence?

Sir H. You seemed mad about her a little while ago. She's a fine mare, and a thing of shape and blood.

Rus. Damn her blood!—Harriet, my dear, provoking Harriet! Where can she be? Have you got any intelligence of her.

Sir H. No, faith, not I: we seem to be quite thrown out here; but, however, I have ordered Tom to try if he can hear any thing of her among the hostlers.

Rus. Why don't you inquire after her yourself? why don't you run up and down the whole town after her!—t'other young rascal knows where she is, I warrant you. What a plague it is to have a daughter! When one loves her to distraction, and has toiled and laboured to make her happy, the ungrateful slut will sooner go to hell her own way—but she shall have him. I will make her happy, if I break her heart for it. A provoking gipsy—to run away, and torment her poor father, that dotes on her! I'll never see her face again.

S. Harry, how can we get any intelligence of her? Why don't you speak? why don't you tell me?—Zounds! you seem as indifferent as if you did not care a farthing about her.

Sir H. Indifferent! you may well call me indifferent!—this damned chase after her will cost me a thousand—if it had not been for her, I would not have been off the course this week to have saved the lives of my whole family. I'll hold you six to two that—

Rus. Zounds! hold your tongue, or talk more to the purpose!—I swear she is too good for you; you don't deserve such a wife; a fine, dear, sweet, lovely, charming girl! She'll break my heart. How shall I find her out? Do, pr'ythee, Sir Harry, my dear, honest friend, consider how we may discover where she is fled to.

Sir H. Suppose you put an advertisement into the newspapers, describing her marks, her age, her height, and where she strayed from. I recovered a bay mare once by that method.

Rus. Advertise her! What, describe my daughter, and expose her, in the public papers, with a reward for bringing her home, like horses stolen or strayed!—recovered a bay mare!—the devil's in the fellow!—he thinks of nothing but racers, and bay mares, and stallions.—Sdeath, I wish you—

Sir H. I wish Harriet was fairly pounded; it would save us both a deal of trouble.

Rus. Which way shall I turn myself? I am half distracted. If I go to that young dog's house, he has certainly conveyed her somewhere out of my reach. If she does not send to me to-day, I'll give her up for ever. Perhaps, though, she may have met with some accident, and has nobody to assist her. No, she is certainly with that young rascal. I wish she was dead, and I was dead. I'll blow young Oakly's brains out.

Re-enter Tom.

Sir H. Well, Tom, how is poor Snip?

Tom. A little better, Sir, after his warm mash: but Lady, the pointing bitch that followed you all the way, is deadly foot-sore.

Rus. Damn Snip and Lady! have you heard any thing of Harriet?

Tom. Why, I came on purpose to let my master and your honour know, that John Hostler says as how, just such a lady as I told him Madam Harriet was, came here in a four-wheel chaise, and was fetched away soon after by a fine lady in a chariot.

Rus. Did she come alone?

Tom. Quite alone, only a servant maid, please your honour.

Rus. And what part of the town did they go to?

Tom. John Hostler says as how they bid the coachman drive to Grosvenor-square.

Sir H. Soho! puss—Yoicks!

Rus. She is certainly gone to that young rogue; he has got his aunt to fetch her from hence, or else she is with her own aunt, Lady Freelove: they both live in that part of the town. I'll go to his house, and in the meanwhile, Sir Harry, you shall step to Lady Freelove's. We'll find her, I warrant you. I'll teach my young mistress to be gadding. She shall marry you to-night. Come along, Sir Harry, come along; we won't lose a minute. Come along.

Sir H. Soho! hark forward! wind 'em and cross 'em! hark forward! Yoicks! Yoicks! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—OAKLY'S House.

Enter MRS. OAKLY.

Mrs. O. After all, that letter was certainly intended for my husband. I see plain enough they are all in a plot against me. My husband intriguing, the major working him up to affront me, Charles owning his letters, and so playing into each other's hands. They think me a fool, I find, but I'll be too much for them yet. I have desired to speak with Mr. Oakly, and expect him here immediately. His temper is naturally open; and if he thinks my anger abated, and my suspicions laid asleep, he will certainly betray himself by his behaviour. I'll assume an air of good humour, pretend to believe the fine story they have trumped up, throw him off his guard, and so draw the secret out of him. Here he comes. How hard it is to dissemble one's anger! Oh, I could rate him soundly! but I'll keep down my indignation at present, though it chokes me.

Enter OAKLY.

O, my dear, I am very glad to see you. Pray sit down. [*They sit.*] I longed to see you. It seemed an age till I had an opportunity of talking over the silly affair that happened this morning.

[*Mildly.*]

Oak. Why, really, my dear—

Mrs. O. Nay, don't look so grave now. Come, it's all over. Charles and you have cleared up matters. I am satisfied.

Oak. Indeed! I rejoice to hear it! You make me happy beyond my expectation. This disposition will insure our felicity. Do but lay aside your cruel, unjust suspicion, and we should never have the least difference.

Mrs. O. Indeed I begin to think so. I'll endeavour to get the better of it. And really sometimes it is very ridiculous. My uneasiness this morning for instance, ha, ha, ha! To be so much alarmed about that idle letter, which turned out

quite another thing at last; was not I very angry with you? ha, ha, ha! [*Affecting a laugh.*]

Oak. Don't mention it. Let us both forget it. Your present cheerfulness makes amends for every thing.

Mrs. O. I am apt to be too violent; I love you too well to be quite easy about you. [*Fondly.*] Well, no matter: what is become of Charles?

Oak. Poor fellow! he is on the wing, rambling all over the town, in pursuit of this young lady.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone, pray?

Oak. First of all, I believe, to some of her relations.

Mrs. O. Relations! Who are they? Where do they live?

Oak. There is an aunt of hers lives just in the neighbourhood; Lady Freelove.

Mrs. O. Lady Freelove! Oho! gone to Lady Freelove's, is he? and do you think he will hear any thing of her?

Oak. I don't know; but I hope so, with all my soul.

Mrs. O. Hope! with all your soul; do you hope so? [*Alarmed.*]

Oak. Hope so! ye—yes, why, don't you hope so? [*Surprised.*]

Mrs. O. Why, yes. [*Recovering.*] O, ay, to be sure. I hope it of all things. You know, my dear, it must give me great satisfaction, as well as yourself to see Charles well settled.

Oak. I should think so; and really I don't know where he can be settled so well. She is a most deserving young woman, I assure you.

Mrs. O. You are well acquainted with her then?

Oak. To be sure, my dear; after seeing her so often last summer, at the major's house in the country, and at her father's.

Mrs. O. So often!

Oak. O, ay, very often; Charles took care of that, almost every day.

Mrs. O. Indeed! But pray—a—a—a—I say—a—a— [*Confused.*]

Oak. What do you say, my dear?

Mrs. O. I say—a—a [*Stammering.*] Is she handsome?

Oak. Prodigiously handsome, indeed.

Mrs. O. Prodigiously handsome! and is she reckoned a sensible girl?

Oak. A very sensible, modest, agreeable young lady, as ever I knew. You would be extremely fond of her, I am sure. You can't imagine how happy I was in her company. Poor Charles! she soon made a conquest of him, and no wonder, she has so many elegant accomplishments! such an infinite fund of cheerfulness and good humour. Why, she's the darling of the whole country.

Mrs. O. Lord! you seem quite in raptures about her!

Oak. Raptures! not at all. I was only telling you the young lady's character. I thought you would be glad to find that Charles had made so sensible a choice, and was so likely to be happy.

Mrs. O. Oh, Charles! True, as you say, Charles will be mighty happy.

Oak. Don't you think so?

Mrs. O. I am convinced of it. Poor Charles, I am much concerned for him. He must be very uneasy about her. I was thinking whether we could be of any service to him in this affair.

Oak. Was you, my love? that is very good of you. Why, to be sure, we must endeavour to as-

sist him. Let me see; how can we manage it? 'Gad! I have hit it. The luckiest thought! and it will be of great service to Charles.

Mrs. O. Well, what is it? [*Eagerly.*] You know I would do any thing to serve Charles, and oblige you. [*Mildly.*]

Oak. That is so kind. Lord, my dear, if you would but always consider things in this proper light, and continue this amiable temper, we should be the happiest people——

Mrs. O. I believe so; but what's your proposal?

Oak. I am sure you'll like it. Charles, you know, may perhaps be so lucky as to meet with this lady.

Mrs. O. True.

Oak. Now I was thinking, that he might with your leave, my dear,——

Mrs. O. Well.

Oak. Bring her home here——

Mrs. O. How!

Oak. Yes, bring her home here, my dear; it will make poor Charles's mind quite easy: and you may take her under your protection, till her father comes to town.

Mrs. O. Amazing! this is even beyond my expectation.

Oak. Why!——what!——

Mrs. O. Was there ever such assurance! [*Rises.*] Take her under my protection! What! would you keep her under my nose?

Oak. Nay, I never conceived; I thought you would have approved——

Mrs. O. What! make me your convenient woman! No place but my own house to serve your purposes?

Oak. Lord, this is the strangest misapprehension! I am quite astonished.

Mrs. O. Astonished! yes—confused, detected, betrayed, by your vain confidence of imposing on me.—Why, sure, you imagine me an idiot, a driveller.—Charles, indeed! yes, Charles is a fine excuse for you. The letter this morning, the letter, Mr. Oakly!

Oak. The letter! why, sure, that——

Mrs. O. Is sufficiently explained. You have made it very clear to me. Now I am convinced. I have no doubt of your perfidy. But I thank you for some hints you have given me, and you may be sure I shall make use of them: nor will I rest till I have full conviction, and overwhelm you with the strongest proof of your baseness towards me.

Oak. Nay, but——

Mrs. O. Go, go! I have no doubt of your falsehood: away! [*Exit.*]

Oak. Was there ever any thing like this? Such unaccountable behaviour! angry I don't know why! jealous of I know not what! Hints!—hints I have given her! What can she mean?

Enter TOILET, crossing the Stage.

Toilet, where are you going?

Toi. To order the porter to let in no company to my lady to-day. She wont see a single soul, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Oak. What an unhappy woman! Now will she sit all day feeding on her suspicions, till she has convinced herself of the truth of them.

Enter JOHN, crossing the Stage.

Well, Sir, what's your business?

John. Going to order the chariot, Sir; my lady's going out immediately. [*Exit*

Oak. Going out! what is all this? But every way she makes me miserable. Wild and ungovernable as the sea or the wind! made up of storms and tempests! I can't bear it: and one way or other I will put an end to it. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—LADY FREELOVE'S HOUSE.

Enter LADY FREELOVE, with a Card; a SERVANT following.

Lady F. [*Reading as she enters.*] And will take the liberty of waiting on her ladyship en cavalier, as he comes from the menage. Does any body wait that brought this card?

Serv. Lord Trinket's servant is in the hall, Madam.

Lady F. My compliments, and I shall be glad to see his lordship. Where is Miss Russet?

Serv. In her own chamber, Madam.

Lady F. What is she doing?

Serv. Writing, I believe, Madam.

Lady F. Oh, ridiculous! scribbling to that Oakly, I suppose. [*Apart.*] Let her know, I should be glad of her company here. [*Exit SERVANT.*] It is a mighty troublesome thing to manage a simple girl, that knows nothing of the world. Harriet, like all other girls, is foolishly fond of this young fellow of her own choosing, her first love; that is to say, the first man that is particularly civil; and the first air of consequence which a young lady gives herself. Poor silly soul!—But Oakly must not have her, positively. A match with Lord Trinket will add to the dignity of the family. I must bring her into it. But here she comes.

Enter HARRIET.

Well, Harriet, still in the pouts! nay, pr'ythee, my dear little runaway girl, be more cheerful! your everlasting melancholy puts me into the vapours.

Har. Dear Madam, excuse me. How can I be cheerful in my present situation? I know my father's temper so well, that I am sure this step of mine must almost distract him. I sometimes wish that I had remained in the country, let what would have been the consequence.

Lady F. Why, it is a naughty child, that's certain; but it need not be so uneasy about papa, as you know that I wrote by last night's post to acquaint him that his little lost sheep was safe, and that you were ready to obey his commands in every particular, except marrying that oaf, Sir Harry Beagle.—Lord! Lord! what a difference there is between a country and a town education! Why, a London lass would have jumped out of a window into a gallant's arms, and without thinking of her father, unless it were to have drawn a few bills on him, been a hundred miles off in nine or ten hours, or perhaps out of the kingdom in twenty-four.

Har. I fear I have already been too precipitate. I tremble for the consequences.

Lady F. I swear, child, you are a downright prude. Your way of talking gives me the spleen; so full of affection, and duty, and virtue, 'tis just like a funeral sermon. And yet, pretty soul! it can love.—Well, I wonder at your taste; a sneaking, simple gentleman, without a title! and when to my knowledge you might have a man of quality to-morrow.

Har. Perhaps so. Your ladyship must excuse me, but many a man of quality would make me miserable.

Lady F. Indeed, my dear, these antediluvian notions will never do now-a-days; and at the same time too, those little wicked eyes of yours speak a very different language. Indeed you have fine eyes, child! and they have made fine work with Lord Trinket.

Har. Lord Trinket! [*Contemptuously.*]

Lady F. Yes, Lord Trinket: you know it as well as I do; and yet, you ill-natured thing, you will not vouchsafe him a single smile. But you must give the poor soul a little encouragement, pr'ythee do.

Har. Indeed I can't, Madam, for of all mankind Lord Trinket is my aversion.

Lady F. Why so, child? He is counted a well-bred, sensible, young fellow, and the women all think him handsome.

Har. Yes, he is just polite enough to be able to be very unmannerly, with a great deal of good breeding; is just handsome enough to make him most excessively vain of his person; and has just reflection enough to finish him for a coxcomb; qualifications which are all very common among those whom your ladyship calls men of quality.

Lady F. A satirist too! Indeed my dear, this affectation sits very awkwardly upon you. There will be a superiority in the behaviour of persons of fashion.

Har. A superiority indeed! for his lordship always behaves with so much insolent familiarity, that I should almost imagine he was soliciting me for other favours, rather than to pass my whole life with him.

Lady F. Innocent freedoms, child, which every fine woman expects to be taken with her as an acknowledgment of her beauty.

Har. They are freedoms which I think no innocent woman can allow.

Lady F. Romantic to the last degree!—Why, you are in the country still, Harriet!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. My Lord Trinket, Madam. [*Exit.*]

Lady F. I swear now I have a good mind to tell him all you have said.

Enter LORD TRINKET, in boots, &c. as from the riding house.

Your lordship's most obedient humble servant.

Lord T. Your ladyship does me too much honour. Here I am, *en bottine*, as you see—just come from the menage.

Lady F. Your lordship is always agreeable in every dress.

Lord T. Vastly obliging, Lady Freelove. Miss Russet, I am your slave. I declare it makes me quite happy to find you together. 'Pon honour, Ma'am, [*To HARRIET.*] I begin to conceive great hopes of you; and as for you, Lady Freelove, I cannot sufficiently commend your assiduity with your fair pupil. She was before possessed of every grace that nature could bestow on her, and nobody is so well qualified as your ladyship to give her the *bon ton*.

Har. Compliment and contempt all in a breath!—My lord, I am obliged to you. But, waving my acknowledgments, give me leave to ask your lordship whether nature and the *bon ton* (as you call it) are so different, that we must give up one in order to obtain the other?

Lord T. Totally opposite, Madam. The chief aim of the *bon ton* is to render persons of family

different from the vulgar, for whom indeed nature serves very well. For this reason it has, at various times, been ungenteel to see, to hear, to walk, to be in good health, and to have twenty other horrible perfections of nature. Nature indeed may do very well sometimes. It made you, for instance, and it then made something very lovely; and if you would suffer us of quality to give you the *ton*, you would be absolutely divine: but now—me—Madam—me—nature never made such a thing as me.

Har. Why, indeed, I think your lordship has very few obligations to her.

Lord T. Then you really think it's all my own? I declare now that is a mighty genteel compliment: nay, if you begin to flatter already, you improve apace. 'Pon honour, Lady Free love, I believe we shall make something of her at last.

Lady F. No doubt on't. It is in your lordship's power to make her a complete woman of fashion at once.

Lord T. Hum! Why, ay—

Har. Your lordship must excuse me. I am of a very tasteless disposition. I shall never bear to be carried out of nature.

Lady F. You are out of nature now, Harriet! I am sure no woman but yourself ever objected to being carried among persons of quality. Would you believe it, my lord! here has she been a whole week in town, and would never suffer me to introduce her to a rout, an assembly, a concert, or even to court, or the opera; nay, would hardly so much as mix with a living soul that has visited me.

Lord T. No wonder, Madam, you do not adopt the manners of persons of fashion, when you will not even honour them with your company. Were you to make one in our little coteries, we should soon make you sick of the boors and bumpkins of the horrid country. By the by, I met a monster at the riding-house this morning who gave me some intelligence, that will surprise you, concerning your family.

Har. What intelligence?

Lady F. Who was this monster, as your lordship calls him? a curiosity, I dare say.

Lord T. This monster, Madam, was formerly my head groom, and had the care of all my running horses; but growing most abominably surly and extravagant, as you know all these fellows do, I turned him off; and ever since my brother, Slouch Trinket, has had the care of my stud, rides all my principal matches himself, and—

Har. Dear, my lord, don't talk of your groom and your brother, but tell me the news. Do you know any thing of my father?

Lord T. Your father, Madam, is now in town. This fellow, you must know, is now groom to Sir Harry Beagle, your sweet rural swain, and informed me that his master and your father were running all over the town in quest of you; and that he himself has orders to inquire after you: for which reason, I suppose, he came to the riding-house stables to look after a horse, thinking it, to be sure, a very likely place to meet you. Your father, perhaps, is gone to seek you at the Tower, or Westminster Abbey, which is all the idea he has of London; and your faithful lover is probably cheapening a hunter, and drinking strong beer, at he Horse and Jockey in Smithfield.

Lady F. The whole set admirably disposed of.

Har. Did not your lordship inform him where I was?

Lord T. Not I, 'pon honour, Madam; that I left to their own ingenuity to discover.

Lady F. And pray, my lord, where in this town have this polite company bestowed themselves?

Lord T. They lodge, Madam, of all places in the world, at the Bull and Gate Inn, in Holborn.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! The Bull and Gate! Incomparable! What, have they brought any hay or cattle to town?

Lord T. Very well, Lady Free love, very well indeed! There they are like so many graziers; and there, it seems, they have learned that this lady is certainly in London.

Har. Do, dear Madam, send a card directly to my father, informing him where I am, and that your ladyship would be glad to see him here. For my part I dare not venture into his presence, till you have in some measure pacified him; but for Heaven's sake, desire him not to bring that wretched fellow along with him.

Lord T. Wretched fellow! Oho! Courage, Milor Trinket! [Aside.]

Lady F. I'll send immediately. Who's there?

Re-enter SERVANT.

Serv. [Apart to LADY FREELOVE.] Sir Harry Beagle is below, Madam.

Lady F. [Apart to SERVANT.] I am not at home.—Have they let him in?

Serv. Yes, Madam.

Lady F. How abominably unlucky this is! Well, then, show him into my dressing-room. I will come to him there. [Exit SERVANT.]

Lord T. Lady Free love! no engagement I hope? We went part with you, 'pon honour.

Lady F. The worst engagement in the world. A pair of musty old prudes! Lady Formal and Miss Prate.

Lord T. O the beldams! as nauseous as ipecacuanha, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Lud, lud! what shall I do with them? Why do these foolish women come troubling me now? I must wait on them in the dressing-room, and you must excuse the card, Harriet, till they are gone. I'll dispatch them as soon as I can, but Heaven knows when I shall get rid of them, for they are both everlasting gossips! though the words come from her ladyship one by one, like drops from a still, while the other tiresome woman overwhelms us with a flood of impertinence. Harriet, you'll entertain his lordship till I return. [Exit.]

Lord T. Gone!—'Pon honour, I am not sorry for the coming in of these old tabbies, and am much obliged to her ladyship for leaving us such an agreeable *tete-a-tete*.

Har. Your lordship will find me extremely bad company.

Lord T. Not in the least, my dear! We'll entertain ourselves one way or other, I'll warrant you.—Egad, I think it a mighty good opportunity to establish a better acquaintance with you.

Har. I don't understand you.

Lord T. No?—Why then I'll speak plain-er.—[Pausing, and looking her full in the face.] You are an amazing fine creature, 'pon honour.

Har. If this be your lordship's polite conversation, I shall leave you to amuse yourself in soliloquy. [Going.]

Lord T. No, no, no, Madam, that must not be, [Stopping her.] This place, my passion, the opportunity, all conspire—

Har. How, Sir! you don't intend to do me any violence?

Lord T. 'Pon honour, Ma'am, it will be doing great violence to myself, if I do not. You must excuse me. [*Struggling with her.*]

Har. Help! help! murder! help!

Lord T. Your yelping will signify nothing—nobody will come. [*Struggling.*]

Har. For Heaven's sake!—Sir!—My lord!—

[*Noise within.*]

Lord T. Plague on't, what noise!—Then I must be quick. [*Still struggling.*]

Har. Help! murder! help! help!

Enter CHARLES, hastily.

Char. What do I hear? my Harriet's voice calling for help!—Ha!—[*Seeing them.*] Is it possible?—'Turn, ruffian! I'll find you employment. [*Drawing.*]

Lord T. You are a most impertinent scoundrel, and I'll whip you through the lungs, 'pon honour.

[*They fight; HARRIET runs out, screaming help, &c.*]

Re-enter LADY FREELOVE, with SIR HARRY BEAGLE, and Servants.

Lady F. How's this?—Swords drawn in my house!—Part them!—[*They are parted.*] This is the most impudent thing—

Lord T. Well, rascal, I shall find a time; I know you, Sir!

Char. The sooner the better; I know your lordship too.

Sir H. I faith, Madam, [*To LADY FREELOVE.*] we had like to have been in at the death.

Lady F. What is all this? pray, Sir, what is the meaning of your coming hither, to raise this disturbance? do you take my house for a brothel?

[*To CHARLES.*]

Char. Not I, indeed, Madam; but I believe his lordship does.

Lord T. Impudent scoundrel!

Lady F. Your conversation, Sir, is as insolent as your behaviour. Who are you? What brought you here?

Char. I am one, Madam, always ready to draw my sword in defence of innocence in distress, and more especially in the cause of that lady I delivered from his lordship's fury; in search of whom I troubled your ladyship's house.

Lady F. Her lover, I suppose; or what?

Char. At your ladyship's service; though not quite so violent in my passion as his lordship there.

Lord T. Impertinent rascal!

Lady F. You shall be made to repent of this insolence.

Lord T. Your ladyship may leave that to me.

Char. Ha, ha!

Sir H. But pray what is become of the lady all this while? why, Lady Free love, you told me she was not here; and i' faith, I was just drawing off another way, if I had not heard the view halloo.

Lady F. You shall see her immediately, Sir; who's there?

Enter SERVANT.

Where is Miss Russet?

Serv. Gone out, Madam.

Lady F. Gone out?—Where?

Serv. I don't know, Madam; but she run down

the back stairs, crying for help, crossed the servants' hall in tears, and took a chair at the door.

Lady F. Blockheads! to let her go out in a chair alone!—Go and inquire after her immediately. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

Sir H. Gone!—When I had just run her down; and is the little puss stole away at last?

Lady F. Sir, if you will walk in, [*To SIR H.*] with his lordship and me, perhaps you may hear some tidings of her; though it is most probable she may be gone to her father. I don't know any other friend she has in town.

Char. I am heartily glad she is gone. She is safer any where than in this house.

Lady F. Mighty well, Sir!—My lord, Sir Harry,—I attend you.

Lord T. You shall hear from me, Sir!

[*To CHARLES.*]

Char. Very well, my lord.

Sir H. Stole away!—plague on't—stole away! [*Exeunt SIR HARRY and LORD TRINKET.*]

Lady F. Before I follow the company, give me leave to tell you, Sir, that your behaviour here has been so extraordinary—

Char. My treatment here, Madam, has indeed been very extraordinary.

Lady F. Indeed!—Well, no matter—permit me to acquaint you, Sir, that there lies your way out, and that the greatest favour you can do me, is to leave the house immediately.

Char. That your ladyship may depend on. Since you have put Miss Russet to flight, you may be sure of not being troubled with my company. I'll after her immediately.

Lady F. If she has any regard for her reputation, she'll never put herself into such hands as yours.

Char. O Madam, there can be no doubt of her regard for that, by her leaving your ladyship.

Lady F. Leave my house.

Char. Directly—A charming house! and a charming lady of the house too!—ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Vulgar fellow!

Char. Fine lady!

[*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—LADY FREELOVE'S House.

Enter LADY FREELOVE and LORD TRINKET.

Lord T. *Doucement, doucement*, my dear Lady Free love!—Excuse me, I mean no harm, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Indeed, indeed, my Lord Trinket, this is absolutely intolerable!—What, to offer rudeness to a young lady in my house! What will the world say of it?

Lord T. Just what the world pleases.—It does not signify a doit what they say.—However, I ask pardon; but 'egad, I thought it was the best way.

Lady F. For shame, for shame, my lord! I am quite hurt at your want of discretion; and as this is rather an ugly affair in regard to me, as well as your lordship, and may make some noise, I think it absolutely necessary, merely to save appearances, that you should wait on her father, palliate matters as well as you can, and make a formal repetition of your proposal of marriage.

Lord T. Your ladyship is perfectly in the right.—You are quite *au fait* of the affair. It shall be done immediately, and then your reputation will be safe, and my conduct justified to all the

world. But should the old rustic continue as stubborn as his daughter, your ladyship, I hope, has no objections to my being a little *rusee*, for I must have her, 'pon honour.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Captain O'Cutter, to wait on your ladyship.

Lady F. O the hideous fellow! The Irish sailor-man, for whom I prevailed on your lordship to get the post of regulating captain. I suppose he is come to load me with his odious thanks. I won't be troubled with him now.

Lord T. Let him in, by all means. He is the best creature to laugh at in nature. He is a perfect sea-monster, and always looks and talks as if he was upon deck. Besides a thought strikes me—He may be of use.

Lady F. Well—send the creature up then. [*Exit SERVANT.*] But what fine thought is this?

Lord T. A *coup de maitre*, 'pon honour! I intend—but, hush! here the porpus comes.

Enter CAPTAIN O'CUTTER.

Lady F. Captain, your humble servant! I am very glad to see you.

O'Cut. I am much obliged to you, my lady! Upon my conscience, the wind favours me at all points. I had no sooner got under weigh, to tank your ladyship, but I have borne down upon my noble friend his lordship too. I hope your lordship's well?

Lord T. Very well, I thank you, captain:—but you seem to be hurt in the service: what is the meaning of that patch over your right eye?

O'Cut. Some advanced wages from my new post, my lord! This pressing is hot work, though it entitles us to smart money.

Lady F. And pray, in what perilous adventure did you get that scar, captain?

O'Cut. Quite out of my element, indeed, my lady, I got it in an engagement by land. A day or two ago, I spied three stout fellows, belonging to a merchantman. They made down Wapping. I immediately gave my lads the signal to chase, and we bore down right upon them. They tackled, and lay to.—We gave them a thundering broadside, which they resaved like men; and one of them made use of small arms, which carried off the weathermost corner of Ned Gage's hat; so I immediately stood in with him, and raked him, but resaved a wound on my starboard eye, from the stock of the pistol. However we took them all, and they now lie under the hatches, with fifty more, aboard a tender off the Tower.

Lord T. Well done, noble captain!—But however you will soon have better employment, for I think the next step to your present post, is commonly a ship.

O'Cut. The sooner the better, my lord! Honest Terence O'Cutter shall never flinch, I warrant you; and has had as much sea-sarvice as any man in the navy.

Lord T. You may depend on my good offices, captain! But, in the meantime, it is in your power to do me a favour.

O'Cut. A favour, my lord?—your lordship does me honour. I would go round the world, from one end to the other, by day or by night, to sarve your lordship, or my good lady here.

Lord T. Dear Madam, the luckiest thought in nature! [*Apart to LADY F.*] The favour I have

to ask of you, captain, need not carry you so far out of your way. The whole affair is, that there is a couple of impudent fellows at an inn in Holborn, who have affronted me, and you would oblige me infinitely, by pressing them into his majesty's service.

Lady F. Now I understand—Admirable!

[*Apart.*]

O'Cut. With all my heart, my lord, and tank you too, 'fait. But, by the by, I hope they are not house-keepers, or freemen of the city. There's the devil to pay in meddling with them. They boder one so about liberty, and property, and stuff.—It was but t'other day that Jack Trowser was carried before my lord mayor, and lost above a twelvemonth's pay for nothing at all, at all.

Lord T. I'll take care you shall be brought into no trouble. These fellows were formerly my grooms. If you'll call on me in the morning, I'll go with you to the place.

O'Cut. I'll be with your lordship, and bring with me four or five as pretty boys as you'll wish to clap your two looking eyes upon of a summer's day.

Lord T. I am much obliged to you—But, captain, I have another little favour to beg of you.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul, I'll do it.

Lord T. What, before you know it?

O'Cut. Fore and aft, my lord!

Lord T. A gentleman has offended me in a point of honour—

O'Cut. Cut his throat!

Lord T. Will you carry him a letter from me?

O'Cut. Indeed and I will:—and I'll take you in tow too; and you shall engage him yard-arm and yard-arm.

Lord T. Why then, captain, you'll come a little earlier to-morrow morning than you proposed, that you may attend him with my billet, before you proceed on the other affair.

O'Cut. Never fear it, my lord—Your sarvant!—My ladyship, your humble sarvant!

Lady F. Captain, yours—Pray give my service to my friend Mrs. O'Cutter. How does she do?

O'Cut. I tank your ladyship's axing—The dear creature is purely tight and well.

Lord T. How many children have you, captain?

O'Cut. Four, an please your lordship, and another upon the stocks.

Lord T. When it is launched, I hope to be at the christening.—I'll stand godfather, captain.

O'Cut. Your lordship's very good.

Lord T. Well, you'll come to-morrow.

O'Cut. Ay, my lord, and every day next week.

—Little Terence O'Cutter never fails, 'fait, as a troat is to be cut. [*Exit.*]

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! but, sure, you don't intend to ship off both her father and her country lover for the Indies?

Lord T. O no! Only let them contemplate the inside of a ship, for a day or two.

Lady F. Well, my lord, what use do you propose to make of this stratagem?

Lord T. Every use in nature. This artifice must, at least, take them out of the way for some time; and in the mean while measures may be concerted to carry off the girl.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mrs. Oakly, Madam, is at the door, in her chariot, and desires to have the honour of speaking to your ladyship on particular business.

Lord T. Mrs. Oakly! what can that jealous-pated woman want with you?

Lady F. No matter what,—I hate her mortally.—Let her in. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

Lord T. What wind blows her hither?

Lady F. A wind that must blow us some good.

Lord T. How?—I was amazed you chose to see her.

Lady F. How can you be so slow of apprehension?—She comes, you may be sure, on some occasion relating to this girl: in order to assist young Oakly, perhaps, to sooth me, and gain intelligence, and so forward the match; but I'll forbid the banns, I warrant you.—Whatsoever she wants, I'll draw some sweet mischief out of it.—But, away, away!—I think I hear her—slip down the back stairs—or—stay, now I think on't, go out this way—meet her—and be sure to make her a very respectful bow, as you go out.

Lord T. Hush! here she is!

Enter MRS. OAKLY.

[*LORD TRINKET bows, and exit.*]

Mrs. O. I beg pardon, for giving your ladyship this trouble.

Lady F. I am always glad of the honour of seeing Mrs. Oakly.

Mrs. O. There is a letter, Madam, just come from the country, which has occasioned some alarm in our family. It comes from Mr. Russet—

Lady F. Mr. Russet!

Mrs. O. Yes, from Mr. Russet, Madam; and is chiefly concerning his daughter. As she has the honour of being related to your ladyship, I took the liberty of waiting on you.

Lady F. She is, indeed, as you say, Madam, a relation of mine; but, after what has happened, I scarce know how to acknowledge her.

Mrs. O. Has she been so much to blame then?

Lady F. So much—Madam!—Only judge for yourself.—Though she had been so indiscreet, not to say indecent in her conduct, as to elope from her father, I was in hopes to have hushed up the matter, for the honour of our family.—But she has run away from me too, Madam:—went off, in the most abrupt manner, not an hour ago.

Mrs. O. You surprise me. Indeed, her father, by his letter, seems apprehensive of the worst consequences.—But does your ladyship imagine any harm has happened?

Lady F. I can't tell—I hope not.—But indeed she's a strange girl. You know, Madam, young women can't be too cautious in their conduct. She is, I am sorry to declare it, a very dangerous person to take into a family.

Mrs. O. Indeed!

[*Alarmed.*]

Lady F. If I was to say all I know—

Mrs. O. Why sure your ladyship knows of nothing that has been carried on clandestinely between her and Mr. Oakly! [*In disorder.*]

Lady F. Mr. Oakly!

Mrs. O. Mr. Oakly—no, not Mr. Oakly—that is, not my husband—I don't mean him—not him—but his nephew—young Mr. Oakly.

Lady F. Jealous of her husband! So, so; now I know my game. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. O. But pray, Madam, give me leave to ask, was there any thing very particular in her conduct while she was in your ladyship's house?

Lady F. Why really, considering she was here

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scarce a week, her behaviour was rather mysterious;—letters and messages, to and fro, between her and I don't know who.—I suppose you know that Mr. Oakly's nephew has been here, Madam?

Mrs. O. I was not sure of it. Has he been to wait on your ladyship already on this occasion?

Lady F. To wait on me!—The expression is much too polite for the nature of his visit.—My Lord Trinket, the nobleman whom you met as you came in, had, you must know, Madam, some thoughts of my niece, and, as it would have been an advantageous match, I was glad of it: but I believe, after what he has been witness to this morning, he will drop all thoughts of it.

Mrs. O. I am sorry that any relation of mine should so far forget himself—

Lady F. It's no matter—his behaviour, indeed, as well as the young lady's, was pretty extraordinary—and yet, after all, I don't believe he is the object of her affections.

Mrs. O. Ha!

[*Much alarmed.*]

Lady F. She has certainly an attachment some where, a strong one; but his lordship, who was present all the time, was convinced, as well as myself, that Mr. Oakly's nephew was rather a convenient friend, a kind of go-between, than the lover.—Bless me, Madam, you change colour! you seem uneasy! What's the matter?

Mrs. O. Nothing—Madam—nothing—a little shocked, that my husband should behave so.

Lady F. Your husband, Madam!

Mrs. O. His nephew, I mean.—His unparadonable rudeness.—But I am not well—I am sorry I have given your ladyship so much trouble.—I'll take my leave.

Lady F. I declare, Madam, you frighten me. Your being so visibly affected makes me quite uneasy. I hope I have not said any thing—I really don't believe your husband is in fault. Men, to be sure, allow themselves strange liberties.—But I think, nay, I am sure, it cannot be so—It is impossible! don't let what I have said have any effect on you.

Mrs. O. No, it has not—I have no idea of such a thing.—Your ladyship's most obedient—[*Going, returns*—] but sure, Madam, you have not heard—or don't know any thing—

Lady F. Come, come, Mrs. Oakly, I see how it is, and it would not be kind to say all I know. I dare not tell you what I have heard. Only be on your guard—there can be no harm in that. Do you be against giving the girl any countenance, and see what effect it has.

Mrs. O. I will—I am much obliged—But does it appear to your ladyship then that Mr. Oakly—

Lady F. No, not at all—nothing in't, I dare say—I would not create uneasiness in a family—but I am a woman myself, have been married, and can't help feeling for you.—But don't be uneasy; there's nothing in't, I dare say.

Mrs. O. I think so.—Your ladyship's humble servant.

Lady F. Your servant, Madam.—Pray don't be alarmed; I must insist on your not making yourself uneasy.

Mrs. O. Not at all alarmed—not in the least uneasy—Your most obedient. [*Exit.*]

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! there she goes, brimful of anger and jealousy, to vent it all on her husband.—Mercy on the poor man!

Re-enter LORD TRINKET.

Bless me, my lord, I thought you was gone!

Lord T. Only into the next room. My curiosity would not let me stir a step further. I heard it all, and was never more diverted in my life, 'pon honour. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. How the silly creature took it.—Ha, ha, ha!

Lord T. Ha, ha, ha!—My dear Lady Free-love, you have a deal of ingenuity, a deal of esprit, 'pon honour.

Lady F. A little shell thrown into the enemy's works, that's all.

Both. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. But I must leave you—I have twenty visits to pay. You'll let me know how you succeed in your secret expedition.

Lord T. That you may depend on.

Lady F. Remember then, that to-morrow morning I expect to see you. At present, your lordship will excuse me. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—MR. OAKLY'S House.

Enter HARRIET, following WILLIAM.

Har. Not at home! are you sure that Mrs. Oakly is not at home, Sir?

Wil. She is just gone out, Madam.

Har. I have something of consequence.—If you will give me leave, Sir, I will wait till she returns.

Wil. You would not see her, if you did, Madam. She has given positive orders not to be interrupted with any company to-day.

Har. Sure, Sir, if you was to let her know that I had particular business—

Wil. I should not dare to trouble her, indeed, Madam.

Har. How unfortunate this is! what can I do?—Pray, Sir, can I see Mr. Oakly then?

Wil. Yes, Madam: I'll acquaint my master, if you please.

Har. Pray do, Sir.

Wil. Will you favour me with your name, Madam?

Har. Be pleased, Sir, to let him know that a lady desires to speak with him.

Wil. I shall, Madam. *[Exit.]*

Har. I wish I could have seen Mrs. Oakly. What an unhappy situation I am reduced to by my father's obstinate perseverance to force me into a marriage which my soul abhors.

Enter OAKLY.

Oak. *[At entering.]* Where is this lady? *[Seeing her.]*—Bless me, Miss Russet, is it you?

—Was ever any thing so unlucky? *[Aside.]* Is this possible, Madam, that I see you here?

Har. It is too true, Sir; and the occasion on which I am now to trouble you, is so much in need of an apology, that—

Oak. Pray make none, Madam.—If my wife should return before I get her out of the house again!

Har. I dare say, Sir, you are not quite a stranger to the attachment your nephew has professed to me. *[Aside.]*

Oak. I am not, Madam—I hope Charles has not been guilty of any baseness towards you. If he has, I'll never see his face again.

Har. I have no cause to accuse him.—But—

Oak. But what, Madam? pray be quick!—The very person in the world I would not have seen! *[Aside.]*

Har. You seem uneasy, Sir!

Oak. No, nothing at all.—Pray go on, Madam.

Har. I am at present, Sir, through a concurrence of strange accidents, in a very unfortunate situation, and do not know what will become of me without your assistance.

Oak. I'll do every thing in my power to serve you. I know of your leaving your father, by a letter we have had from him. Pray let me know the rest of your story.

Har. My story, Sir, is very short. When I left my father's I came immediately to London, and took refuge with a relation; where, instead of meeting with the protection I expected, I was alarmed with the most infamous designs upon my honour. It is not an hour ago since your nephew rescued me from the attempts of a villain. I tremble to think that I left him actually engaged in a duel.

Oak. He is very safe. He has just sent home the chariot from the St. Alban's tavern, where he dines to-day.—But what are your commands for me, Madam?

Har. The favour, Sir, I would now request of you is, that you would suffer me to remain, for a few days, in your house.

Oak. Madam!

Har. And that, in the mean time, you will use your utmost endeavours to reconcile me to my father, without his forcing me into a marriage with Sir Harry Beagle.

Oak. This is the most perplexing situation!—Why did not Charles take care to bestow you properly?

Har. It is most probable, Sir, that I should not have consented to such a measure myself. The world is but too apt to censure, even without a cause: and if you are so kind as to admit me into your house, I must desire not to consider Mr. Oakly in any other light than as your nephew.

Oak. What an unlucky circumstance!—Upon my soul, Madam, I would do any thing to serve you—but being in my house creates a difficulty that—

Har. I hope, Sir, you do not doubt the truth of what I have told you?

Oak. I religiously believe every tittle of it, Madam; but I have particular family considerations, that—

Har. Sure, Sir, you cannot suspect me to be base enough to form any connexions in your family, contrary to your inclinations, while I am living in your house!

Oak. Such connexions, Madam, would do me and all my family great honour. I never dreamt of any scruples on that account.—What can I do?—Let me see—let me see—suppose— *[Pausing.]*

Enter MRS. OAKLY behind, in a cupuchin, tippet, &c.

Mrs. O. I am sure I heard the voice of a woman, conversing with my husband—Ha! *[Seeing HARRIET.]* It is so indeed! Let me contain myself—I'll listen. *[Aside.]*

Har. I see, Sir, you are not inclined to serve me—good Heaven! what am I reserved to?—Why, why did I leave my father's house, to expose myself to greater distresses? *[Ready to weep.]*

Oak. I would do any thing for your sake, in

deed I would. So pray be comforted, and I'll think of some proper place to bestow you in.

Mrs. O. So! so! [Aside.]

Har. What place can be so proper as your own house?

Oak. My dear Madam, I—I—

Mrs. O. My dear Madam! Mighty well!

[Aside.]

Oak. Hush!—hark!—what noise?—no,—nothing. But I'll be plain with you, Madam; we may be interrupted. The family consideration I hinted at is nothing else than my wife. She is a little unhappy in her temper, Madam; and if you were to be admitted into the house, I don't know what would be the consequence.

Mrs. O. Very fine!

[Aside.]

Har. My behaviour, Sir!—

Oak. My dear life, it would be impossible for you to behave in such a manner as not to give her suspicion.

Har. But if your nephew, Sir, took every thing upon himself—

Oak. Still that would not do, Madam. Why, this very morning, when the letter came from your father, though I positively denied any knowledge of it, and Charles owned it, yet it was almost impossible to pacify her.

Har. What shall I do? What will become of me?

Oak. Why lookye, my dear Madam, since my wife is so strong an objection, it is absolutely impossible for me to take you into the house. Nay, if I had not known she was gone out, just before you came, I should be uneasy at your being here, even now. So we must manage as well as we can. I'll take a private lodging for you a little way off, unknown to Charles, or my wife, or any body; and if Mrs. Oakly should discover it at last, why the whole matter will light upon Charles, you know.

Mrs. O. Upon Charles!

[Aside.]

Har. How unhappy is my situation! [Weeping.] I am ruined for ever.

Oak. Ruined! not at all. Such a thing as this has happened to many a young lady before you, and all has been well again. Keep up your spirits! I'll contrive, if I possibly can, to visit you every day.

Mrs. O. [Advances.] Will you so? O, Mr. Oakly! have I discovered you at last? I'll visit you, indeed! And you, my dear Madam, I'll—

Har. Madam, I don't understand—

Mrs. O. I understand the whole affair, and have understood it for some time past. You shall have a private lodging, Miss! It is the fittest place for you, I believe. How dare you look me in the face?

Oak. For Heaven's sake, my love, don't be so violent. You are quite wrong in this affair—you don't know who you are talking to. This lady is a person of fashion.

Mrs. O. Fine fashion, indeed! to seduce other women's husbands!

Har. Dear Madam, how can you imagine—

Oak. I tell you, my dear, this is the young lady that Charles—

Mrs. O. Mighty well! but this wont do, Sir! Did not I hear you lay the whole intrigue together? Did not I hear your fine plot of throwing all the blame upon Charles?—

Oak. Nay, be cool a moment. You must know, my dear, that the letter which came this morning related to this lady—

Mrs. O. I know it.

Oak. And since that, it seems, Charles has been so fortunate as to—

Mrs. O. O, you deceitful man! That trick is too stale to pass again with me. It is plain now what you meant by your proposing to take her into the house this morning. But the gentleman could introduce herself, I see.

Oak. Fy! fy, my dear, she came on purpose to inquire for you.

Mrs. O. For me! better and better! Did not she watch her opportunity, and come to you just as I went out? But I am obliged to you for your visit, Madam. It is sufficiently paid. Pray, don't let me detain you.

Oak. For shame! for shame! Mrs. Oakly! How can you be so absurd? Is this proper behaviour to a lady of her character?

Mrs. O. I have heard her character. Go, my fine, runaway Madam! Now you have eloped from your family, and run away from your aunt. Go! You sha'n't stay here, I promise you.

Oak. Pr'ythee, be quiet. You don't know what you are doing. She shall stay.

Mrs. O. She sha'n't stay a minute.

Oak. She shall stay a minute, an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year! 'Sdeath, Madam, she shall stay for ever, if I choose.

Mrs. O. How!

Har. For Heaven's sake, Sir, let me go, I am frightened to death.

Oak. Don't be afraid, Madam! She shall stay, I insist upon it.

Rus. [Within.] I tell you, Sir, I will go up. I am sure the lady is here, and nothing shall hinder me.

Har. O, my father! my father!

[Faints.]

Oak. See! she faints! [Catches her.] Ring the bell! Who's there?

Mrs. O. What! take her into your arms too! I have no patience.

Enter RUSSET.

Rus. Where is this—ha! fainting! [Runs to her.] O, my dear Harriet! my child! my child!

Oak. Your coming so abruptly shocked her spirits. But she revives. How do you do, Madam?

Har. [To RUSSET.] O, Sir!

Rus. O, my dear girl! how could you run away from your father, that loves you with such fondness? But I was sure I should find you here—

Mrs. O. There! there! sure he should find her here! Did I not tell you so? Are not you a wicked man, to carry on such base underhand doings, with a gentleman's daughter?

Rus. Let me tell you, Sir, whatever you may think of the matter, I shall not easily put up with this behaviour. How durst you encourage my daughter to an elopement, and receive her in your house?

Mrs. O. There, mind that! The thing is as plain as the light.

Oak. I tell you, you misunderstand—

Rus. Look you, Mr. Oakly, I shall expect satisfaction from your family for so gross an affront. Zounds, Sir, I am not to be used ill by any man in England.

Har. My dear Sir, I can assure you—

Rus. Hold your tongue, girl! You'll put me in a passion.

Oak. Sir, this is all a mistake.

Rus. A mistake! Did not I find her in your house?

Oak. Upon my soul, she has not been in my house above—

Mrs. O. Did not I hear you say, you would take her a lodging, a private lodging?

Oak. Yes, but that—

Rus. Has not this affair been carried on a long time in spite of my teeth?

Oak. Sir, I never troubled myself—

Mrs. O. Never troubled yourself! Did not you insist on her staying in the house, whether I would or no?

Oak. No.

Rus. Did not you send to meet her, when she came to town?

Oak. No.

Mrs. O. Did not you deceive me about the letter this morning?

Oak. No, no, no—I tell you, no.

Mrs. O. Yes, yes, yes—I tell you, yes.

Rus. Sha'n't I believe my own eyes?

Mrs. O. Sha'n't I believe my own ears?

Oak. I tell you, you are both deceived.

Rus. Zounds, Sir, I'll have satisfaction.

Mrs. O. I'll stop these fine doings, I warrant you.

Oak. 'Sdeath, you will not let me speak—and you are both alike, I think. I wish you were married to one another with all my heart.

Mrs. O. Mighty well! mighty well!

Rus. I shall soon find a time to talk with you.

Oak. Find a time to talk! you have talked enough now for all your lives.

Mrs. O. Very fine! Come along, Sir! Leave that lady with her father. Now she is in the properest hands. [Exit.]

Oak. I wish I could leave you in his hands. [Going, returns.] One word with you, Sir! The height of your passion, and Mrs. Oakly's strange misapprehension of this whole affair, makes it impossible to explain matters to you at present. I will do it when you please, and how you please.

Rus. Yes, yes; I'll have satisfaction. So, Madam! I have found you at last. You have made a fine confusion here.

Har. I have indeed been the innocent cause of a great deal of confusion.

Rus. Innocent! What business had you to be running hither after—

Har. My dear Sir, you misunderstand the whole affair. I have not been in this house half an hour.

Rus. Zounds, girl, don't put me in a passion! You know I love you; but a lie puts me in a passion. But come along, we'll leave this house directly. [Charles sings without.] Hey-day! what now?

After a noise without, enter CHARLES, drunk.

Char. [Sings.] But my wine neither nurses nor babies can bring,

And a big-bellied bottle's a mighty good thing.

What's here? a woman? Harriet! impossible! My dearest, sweetest Harriet! I have been looking all over the town for you, and at last, when I was tired, and weary, and disappointed, why then the honest major and I sat down together to drink your health in pint bumpers. [Running to her.]

Rus. Stand off! how dare you take any liberty with my daughter before me? Zounds, Sir, I'll be the death of you.

Char. Ha! 'Squire Russet too! You jolly old cock, how do you do? But, Harriet! my dear

girl! [Taking hold of her.] My life, my soul my—

Rus. Let her go, Sir; come away, Harriet! Leave him this instant, or I'll tear you asunder.

[Pulling her.]

Har. There needs no violence to tear me from a man who could disguise himself in such a gross manner, at a time when he knew I was in the utmost distress.

[Disengages herself, and exit with RUSSET.]

Char. Only hear me, Sir!—Madam! my dear Harriet—Mr. Russet—gone! she's gone! and 'egad, in very ill humour, and in very bad company! I'll go after her—but hold! I shall only make it worse, as I did, now I recollect, once before. How the devil came they here? Who could have thought of finding her in my own house? My head turns round with conjectures. I believe I am drunk; very drunk: so 'egad, I'll e'en go and sleep myself sober, and then inquire the meaning of all this. For,

I love Sue, and Sue loves me, &c.

[Exit, singing.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—OAKLY'S House.

Enter CHARLES and MAJOR OAKLY.

Maj. O. Poor Charles! what a scene of confusion! I would give the world to have been there.

Char. And I would give the world to have been any where else. May wine be my poison, if ever I am drunk again!

Maj. O. Ay, ay, so every man says the next morning.

Char. Where, where can she be? Her father would hardly carry her back to Lady Frelove's, and he has no house in town himself, or Sir Harry—I don't know what to think. I'll go in search of her, though I don't know where to direct myself.

Enter WILLIAM.

Wil. A gentleman, Sir, that calls himself Captain O'Cutter, desires to speak with you.

Char. Don't trouble me—I'll see nobody—I'm not at home—

Wil. The gentleman says he has very particular business, and he must see you.

Char. What's his name? who did you say?

Wil. Captain O'Cutter, Sir.

Char. Captain O'Cutter! I never heard of him before. Do you know any thing of him, Major?

Maj. O. Not I—But you hear he has particular business. I'll leave the room.

Char. He can have no business that need be a secret to you. Desire the captain to walk up.

[Exit WILLIAM.]

Enter CAPTAIN O'CUTTER.

O'Cut. Jontlemen, your sarvant. Is either of your names Charles Oakly, Esq.?

Char. Charles Oakly, Sir, is my name, if you have any business with it.

O'Cut. Avast, avast, my dear! I have a little business with your name; but as I was to let nobody know it, I can't mention it till you clear the decks, 'fait. [Pointing to the MAJOR.]

Char. This gentleman, Sir, is my most intimate friend, and any thing that concerns me may be mentioned before him.

O'Cut. O, if he's your friend, my dear, we may do all above board. It's only about your deciding a difference with my Lord Trinket. He

wants to show you a little warm work; and, as I was steering this way, he desired me to fetch you this letter. [*Gives a letter.*]

Maj. O. How, Sir, a challenge!

O'Cut. Yes, fait, a challenge. I am to be his lordship's second; and if you are fond of a hot birth, and will come along with that jontleman, we'll all go to it together, and make a little line of battle a-head of our own, my dear.

Char. [Reads.] Ha! what's this? This may be useful. [*Aside.*]

Maj. O. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you. A rare fellow this! [*Aside.*] Yes, yes, I'll meet all the good company. I'll be there in my waistcoat and pumps, and take a morning's breathing with you. Are you very fond of fighting, Sir?

O'Cut. Indeed, and I am; I love it better than grog.

Maj. O. But pray, Sir, how are you interested in this difference? Do you know what it is about?

O'Cut. O, the devil burn me, not I. What signifies what it's about, you know? so we do but tilt a little.

Maj. O. What, fight, and not know for what?

O'Cut. When the signal's out for engaging, what signifies talking?

Maj. O. I fancy, Sir, a duel's a common breakfast with you. I'll warrant now, you have been engaged in many such affairs.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul, and I have; sea or land, it's all one to little Terence O'Cutter. When I was last in Dublin, I fought one jontleman for cheating me out of a thousand pounds; I fought two of the Mermaid's crew about Sally Macguire; tree about politics; and one about the playhouse in Smock Alley. But upon my fait, since I am in England, I have done nothing at all, at all.

Char. This is lucky—but my transport will discover me. [*Aside.*] Will you be so kind, Sir, [*To O'Cut.*] as to make my compliments to his lordship, and assure him, that I shall do myself the honour of waiting on him.

O'Cut. Indeed, and I will. Arrah, my dear, won't you come too? [*To MAJOR OAKLY.*]

Maj. O. Depend upon it, captain. A very extraordinary fellow! [*Aside.*]

Char. Now to get my intelligence. [*Aside.*] I think, the time, Sir, his lordship appoints in his letter, is a—

O'Cut. You say right. Six o'clock.

Char. And the place—a—a—is—I think, behind Montague-House?

O'Cut. No, my dear! Avast, by the ring in Hyde-park, fait. I settled it there myself, for fare of interruption.

Char. True, as you say, the ring in Hyde-park; I had forgot. Very well, I'll not fail you, Sir.

O'Cut. Devil burn me, nor I. Upon my shoul, little Terence O'Cutter will see fair play, or he'll know the reason; and so, my dear, your sarvant. You'll not forget to come, my dear. [*Exit.*]

Maj. O. Ha, ha, ha! What a fellow!—He loves fighting like a game cock.

Char. O uncle! the luckiest thing in the world!

Maj. O. What, to have the chance of being run through the body? I desire no such good fortune.

Char. Wish me joy, wish me joy! I have found her, my dear girl, my Harriet! She is at an inn in Holborn, major!

Maj. O. Ay, how do you know?

Char. Why, this dear, delightful, charming, blundering captain has delivered me a wrong letter.

Maj. O. A wrong letter!

Char. Yes, a letter from Lord Trinket to Lady Freelove.

Maj. O. The devil! What are the contents?

Char. The news I told you just now, that she's at an inn in Holborn: and, besides, an excuse from my lord, for not waiting on her ladyship this morning according to his promise, as he shall be entirely taken up with his design upon Harriet.

Maj. O. So, so!—A plot between the lord and the lady.

Char. There! read, read man!

[*Giving the letter.*]

Maj. O. [Reading.] Um—um—um—Very fine! And what do you propose doing?

Char. To go thither immediately!

Maj. O. Then you shall take me with you. Who knows what his lordship's designs may be? I begin to suspect foul play.

Char. No, no; pray mind your own business. If I find there is any need of your assistance, I'll send for you.

Maj. O. You'll manage this affair like a boy, now; go on rashly with noise and bustle, and fury, and get yourself into another scrape.

Char. No, no, let me alone; I'll go incog. Leave my chariot at some distance—Proceed prudently, and take care of myself, I warrant you. I did not imagine that I should ever rejoice at receiving a challenge, but this is the most fortunate accident that could possibly have happened. B'ye, b'ye, uncle! [*Exit, hastily.*]

Maj. O. I don't half approve of this; and yet I can hardly suspect his lordship of any very deep designs neither. Charles may easily outwit him. Harkye, William!

[*Seeing WILLIAM at some distance.*]

Re-enter WILLIAM.

Wil. Sir!

Maj. O. Where's my brother?

Wil. In his study, Sir.

Maj. O. Is he alone?

Wil. Yes, Sir.

Maj. O. And how is he, William?

Wil. Pretty well, I believe, Sir.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, but is he in a good humour, or—

Wil. I never meddle in family affairs, not I, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Maj. O. Well said, William!—No bad hint for me, perhaps!—What a strange world we live in! no two people in it love one another better than my brother and sister, and yet the bitterest enemies could not torment each other more heartily.

—However, yesterday, to give him his due, he behaved like a man. Keep it up, brother! keep it up! or it's all over with you. Some mischief is on foot, I'll even set forwards on all sides. I'll in to him directly, read him one of my morning lectures, and persuade him, if I possibly can, to go out with me immediately; or work him to some open act of rebellion against the sovereign authority of his lady wife. Zounds, brother! rant and roar, and rave, and turn the house out of the window. If I was a husband!—'Sdeath, what a pity it is that nobody knows how to manage a wife but a bachelor. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Bull and Gate Inn.**Enter HARRIET.*

Har. What will become of me? Among all my distresses, I must confess that Charles's behaviour yesterday is not the least. So wild! so given up to excesses! And yet, I am ashamed to own it even to myself,—I love him; and death itself shall not prevail on me to give my hand to Sir Harry. But here he comes! What shall I do with him?

Enter SIR HARRY BEAGLE.

Sir H. Your servant, Miss! What; not speak! Bashful, mayhap. Why then I will. Lookye, Miss, I am a man of few words. What signifies haggling? it looks just like a dealer. What d'ye think of me for a husband? I am a tight young fellow; sound wind and limb; free from all natural blemishes; rum all over, damme.

Har. Sir, I don't understand you. Speak English, and I'll give you an answer.

Sir H. English! Why so I do; and good plain English too. What d'ye think of me for a husband? That's English—e'nt it?—I know none of your French lingo, none of your parlyvoos, not I. What d'ye think of me for a husband? The 'squire says you shall marry me.

Har. What shall I say to him? I had best be civil. [*Aside.*] I think, Sir, you deserve a much better wife, and beg—

Sir H. Better! No, no, though you're so knowing, I'm not to be taken in so. You're a fine thing. Your points are all good.

Har. Sir Harry! Sincerity is above all ceremony. Excuse me, if I declare I never will be your wife.

Sir H. Hey! how! what, be off! Why, it's a match, Miss!—It's done, and done on both sides.

Har. For Heaven's sake, Sir, withdraw your claim to me. I never can be prevailed on; indeed I can't.

Sir H. What, make a match and then draw stakes! That's doing of nothing. Play or pay all the world over.

Har. I am determined not to marry you, at all events.

Sir H. But your father's determined you shall, Miss. So the odds are on my side. I am not quite sure of my horse, but I have the rider hollow.

Har. Your horse! Sir, d'ye take me for; but I forgive you. I beseech you, come into my proposal. It will be better for us both in the end.

Sir H. I can't be off.

Har. Let me entreat you.

Sir H. I tell you, it's impossible.

Har. Pray, pray, do, Sir.

Sir H. I can't, damme.

Har. I beseech you. [*SIR HARRY whistles.*]
How! laughed at?

Sir H. Will you marry me, dear Ally, Ally Croker? [*Singing.*]

Har. Marry you! I had rather be married to a slave, a wretch—You! [*Walks about.*]

Sir H. A fine going thing. She has a deal of foot—treads well upon her pasterns—goes above her ground.

Har. Peace, wretch! Do you talk to me as if I were your horse?

Sir H. Horse! Why not speak of my horse! If your fine ladies had half as many good qualities, they would be much better bargains.

Har. And if their wretches of husbands liked them half so well as they do their horses, they would lead better lives.

Sir H. Mayhap so. But what signifies talking to you? The 'squire shall know your tricks. He'll doctor you. I'll go and talk to him.

Har. Go any where, so that you go from me.

Sir H. He'll break you in. If you wont go in a snaffle, you must be put in a curb. He'll break you, damme. [*Exit.*]

Har. A wretch! But I was to blame to suffer his brutal behaviour to ruffle my temper. I could expect nothing else from him, and he is below my anger.

Enter RUSSET.

Rus. Are not you a sad girl! a perverse, stubborn, obstinate—

Har. My dear Sir—

Rus. Lookye, Harriet, don't speak, you'll put me in a passion. Will you have him? Answer me that. Why don't the girl speak? Will you have him?

Har. Dearest Sir, there is nothing in the world else—

Rus. Why there, there! Lookye there! Zounds, you shall have him. Hussy you shall have him. You shall marry him to-night. Did not you promise to receive him civilly? How came you to affront him?

Har. Sir, I did receive him very civilly; but his behaviour was so insolent and insupportable.

Rus. Insolent! Zounds, I'll blow his brains out. Insolent to my dear Harriet! A rogue, a villain, a scoundrel! I'll—but it's a lie—I know, it's a lie.—He durst not behave insolent. Will you have him? Answer me that. Will you have him? Zounds, you shall have him.

Har. If you have any love for me, Sir—

Rus. Love for you! You know I love you. You know your poor fond father dotes on you to madness. I would not force you, if I did not love you. Don't I want you to be happy? But I know what you would have. You want young Oakly, a rakehell, drunken—

Har. Release me from Sir Harry, and if I ever marry against your consent, renounce me for ever.

Rus. I will renounce you, unless you'll have Sir Harry.

Har. Consider, my dear Sir, you'll make me miserable. Absolve me from this hard command, and in every thing else it will be happiness to obey you.

Rus. You'll break my heart, Harriet, you'll break my heart. Make you miserable! Don't I want to make you happy? Is not he the richest man in the county? That will make you happy. Don't all the pale-faced girls in the country long to get him? And yet you are so perverse, and wayward, and stubborn. Zounds, you shall have him.

Har. For Heaven's sake, Sir—

Rus. Hold your tongue, Harriet! I'll hear none of your nonsense. You shall have him, I tell you, you shall have him. He shall marry you this very night. I'll go for a license and a parson immediately. Zounds, why do I stand arguing with you? An't I your father? Have not I a right to dispose of you? You shall have him.

Har. Sir!

Rus. I wont hear a word. You shall have him. [*Exit.*]

Har. Sir! Hear me! but one word! He will not hear me, and is gone to prepare for this odious marriage. I will die before I consent to it.

Enter CHARLES, in a frock, &c.

Ha! What do I see? [*Screaming.*]

Char. Peace, my love! My dear life, make no noise! I have been hovering about the house this hour. I just now saw your father and Sir Harry go out, and have seized this precious opportunity to throw myself at your feet.

Har. You have given yourself, Sir, a great deal of needless trouble. I did not expect or hope for the favour of such a visit.

Char. O, my Harriet, upbraid me, reproach me, do any thing but look and talk with that air of coldness and indifference. Let me, while their absence allows it, convey you from the brutal violence of a constrained marriage.

Har. No, I will wait the event, be it what it may; Oh, Charles, I am too much inclined—they shan't force me to marry Sir Harry—but your behaviour—Not half an hour ago, my father reproached me with the looseness of your character.

[*Weeping.*]
Char. I see my folly, and am ashamed of it;—you have reclaimed me, Harriet, on my soul you have. If all women were as attentive as yourself to the morals of their lovers, a libertine would be an uncommon character. But let me persuade you to leave this place while you may. Major Oakly will receive us at his house with pleasure. I am shocked at the thoughts of what your stay here may reserve you to.

Har. No, I am determined to remain. To leave my father again, to go off openly with a man, of whose libertine character he has himself so lately been a witness, would justify his anger, and impeach my reputation.

Enter CHAMBERMAID.

Chamb. O law, Ma'am! Such a terrible accident! As sure as I am here, there's a pressgang has seized the two gemmin, and is carrying them away, thof so be one an 'em says as how he's a knight and baronight, and that t'other's a 'squire and a housekeeper.

Har. Seized by a pressgang! impossible!

Char. Oh, now the design comes out. But I'll balk his lordship.

Chamb. Lack-a-daisy, Ma'am, what can we do? There is master, and John Hostler, and Boot-catcher, all gone a'ter 'em. There is such an uproar as never was! [*Exit.*]

Har. If I thought this was your contrivance, Sir, I would never speak to you again.

Char. I would sooner die than be guilty of it. This is Lord Trinket's doing, I am sure. I knew he had some scheme in agitation, by a letter I intercepted this morning. [*HARRIET screams.*] *Ha!* here he comes. Nay, then, it's plain enough. Don't be frightened, my love! I'll protect you. But now I must desire you to follow my directions.

Enter LORD TRINKET.

Lord T. Now, Madam.—Pox on't, he here again! Nay then, [*Draws.*] come, Sir! You're unarmed, I see. Give up the lady; give her up, I say, or I am through you in a twinkling.

[*Going to make a pass at CHARLES.*]
Char. Keep your distance, my lord! I have arms. [*Produces a pistol.*] If you come a foot

nearer, you have a brace of balls through you, lordship's head.

Lord T. How! what's this? pistols!

Char. At your lordship's service. Sword and pistol, my lord.—Those, you know, are our weapons. If this misses, I have the fellow to it in my pocket. Don't be frightened, Madam. His lordship has removed your friends and relations, but he will take great care of you. Shall I leave you with him?

Har. Cruel Charles! you know I must go with you now.

Char. A little way from the door, if your lordship pleases. [*Waves his hand.*]

Lord T. Sir!—'Sdeath!—Madam!—

Char. A little more round, my lord. [*Waves.*]

Lord T. But, Sir! Mr. Oakly!

Char. I have no leisure to talk with your lordship now. A little more that way, if you please. [*Waves.*] You know where I live. If you have any commands for Miss Russet, you will hear of her too at my house. Nay, keep back, my lord. [*Presents.*] Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant. [*Exit with HARRIET.*]

Lord T. [*Looks at them, and pauses for a short time.*] I cut a mighty ridiculous figure here, 'pon honour. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—LADY FREELOVE'S House.

Enter LORD TRINKET, LADY FREELOVE, with a letter, and CAPTAIN O'CUTTER.

Lord T. Was ever any thing so unfortunate! Plague on't, captain, how could you make such a strange blunder?

O'Cut. I never thought of a blunder. I was to deliver two letters; and if I gave them one a piece, I thought it would do.

Lady F. And so, my lord, the ingenious captain gave the letter intended for me to young Oakly, and here has brought me a challenge.

Lord T. Ridiculous! Never was any thing so *malapropos*. Did you read the direction, captain?

O'Cut. Who, me? Devil burn me, not I. I never rade at all.

Lord T. 'Sdeath! how provoking! When I had secured the servants, and got all the people out of the way—when every thing was *en train*.

Lady F. Nay, never despair, my lord! I've hit upon a method to set every thing to rights again.

Lord T. How? how? my dear Lady Freelove, how?

Lady F. Suppose then your lordship was to go and deliver these country gentlemen from their confinement: make them believe it was a plot of young Oakly's to carry off my niece; and so make a merit of your own services with the father.

Lord T. Admirable! I'll about it immediately.

O'Cut. Has your lordship any occasion for my service in this expedition?

Lord T. O, no. Only release me these people, and then keep out of the way, dear captain.

O'Cut. With all my heart, fait. But you are all wrong: this will not signify a brass farding. If you would let me alone, I would give him a salt eel, I warrant you. But upon my credit, there's noting to be done without a little tilting. [*Exit.*]

Lord T. But where shall I carry them, when I have delivered them?

Lady F. To Mr. Oakly's, by all means; you may be sure my niece is there.

Lord T. To Mr. Oakly's! Why, does your ladyship consider? 'Tis going directly in the fire of the enemy—throwing the *dementi* full in their teeth.

Lady F. So much the better. Face your enemies; nay, you shall outface them too. I'll certainly meet you there. It's hard indeed if two persons of condition can't bear themselves out against such trumpery folks as the family of the Oaklys.

Lord T. Odious low people! But I lose time; I must after the captain; and so, till we meet at Mr. Oakly's, I kiss your ladyship's hands—you won't fail me?

Lady F. You may depend on me. [*Exit LORD TRINKET.*] So, here is fine work! this artful little hussy has been too much for us all. Well, what's to be done? Why, when a woman of fashion gets into a scrape, nothing but a fashionable assurance can get her out of it again. I'll e'en go boldly to Mr. Oakly's, as I have promised, and if it appears practicable, I will forward Lord Trinket's match; but if I find that matters have taken another turn, his lordship must excuse me. In that case I'll fairly drop him, seem a perfect stranger to all his intentions, and give my visit an air of congratulation to my niece and any other husband, which fortune, her wise father, or her ridiculous self, has provided for her. [*Exit*]

SCENE II.—MRS. OAKLY'S Dressing-room.

Enter MRS. OAKLY.

Mrs. O. This is worse and worse! He never held me so much in contempt before. To go out without speaking to me, or taking the least notice. I am obliged to the major for this. How could he take him out? and how could Mr. Oakly go with him?—

Enter TOILET.

Well, Toilet.

Toil. My master is not come back yet, Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone?

Toil. I don't know, I can assure your ladyship.

Mrs. O. Why don't you know. You know nothing. But I warrant you know well enough, if you would tell. You shall never persuade me but you knew of Mr. Oakly's going out to-day.

Toil. I wish I may die, Ma'am, upon my honour, and I protest to your ladyship I knew nothing in the world of the matter, no more than the child unborn. There is Mr. Paris, my master's gentleman, knows—

Mrs. O. What does he know?

Toil. That I knew nothing at all of the matter.

Mrs. O. Where is Paris? What is he doing?

Toil. He is in my master's room, Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Bid him come here.

Toil. Yes, Ma'am. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. O. He is certainly gone after this young flirt. His confidence and the major's insolence provoke me beyond expression.

Re-enter TOILET with PARIS.

Where's your master?

Par. *Il est sorti.* He is gone out.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone?

Par. Ah, Madame, *je n'en sçai rien.* I know nothing of it.

Mrs. O. Nobody knows any thing. Why did not you tell me he was going out?

Par. I dress him—*Je ne m'en soucie pas du plus*—He go where he will; I have no business with it.

Mrs. O. Yes, you should have told me—that was your business; and if you don't mind your business better, you sha'n't stay here, I promise you, Sir.

Par. *Voilà quelque chose d'extraordinaire!*

Mrs. O. Don't stand jabbering and shrugging your shoulders, but go and inquire; go, and bring me word where he is gone.

Par. I don't know what I am do.

Mrs. O. Bid John come to me.

Par. *De tout mon cœur. Jean! ici! Jean!* speak, my ladi. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. O. Impudent fellow! His insolent gravity and indifference is insupportable. Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Where's John? Why don't he come? Why do you stand with your hands before you? Why don't you fetch him?

Toil. Yes, Ma'am, I'll go this minute.—O, here, John; my lady wants you.

Enter JOHN.

Mrs. O. Where's your master?

John. Gone out, Madam.

Mrs. O. Why did not you go with him?

John. Because he went out in the major's chariot, Madam.

Mrs. O. Where did they go to?

John. To the major's, I suppose, Madam.

Mrs. O. Suppose! Don't you know?

John. I believe so, but can't tell for certain, indeed, Madam.

Mrs. O. Believe and suppose! and don't know, and can't tell! You are all fools. Go about your business. [*JOHN going.*] Come here. [*Returns.*] Go the major's—no—it does not signify, go along. [*JOHN going.*] Yes, harkye, [*Returns.*] go to the major's, and see if your master is there.

John. Give your compliments, Madam?

Mrs. O. My compliments, blockhead! Get along. [*JOHN going.*] Come hither. [*Returns.*] Can't you go to the major's, and bring me word if Mr. Oakly is there, without taking any further notice?

John. Yes, Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Well, why don't you go then? And make haste back. And, d'y'e hear, John?

[*JOHN going, returns.*]

John. Madam!

Mrs. O. Nothing at all, go along. [*JOHN goes.*] How uneasy Mr. Oakly makes me! Harkye, John!

[*JOHN returns.*]

John. Madam!

Mrs. O. Send the porter here.

John. Yes, Madam. [*Exit.*]

Toil. So she's in a rare humour! I shall have a fine time on't. [*Aside.*] Will your ladyship choose to dress?

Mrs. O. Prythee, creature, don't tease me with your fiddle-faddle stuff. I have a thousand things to think of. Where is the porter? Why has not that booby sent him? What is the meaning—

Re-enter JOHN.

John. Madam, my master is this moment returned with Major Oakly, and my young master, and the lady that was here yesterday.

Mrs. O. Very well. [*Exit JOHN.*] Returned—yes, truly he is returned—and in a very extraor-

dinary manner. This is setting me at open defiance. But I'll go down, and show them I have too much spirit to endure such usage. [*Going.*] Or, stay—I'll not go amongst his company—I'll go out—Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am!

Mrs. O. Order the coach; I'll go out. [*TOILET going.*] Toilet, stay—I'll e'en go down to them—No—Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am!

Mrs. O. Order me a boiled chicken—I'll not go down to dinner. I'll dine in my own room, and sup there. I'll not see his face these three days.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter OAKLY, MAJOR OAKLY, CHARLES, and HARRIET.

Char. My dear Harriet, do not make yourself so uneasy.

Har. Alas! I have too much cause for my uneasiness. Who knows what that vile lord has done with my father?

Oak. Be comforted, Madam; we shall soon hear of Mr. Russet, and all will be well, I dare say.

Har. You are too good to me, Sir; I shall never forgive myself for having disturbed the peace of such a worthy family.

Maj. O. Don't mind that, Madam; they'll be very good friends again. This is nothing among married people. 'Sdeath! here she is! No, its only Mrs. Toilet.

Re-enter TOILET.

Oak. Well, Toilet, what now: [*TOILET whispers.*] not well? Can't come down to dinner? Wants to see me above? Harkye, brother, what shall I do?

Maj. O. If you go, you are undone.

Har. Go, Sir, go to Mrs. Oakly. Indeed you had better—

Maj. O. 'Sdeath, brother, don't budge a foot. This is all fractiousness and ill humour.

Oak. No, I'll not go. Tell her I have company, and we shall be glad to see her here.

[*Exit* TOILET.

Maj. O. That's right.

Oak. Suppose I go and watch how she proceeds?

Maj. O. What d'ye mean? You would not go to her? Are you mad?

Oak. By no means go to her; I only want to know how she takes it. I'll lie *perdue* in my study, and observe her motions.

Maj. O. I don't like this pitiful ambuscade work—this bush fighting. Why can't you stay here? Ay, ay! I know how it will be. She'll come bounce in upon you with a torrent of anger and passion, or, if necessary, a whole flood of tears, and carry all before her at once.

Oak. You shall find that you are mistaken, major. Now I am convinced I'm in the right, I'll support that right with ten times your steadiness.

Maj. O. You talk this well, brother.

Oak. I'll do it well, brother.

Maj. O. If you don't, you are undone.

Oak. Never fear, never fear.

[*Exit.*]

Maj. O. Well, Charles.

Char. I can't bear to see my Harriet so uneasy. I'll go immediately in quest of Mr. Russet. Perhaps I may learn at the inn where his lordship's ruffians have carried him.

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Rus. [*Without.*] Here! Yes, yes, I know she's here well enough. Come along, Sir Harry, come along.

Har. He's here! My father! I know his voice. Where is Mr. Oakly? O, now, good Sir, [*To the MAJOR.*] do but pacify him, and you'll be a friend indeed.

Enter RUSSET, LORD TRINKET, and SIR HARRY BEAGLE.

Lord T. There, Sir—I told you it was so!

Rus. Ay, ay, it is too plain. O you provoking slut! Elopement after elopement! And at last to have your father carried off by violence! to endanger my life! Zounds! I am so angry I dare not trust myself within reach of you.

Char. I can assure you, Sir, that your daughter is entirely—

Rus. You assure me! You are the fellow that has perverted her mind—That has set up my own child against me—

Char. If you will but hear me, Sir.

Rus. I won't hear a word you say. I'll have my daughter; I won't hear a word.

Maj. O. Nay, Mr. Russet, hear reason. If you will but have patience.

Rus. I'll have no patience, I'll have my daughter, and she shall marry Sir Harry to-night.

Lord T. That is dealing rather too much *en cavalier* with me, Mr. Russet, 'pon honour. You take no notice of my pretensions, though my rank and family—

Rus. What care I for rank and family? I don't want to make my daughter a rantipole woman of quality. I'll give her to whom I please. Take her away, Sir Harry; she shall marry you to-night.

Maj. O. Only three words, Mr. Russet.

Rus. Why don't the booby take her?

Sir H. Hold hard! hold hard! You are all on a wrong scent; hold hard, I say, hold hard! Harkye, 'Squire Russet.

Rus. Well, what now?

Sir H. It was proposed, you know, to match me with Miss Harriet: but she can't take kindly to me. When one has made a bad bet, it is best to hedge off, you know; and so I have e'en swopped her with Lord Trinket here for his brown horse, Nabob.

Rus. Swopped her? swopped my daughter for a horse! Zounds, Sir, what d'ye mean?

Sir H. Mean? Why I mean to be off, to be sure. It wont do; I tell you it wont do. First of all, I knocked up myself and my horses, when they took for London; and now I have been stewed aboard a tender. I have wasted three stone at least. If I could have rid my match, it would not have grieved me. And so, as I said before, I have swopped her for Nabob.

Rus. The devil take Nabob and yourself, and Lord Trinket, and—

Lord T. Pardon! *je vous demande* pardon, Monsieur Russet, 'pon honour.

Rus. Death and the devil; I shall go distracted! My daughter plotting against me—the—

Maj. O. Come, come, Mr. Russet, I am your man after all. Give me but a moment's hearing, and I'll engage to make peace between you and your daughter, and throw the blame where it ought to fall most deservedly.

Sir H. Ay, ay, that's right. Put the saddle on the right horse, my buck!

Rus. Well, Sir; what d'ye say? Speak. I don't know what to do.

Maj. O. I'll speak the truth, let who will be offended by it. I have proof presumptive and positive for you, Mr. Russet. From his lordship's behaviour at Lady Freelove's, when my nephew rescued her, we may fairly conclude that he would stick at no measures to carry his point; there's proof presumptive. But, Sir, we can give you proof positive too; proof under his lordship's own hand, that he likewise was the contriver of the gross affront that has just been offered you.

Rus. Hey! how?

Lord T. Every syllable romance, 'pon honour.

Maj. O. Gospel, every word on't.

Char. This letter will convince you, Sir! In consequence of what happened at Lady Freelove's, his lordship thought fit to send me a challenge; but the messenger blundered, and gave me this letter instead of it. [*Giving the letter.*] I have the case which enclosed it in my pocket.

Lord T. Forgery from beginning to end, 'pon honour.

Maj. O. Truth, upon my honour. But read, read, Mr. Russet, read and be convinced.

Rus. Let me see, let me see. [*Reads.*] Um, um, um; so, so; um, um, um, damnation! *Wish me success,—obedient slave—TRINKET.* Fire and fury! How dare you do this?

Lord T. When you are cool, Mr. Russet, I will explain this matter to you.

Rus. Cool! 'Sdeath and hell! I'll never be cool again! I'll be revenged. So, my Harriet, my dear girl, is innocent at last. Say so, my Harriet; tell me you are innocent. [*Embraces her.*]

Har. I am indeed, Sir, and happy beyond expression at your being convinced of it.

Rus. I am glad on't—I am glad on't—I believe you Harriet!—You was always a good girl.

Maj. O. So she is, an excellent girl!—Worth a regiment of such lords and baronets—Come, Sir, finish every thing handsomely at once.—Come, Charles will have a handsome fortune.

Rus. Marry!—she durst not do it.

Maj. O. Consider, Sir, they have long been fond of each other—old acquaintance—faithful lovers—turtles—and may be very happy.

Rus. Well, well—since things are so—I love my girl.—Harkye, young Oakly, if you don't make her a good husband, you'll break my heart, you rogue.

Maj. O. I'll cut his throat, if he don't.

Char. Do not doubt it, Sir; my Harriet has reformed me altogether.

Rus. Has she?—Why then—there—Heaven bless you both—there—now there's an end on't.

Sir H. So, my lord, you and I are both distanced—A hollow thing, damme.

Lord T. *N'importe.*

Sir H. Now this stake is drawn, my lord may be for hedging off, mayhap. Ecod! I'll go to Jack Speed's, secure Nabob, and be out of town in an hour. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Enter LADY FREELOVE.

Lady F. My dear Miss Russet, you'll excuse—

Char. Mrs. Oakly, at your ladyship's service.

Lady F. Married!

Har. Not yet, Madam; but my father has been so good as to give his consent.

Lady F. I protest I am prodigiously glad of it.

My dear, I give you joy—and you, Mr. Oakly.—I wish you joy, Mr. Russet, and all the good company—for I think the most of them are parties concerned.

Maj. O. How easy, impudent, and familiar.

[*Aside.*]

Lady F. Lord Trinket here too! I vow I did not see your lordship before.

Lord T. Your ladyship's most obedient slave.

[*Bowing.*]

Lady F. You seem grave, my lord! Come, come, I know there has been some difference between you and Mr. Oakly—You must give me leave to be a mediator in this affair.

Lord T. Here has been a small *fracas*, to be sure, Madam!—We are all blown, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Blown! what do you mean, my lord?

Lord T. Nay, your ladyship knows that I never mind these things, and I know that they never discompose your ladyship—But things have happened a little *en travers*—The little billet I sent your ladyship has fallen into the hands of that gentleman—[*Pointing to CHARLES.*—and so there has been a little *brouillerie* about it—that's all.

Lady F. You talk to me, my lord, in a very extraordinary style—If you have been guilty of any misbehaviour, I am sorry for it; but your ill conduct can fasten no imputation on me—Miss Russet will justify me sufficiently.

Maj. O. Had not your ladyship better appeal to my friend Charles here?—The letter, Charles!—Out with it this instant.

Char. Yes, I have the credentials of her ladyship's integrity in my pocket.—Mr. Russet, the letter you read a little while ago, was enclosed in this cover, which also I now think it my duty to put into your hands.

Rus. [*Reading.*] *To the Right Honourable Lady Freelove.*—'Sdeath and hell!—and now I recollect, the letter itself was pieced with scraps of French, and Madam, and your ladyship—Fire and fury, Madam! how came you to use me so? I am obliged to you, then, for the insult that has been offered me!

Lady F. What is all this? Your obligations to me, Mr. Russet, are of a nature, that—

Rus. Fine obligations! I dare say, I am partly obliged to you for the attempt on my daughter by that thing of a lord yonder at your house. Zounds, Madam, these are injuries never to be forgiven—they are the grossest affronts to me and my family—all the world shall know them—Zounds!—I'll—

Lady F. Mercy on me! how boisterous are these country gentlemen! Why, really, Mr. Russet, you rave like a man in Bedlam—I am afraid you'll beat me—and then you swear most abominably.—How can you be so vulgar!—I see the meaning of this low malace—But the reputations of women of quality are not so easily impeached—My rank places me above the scandal of little people, and I shall meet such petty insolence with the greatest ease and tranquillity. But you and your simple girl will be sufferers.—I had some thoughts of introducing her into the first company.—But now, Madam, I shall neither receive nor return your visits, and will entirely withdraw my protection from the ordinary part of the family. [*Exit.*]

Rus. Zounds, what impudence! that's worse than all the rest.

Lord T. Fine presence of mind, faith!—The true French *nonchalance*—But, good folks, why such a deal of rout and *tapage* about nothing at all?—If Mademoiselle Harriet had rather be Mrs. Oakly than Lady Trinket—Why, I wish her joy—that's all.—Mr. Russet, I wish you joy of your son-in-law—Mr. Oakly, I wish you joy of the lady—and you, Madam, [*To HARRIET.*] of the gentleman—And, in short, I wish you all joy of one another, 'pon honour. [*Exit.*]

Rus. There's a fine fellow of a lord now! The devil's in your London folks of the first fashion, as you call them. They will rob you of your estate, debauch your daughter, or lie with your wife—and all as if they were doing you a favour—'pon honour!—

Maj. O. Hey! what now?

[*Bell rings violently.*]

Re-enter OAKLY.

Oak. D'y'e hear, major, d'y'e hear?

Maj. O. Zounds! what a clatter!—She'll pull down all the bells in the house.

Oak. My observations since I left you, have confirmed my resolution. I see plainly that her good humour, and her ill humour, her smiles, her tears, and her fits, are all calculated to play upon me.

Maj. O. Did not I always tell you so? It's the way with them all—they will be rough and smooth, and hot and cold, and all in a breath. Any thing to get the better of us.

Oak. She is in all moods at present, I promise you—There has she been in her chamber, fuming and fretting, and dispatching a messenger to me every two minutes—servant after servant—now she insists on my coming to her—now again she writes a note to entreat—then Toilet is sent to let me know that she is ill, absolutely dying—then the very next minute, she'll never see my face again—she'll go out of the house directly. [*Bell rings.*] Again! now the storm rises!—

Maj. O. It will soon drive this way then—now, brother, prove yourself a man—You have gone too far to retreat.

Oak. Retreat!—Retreat!—no, no!—I'll preserve the advantage I have gained, I am determined.

Maj. O. Ay, ay!—keep your ground!—fear nothing—up with your noble heart!—Good discipline makes good soldiers; stick close to my advice, and you may stand buff to a tigress—

Oak. Here she is, by Heavens! now, brother!

Maj. O. And now, brother!—Now or never!

Re-enter MRS. OAKLY.

Mrs. O. I think, Mr. Oakly, you might have had humanity enough to have come to see how I did. You have taken your leave, I suppose, of all tenderness and affection—but I'll be calm—I'll not throw myself into a passion—You want to drive me out of your house—I see what you aim at, and will be beforehand with you—let me keep my temper! I'll send for a chair, and leave the house this instant.

Oak. True, my love: I knew you would not think of dining in your chamber alone, when I had company below. You shall sit at the head of the table, as you ought, to be sure, as you say, and make my friends welcome.

Mrs. O. Excellent rallery! Lookye, Mr. Oakly, I see the meaning of all this affected coolness and indifference.

Oak. My dear, consider where you are—

Mrs. O. You would be glad, I find, to get me out of your house, and have all your flirts about you.

Oak. Before all this company! fy!

Mrs. O. But I'll disappoint you, for I shall remain in it, to support my due authority—as for you, Major Oakly—

Maj. O. Hey-day! what have I done?

Mrs. O. I think you might find better employment, than to create divisions between married people—and you, Sir!—

Oak. Nay but, my dear!—

Mrs. O. Might have more sense as well as tenderness, than to give ear to such idle stuff.

Oak. Lord, Lord!

Mrs. O. You and your wise counsellor there, I suppose, think to carry all your points with me—

Oak. Was ever any thing—

Mrs. O. But it wont do, Sir. You shall find that I will have my own way, and that I will govern my own family.

Oak. You had better learn to govern yourself; by half. Your passion makes you ridiculous. Did ever any body see so much fury and violence; affronting your best friends, breaking my peace, and disconcerting your own temper. And all for what? for nothing. 'Sdeath, Madam! at these years you ought to know better.

Mrs. O. At these years!—Very fine!—Am I to be talked to in this manner?

Oak. Talked to!—Why not?—You have talked to me long enough—almost talked me to death—and I have taken it all, in hopes of making you quiet—but all in vain. Patience, I find, is all thrown away upon you; and henceforward, come what may, I am resolved to be master of my own house.

Mrs. O. So, so!—Master, indeed!—Yes, Sir; and you'll take care to have mistresses enough too, I warrant you.

Oak. Perhaps I may; but they shall be quiet ones, I can assure you.

Mrs. O. Indeed!—And do you think I am such a tame fool, as to sit quietly and bear all this behaviour—You shall find that I have a spirit—

Oak. Of the devil.

Mrs. O. Intolerable!—You shall find then that I will exert that spirit. I am sure I have need of it. As soon as the house is once cleared again, I'll shut my doors against all company.—You sha'n't see a single soul for this month.

Oak. 'Sdeath, Madam, but I will!—I'll keep open house for a year.—I'll send cards to the whole town—Mr. Oakly's rout!—All the world will come—and I'll go among the world too—I'll be mewed up no longer.

Mrs. O. Provoking insolence! this is not to be endured—Lookye, Mr. Oakly—

Oak. And lookye, Mrs. Oakly, I will have my own way.

Mrs. O. Nay, then, let me tell you, Sir—

Oak. And let me tell you, Madam, I will not be crossed—I wont be made a fool.

Mrs. O. Why, you wont let me speak.

Oak. Because you don't speak as you ought. Madam, Madam! you sha'n't look, nor walk, nor talk, nor think, but as I please.

Mrs. O. Was there ever such a monster! I can bear this no longer. [*Bursts into tears.*] O you vile man! I can see through your design—you cruel, barbarous, inhuman—such usage to your poor wife!—you'll be the death of her.

Oak. She sha'n't be the death of me, I am determined.

Mrs. O. That it should ever come to this!—To be contradicted—[*Sobbing.*]—insulted—abused—hated—'tis too much—my heart will burst with—oh—oh!—

[*Falls into a fit.* HARRIET, CHARLES, &c. run to her assistance.

Oak. [*Interposing.*] Let her alone.

Har. Sir, Mrs. Oakly—

Char. For Heaven's sake, Sir, she will be—

Oak. Let her alone, let her alone.

Har. Pray, my dear Sir, let us assist her. She may—

Oak. I don't care. Let her alone, I say.

Mrs. O. [*Rising.*] O, you monster!—you villain!—you base man! Would you let me die for want of help?—would you?

Oak. Bless me, Madam, your fit is very violent; take care of yourself.

Mrs. O. Despised, ridiculed; but I'll be revenged, you shall see, Sir.

Oak. Tol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol.

Mrs. O. What, am I made a jest of? Exposed to all the world? If there's law or justice—

Oak. Tol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol.

Mrs. O. I shall burst with anger. Have a care, Sir; you may repent this. Scorned and made ridiculous! No power on earth shall hinder my revenge!

Har. [*Interposing.*] Stay, Madam.

Mrs. O. Let me go: I cannot bear this place.

Har. Let me beseech you, Madam.

Maj. O. Courage, brother! you have done wonders.

Oak. I think she'll have no more fits.

Har. Stay, Madam; pray stay one moment. I have been a painful witness of your uneasiness, and in great part the innocent occasion of it. Give me leave then—

Mrs. O. I did not expect, indeed, to have found you here again. But, however—

Har. I see the agitation of your mind, and it makes me miserable. Suffer me to tell the real truth. I can explain every thing to your satisfaction.

Mrs. O. May be so: I cannot argue with you.

Char. Pray, Madam, hear her; for my sake, for your own—dear Madam!

Mrs. O. Well, well, proceed.

Har. I understand, Madam, that your first alarm was occasioned by a letter from my father to your nephew.

Rus. I was in a bloody passion, to be sure, Madam! The letter was not over civil, I believe. I did not know but the young rogue had ruined my girl. But it's all over now, and so—

Mrs. O. You was here yesterday, Sir?

Rus. Yes; I came after Harriet. I thought I

should find my young Madam with my young Sir here.

Mrs. O. With Charles, did you say, Sir?

Rus. Ay, with Charles, Madam. The young rogue has been fond of her a long time, and she of him, it seems.

Mrs. O. I fear I have been to blame. [*Aside.*

Rus. I ask pardon, Madam, for the disturbance I made in your house.

Har. And the abrupt manner in which I came into it demands a thousand apologies. But the occasion must be my excuse.

Mrs. O. How have I been mistaken! [*Aside.*] But did not I overhear you and Mr. Oakly—

[*To HARRIET.*

Har. Dear Madam, you had but a partial hearing of our conversation. It related entirely to this gentleman.

Char. To put it beyond doubt, Madam, Mr. Russet and my guardian have consented to our marriage; and we are in hopes that you will withhold your approbation.

Mrs. O. I have no further doubt. I see you are innocent, and it was cruel to suspect you. You have taken a load of anguish off my mind; and yet your kind interposition comes too late; Mr. Oakly's love for me is entirely destroyed.

[*Weeping.*

Oak. I must go to her.

Maj. O. Not yet, not yet.

Har. Do not disturb yourself with such apprehensions; I am sure Mr. Oakly loves you most affectionately.

Oak. I can hold no longer. [*Going to her.*] My affection for you, Madam, is as warm as ever. My constrained behaviour has cut me to the soul, for it was all constrained, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I was able to support it.

Mrs. O. O, Mr. Oakly, how have I exposed myself! What low arts has my jealousy induced me to practise! I see my folly, and fear that you can never forgive me.

Oak. Forgive you! This change transports me!—Brother! Mr. Russet! Charles! Harriet! give me joy! I am the happiest man in the world!

Maj. O. Joy, much joy to you both! though, by the by, you are not a little obliged to me for it. Did not I tell you I would cure all the disorders in your family? I beg pardon, sister, for taking the liberty to prescribe for you. My medicines have been somewhat rough, I believe, but they have had an admirable effect, and so don't be angry with your physician.

Mrs. O. I am indeed obliged to you, and I feel—

Oak. Nay, my dear, no more of this. All that's past must be utterly forgotten.

Mrs. O. I have not merited this kindness; but it shall hereafter be my study to deserve it. A way with all idle jealousies! And since my suspicions have hitherto been groundless, I am resolved for the future never to suspect a' all. [*Exeunt.*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA:

AN OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY JOHN GAY, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS piece is said to have arisen from a remark of Dean Swift to Mr. Gay, "that a *Newgate Pastoral* might make a pretty sort of thing." It had a run of 63 nights, in its first season, (1727) and spread rapidly, with equal success, throughout Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. The card-table and the drawing-room echoed with its praise; the ladies had the songs engraven on their fans; even screens and other pieces of furniture were decorated with them. The profits were so considerable, both to the Author, (who was called the *Orpheus of Highwaymen*;) and to Mr. Rich, the Manager, as to produce the saying, that it had "made *Rich gay*, and *Gay rich*." Miss Fenton, who acted Polly, became the idol of the town and of the Duke of Bolton, by marriage with whom she attained the highest rank a female subject can acquire.

This fortunate opera has been generally thought to give vice additional attraction, by exhibiting it in a pleasing form; in this respect, the example of the hero and its general influence have probably been much over-rated; but the scruples of the present refined age may well hesitate to admit the moral pretensions of this work. Instead of approbation merely as a powerful attack on the absurdities of the Italian opera,* it now charms by the native beauty of the old airs, and the professional abilities of the performers.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted in LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS, 1728.		At COVENT GARDEN, 1814.
CAPTAIN MACHEATH.....	Mr. Walker.....	Mr. Incedon.
PEACHUM,.....	Mr. Hippley.....	Mr. Blanchard.
LOCKIT,.....	Mr. Hall.....	Mr. Emery.
MAT-O'-THE-MINT,.....	Mr. Spiller.....	Mr. Taylor.
BEN BUDGE,.....	Mr. Morgan.....	Mr. Higman.
CROOK-FINGER'D JACK,.....	Mr. Houghton.....	Mr. Jefferies.
JEMMY TWITCHER,.....	Mr. H. Bullock.....	Mr. Treby.
WAT DREARY,.....	Mr. Smith.....	Mr. Norris.
NIMMING NED,.....	Mr. Pitt.....	Mr. Atkins.
HARRY PADDINGTON,.....	Mr. Eaton.....	Mr. King.
ROBIN OF BAGSHOT,.....	Mr. Lacy.....	Mr. Tinney.
DRAWER,.....		Mr. Menage.
FILCH,.....	Mr. Clark.....	Mr. Simmons.
MRS. PEACHUM,.....	Mrs. Martin.....	Mrs. Davenport.
POLLY,.....	Miss Fenton.....	Miss Stephens.
LUCY,.....	Miss Eggleton.....	Mrs. Liston.
MRS. COAXER,.....	Mrs. Holiday.....	Mrs. Bologna.
DOLLY TRULL,.....	Mrs. Lacy.....	Mrs. Heath.
MRS. VIXEN,.....	Mrs. Rice.....	Mrs. Coates.
BETTY DOXY,.....	Mrs. Rogers.....	Miss Adams.
JENNY DIVER,.....	Mrs. Clarke.....	Miss Cox.
MRS. SLAMMEKIN,.....	Mrs. Morgan.....	Miss Leserve.
SUKEY TAWDRY,.....	Mrs. Palen.....	Mrs. Watts.
MOLLY BRAZEN,.....	Mrs. Sallee.....	Mrs. Davies.
DIANA TRAPES,.....	Mrs. Martin.....	

* This effeminacy had been recently imported from Italy, and infected the fashionable world; to oppose this Mr. Gay, in his "Beggars Opera," drew up the nervous old ballad of Britain, against the soft, unnatural, Italian stanza, and took his airs from our most popular songs. "An Italian, (says Mr. Ireland, in his, 'Hogarth Illustrated') concluded an harangue calculated to throw Gay's talents and taste into contempt, with—'Saire, this simple signor did tri to pelt mi countrymen out of England with lumps of pudding;' one of Gay's tunes."

ACT I.

SCENE I.—PEACHUM'S House.

PEACHUM sitting at a table, with a large book of accounts before him.

Peach. Through all the employments of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother:
Whore and rogue, they call husband and wife:

All professions be-rogue one another.
The priest calls the lawyer a cheat;
The lawyer be-knaves the divine;
And the statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his trade is as honest as mine.

A lawyer is an honest employment, so is mine. Like me too, he acts in a double capacity, both against rogues, and for them; for it is but fitting, that we should protect and encourage cheats, since we live by them.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Sir, Black Moll has sent word, her trial comes on in the afternoon, and she hopes you will order matters so as to bring her off.

Peach. Why, as the wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her that I'll soften the evidence.

Filch. Tom Gagg, Sir, is found guilty.

Peach. A lazy dog! When I took him, the time before, I told him what he would come to, if he did not mend his hand. This is death, without reprieve. I may venture to book him; [*Writes.*] for Tom Gagg, forty pounds. Let Betty Sly know, that I'll save her from transportation, for I can get more by her staying in England.

Filch. Betty hath brought more goods to our lock this year, than any five of the gang; and, in truth, 'tis pity to lose so good a customer.

Peach. If none of the gang takes her off, she may, in the common course of business, live a twelvemonth longer. I love to let women 'scape. A good sportsman always lets the hen-partridges fly, because the breed of the game depends upon them. Besides, here the law allows us no reward: there is nothing to be got by the death of women—except our wives.

Filch. Without dispute, she is a fine woman! 'Twas to her I was obliged for my education. To say a bold word, she has trained up more young fellows to the business than the gaming-table.

Peach. Truly, Filch, thy observation is right. We and the surgeons are more beholden to women, than all the professions besides.

Filch. 'Tis woman that seduces all mankind;
By her we first were taught the wheedling arts;

[kind,
Her very eyes can cheat; when most she's
She tricks us of our money, with our hearts.
For her, like wolves, by night, we roam for prey,

[charms;
And practice every fraud to bribe her
For, suits of love, like law, are won by pay,
And beauty must be feed'd into our arms.

Peach. But make haste to Newgate, boy, and let my friends know what I intend; for I love to make them easy, one way or another.

Filch. When a gentleman is long kept in suspense, penitence may break his spirit ever after. Besides, certainty gives a man a good air upon

his trial, and makes him risk another, without fear or scruple. But I'll away, for 'tis a pleasure to be a messenger of comfort to friends in affliction. [*Exit.*]

Peach. But it is now high time to look about me, for a decent execution against next sessions I hate a lazy rogue, by whom one can get nothing till he is hanged. A register of the gang: [*Reading.*] *Crook-fingered Jack—a year and a half in the service*—let me see, how much the stock owes to his industry;—One, two, three, four, five gold watches, and seven silver ones. A mighty clean-handed fellow! sixteen snuff-boxes, five of them of true gold, six dozen of handkerchiefs, four silver-hilted swords, half a dozen of shirts, three tie-perriwigs, and a piece of broadcloth. Considering these are only the fruits of his leisure hours, I don't know a prettier fellow; for no man alive hath a more engaging presence of mind upon the road.—*Wat Dreary, alias Brown Will*—an irregular dog; who hath an underhand way of disposing of his goods; I'll try him only for a session or two longer, upon his good behaviour.—*Harry Paddington*—a poor petty-larceny rascal, without the least genius! that fellow, though he were to live these six months, will never come to the gallows with any credit.—*Slippery Sam*—he goes off the next sessions; for the villain hath the impudence to have views of following his trade as a tailor, which he calls an honest employment.—*Mat-o'-the-Mint*—listed not above a month ago; a promising, sturdy fellow, and diligent in his way; somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good contributions on the public, if he does not cut himself short by murder.—*Tom Tiddle*—a guzzling, soaking sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand; a cart is absolutely necessary for him. *Robin of Bagshot, alias Gorgon, alias Bluff Bob, alias Caruncle, alias Bob Booty*—

Enter MRS. PEACHUM.

Mrs. P. What of Bob Booty, husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him.—You know, my dear, he's a favourite customer of mine—'twas he made me a present of this ring.

Peach. I have set his name down in the black list, that's all, my dear; he spends his life among women, and, as soon as his money is gone, one or other of the ladies will hang him for the reward, and there's forty pounds lost to us for ever!

Mrs. P. You know, my dear, I never meddle in matters of death; I always leave those affairs to you. Women, indeed, are bitter bad judges in these cases; for they are so partial to the brave, that they think every man handsome, who is going to the camp or the gallows. But really, husband, you should not be too hard-hearted, for you never had a finer, braver set of men than at present. We have not had a murder among them all these seven months; and truly, my dear, this is a great blessing.

Peach. What a dickens is the woman always whimpering about murder for? No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man in his own defence; and if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a gentleman do? so, my dear, have done upon this subject. Was Captain Macheath here, this morning, for the bank-notes he left with you last week?

Mrs. P. Yes, my dear; and though the bank has stopped payment, he was so cheerful and so

agreeable! Sure, there is not a finer gentleman upon the road than the captain? if he comes from Bagshot, at any reasonable hour, he hath promised to make one this evening, with Polly, me, and Bob Booty, at a party at quadrille. Pray, my dear, is the captain rich?

Peach. The captain keeps too good company ever to grow rich. Marybone and the chocolate-houses are his undoing. The man that proposes to get money by play, should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth.

Mrs. P. Really, I am sorry, upon Polly's account, the captain hath not more discretion. What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

Peach. Upon Polly's account! what a plague doth the woman mean?—Upon Polly's account!

Mrs. P. Captain Macheath is very fond of the girl.

Peach. And what then?

Mrs. P. If I have any skill in the ways of women, I am sure Polly thinks him a very pretty man.

Peach. And what then? you would not be so mad as to have the wench marry him! Gamesters and highwaymen are, generally, very good to their mistresses, but they are very devils to their wives.

Mrs. P. But if Polly should be in love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself? Poor girl, I'm in the utmost concern about her!

Peach. Look ye, wife, a handsome wench, in our way of business, is as profitable as at the bar of a Temple coffee-house, who looks upon it as her livelihood, to grant every liberty but one. My daughter to me should be like a court lady to a minister of state, a key to the whole gang. Married! if the affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the example of our neighbours.

Mrs. P. Mayhap, my dear, you may injure the poor girl: she loves to imitate the fine ladies, and she may only allow the captain liberties, in the view of interest.

Peach. But 'tis your duty, my dear, to warn the girl against her ruin, and to instruct her how to make the most of her beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the meantime, wife, rip out the coronets and marks of these dozen of cambric handkerchiefs, for I can dispose of them this afternoon to a chap in the city. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. P. Never was a man more out of the way in an argument than my husband. Why must our Polly, forsooth, differ from her sex, and love only her husband? and why must Polly's marriage, contrary to all observation, make her the less followed by other men? All men are thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property.

Enter FILCH.

Come hither, Filch.—I am as fond of this child, as though my mind misgave me he were my own. He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble-fingered as a juggler. If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of thy life, I pronounce, boy, thou wilt be a great man in history. Where was your post last night, my boy?

Filch. I plied at the opera, Madam; and, considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there was no great hurry in getting chairs and coaches,

made a tolerable hand on't—These seven handkerchiefs, Madam.

Mrs. P. Coloured ones, I see. They are of sure sale from our warehouse at Redriff, among the seamen.

Filch. And this snuff-box.

Mrs. P. Set in gold! a pretty encouragement this to a young beginner!

Filch. I had a fair tug at a charming gold watch. Plague take the tailors, for making the fobs so deep and narrow!—it stuck by the way, and I was forced to make my escape under a coach. Really, Madam, I fear I shall be cut off in the flower of my youth, so that every now and then, since I was pumped, I have thoughts of taking up, and going to sea.

Mrs. P. You should go to Hockley-in-the-hole, and to Marybone, child, to learn valour; these are the schools that have bred so many brave men. I thought, boy, by this time, thou hadst lost fear as well as shame. Poor lad! how little does he know yet of the Old Bailey! For the first fact, I'll insure thee from being hanged; and going to sea, Filch, will come time enough, upon a sentence of transportation. But, hark you, my lad, don't tell me a lie; for you know I hate a liar.—Do you know of any thing that hath passed between Captain Macheath and our Polly?

Filch. I beg you, Madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a lie to you, or to Miss Polly; for I promised her I would not tell.

Mrs. P. But when the honour of our family is concerned.

Filch. I shall lead a sad life with Miss Polly, if ever she comes to know I told you. Besides, I would not willingly forfeit my own honour, by betraying any body.

Mrs. P. Yonder comes my husband and Polly. Come, Filch, you shall go with me into my own room, and tell me the whole story. I'll give thee a glass of a most delicious cordial that I keep for my own drinking. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter PEACHUM and POLLY.

Polly. I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself, and of my man too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a court or at an assembly. We have it in our nature, papa. If I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favour to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common.

Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre,

Which in the garden enamels the ground.

Near it the bees in play flutter and cluster,

And gaudy butterflies frolic around.

But when once pluck'd 'tis no longer alluring,
To Covent Garden 'tis sent (as yet sweet,
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all en-
during,

Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.

Peach. You know, Polly, I am not against your toying and trifling with a customer, in the way of business, or to get out a secret or so; but if I find out that you have played the fool, and are married, you jade you, I'll cut your throat, hussy. Now, you know my mind.

Enter MRS. PEACHUM, in a very great passion.

Our Polly is a sad slut! nor heeds what we have taught her.

I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter! For she must have both hoods and gowns, and hoops to swell her pride,

With scarfs, and stays, and gloves, and lace, and she will have men beside;

And when she's dress'd with care and cost, all tempting, fine, and gay,

As men should serve a cucumber, she flings herself away.

You baggage! you hussy! you inconsiderate jade! had you been hanged, it would not have vexed me; for that might have been your misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by choice!—The wench is married, husband.

Peach. Married! the captain is a bold man, and will risk any thing for money: to be sure he believes her a fortune. Do you think your mother and I should have lived comfortably so long together, if ever we had been married, baggage?

Mrs. P. I knew she was always a proud slut, and now the wench hath played the fool and married, because, forsooth, she would do like the gentry! Can you support the expense of a husband, hussy, in gaming and drinking? have you money enough to carry on the daily quarrels of man and wife, about who shall squander most? If you must be married, could you introduce nobody into our family but a highwayman? Why, thou foolish jade, thou wilt be as ill used and as much neglected as if thou hadst married a lord!

Peach. Let not your anger, my dear, break through the rules of decency; for the captain looks upon himself in the military capacity, as a gentleman by his profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting or dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent chances for a wife. Tell me, hussy, are you ruined or no?

Mrs. P. With Polly's fortune she might very well have gone off to a person of distinction: yes, that you might, you pouting slut.

Peach. What! is the wench dumb? speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an answer from you. Are you really bound wife to him, or are you only upon liking.

Polly. Oh!

Mrs. P. How the mother is to be pitied who hath handsome daughters! Locks, bolts, bars, and lectures of morality, are nothing to them; they break through them all; they have as much pleasure in cheating a father and mother, as in cheating at cards.

Peach. Why, Polly, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our house.

Polly. Can love be controll'd by advice!

Will Cupid our mothers obey?

Though my heart were as frozen as ice,

At his flame 'twould have melted away.

When he kiss'd me, so sweetly he press'd,

'Twas so sweet that I must have complied,

So I thought it both safest and best.

To marry, for fear you should chide.

Mrs. P. Then all the hopes of our family are gone for ever and ever.

Peach. And Macheath may hang his father and mother-in-law, in hopes to get into their laughter's fortune.

Polly. I did not marry him (as tis the fashion, coolly and deliberately, for honour or money—but I love him.

Mrs. P. Love him! worse and worse! I thought the girl had been better bred. Oh husband! husband! her folly makes me mad! my head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself—Oh!

[*Faints*]

Peach. See, wench, to what a condition you have reduced your poor mother! A glass of cordial this instant! How the poor woman takes it to heart! [*POLLY goes out, and returns with it.*] Ah, hussy! now this is the only comfort your mother has left.

Polly. Give her another glass, Sir; my mamma drinks double the quantity whenever she is in this way. This, you see, fetches her.

Mrs. P. The girl shows such readiness, and so much concern, that I almost could find in my heart to forgive her.

O Polly, you might have toy'd and kiss'd:

By keeping men off, you keep them on,

Polly. But he so teased me,

And he so pleased me,

What I did you must have done.

Mrs. P. Not with a highwayman—you sorry slut.

Peach. A word with you, wife. 'Tis no new thing for a wench to take a man without consent of parents. You know 'tis the frailty of woman, my dear!

Mrs. P. Yes, indeed, the sex is frail; but the first time a woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice methinks, for then or never is her time to make her fortune: after that she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

Peach. Make yourself a little easy; I have a thought shall soon set all matters again to rights. Why so melancholy, Polly? since what is done cannot be undone, we must endeavour to make the best of it.

Mrs. P. Well, Polly, as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee.—Your father is too fond of you, hussy.

Polly. Then all my sorrows are at an end.

Mrs. P. A mighty likely speech in troth for a wench who is just married!

Polly. I like a ship in storms was toss'd,

Yet afraid to put into land,

For, seized in the port the vessel's lost

Whose treasure is contraband.

The waves are laid,

My duty's paid;

O joy beyond expression!

Thus safe ashore

I ask no more;

My all's in my possession.

Peach. I hear customers in t'other room; go talk with them, Polly; but come again as soon as they are gone.—But, barkye, child, if 'tis the gentleman who was here yesterday about the repeating watch, say you can't get intelligence of it till to-morrow, for I lent it to Sukey Straddle, to make a figure with to-night at a tavern in Drury-lane. If t'other gentleman calls for the silver-hilted sword, you know Beetle-browed Jemmy hath it on, and he doth not come from Tunbridge till Tuesday night, so that it cannot be had till then. [*Exit POLLY.*] Dear wife, be a little pacified;

don't let your passion run away with your senses : Polly, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

Mrs. P. If she had had only an intrigue with the fellow, why the very best families have excused and huddled up a frailty of that sort. 'Tis marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish.

Peach. But money, wife, is the true fullers' birth for reputations ; there is not a spot or stain but what it can take out. I tell you, wife, I can make this match turn to our advantage.

Mrs. P. I am very sensible, husband, that Captain Macheath is worth money, but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three wives already, and then, if he should die in a session or two, Polly's dower would come into dispute.

Peach. That indeed is a point which ought to be considered. The lawyers are bitter enemies to those in our way ; they don't care that any body should get a clandestine livelihood but themselves.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. 'Twas only Nimming Ned : he brought in a damask window-curtain, a hoop-petticoat, a pair of silver candlesticks, a perriwig, and one silk stocking, from the fire that happened last night.

Peach. There is not a fellow that is cleverer in his way, and saves more goods out of the fire, than Ned. But now, Polly, to your affair ; for matters must not be as they are. You are married, then, it seems ?

Polly. Yes, Sir.

Peach. And how do you propose to live, child ?

Polly. Like other women, Sir ; upon the industry of my husband.

Mrs. P. What ! is the wench turned fool ? a highwayman's wife, like a soldier's, hath as little of his pay as of his company.

Peach. And had not you the common views of a gentlewoman in your marriage, Polly ?

Polly. I don't know what you mean, Sir.

Peach. Of a jointure, and of being a widow.

Polly. But I love him, Sir : how then could I have thoughts of parting with him ?

Peach. Parting with him ! why that is the whole scheme and intention of all marriage articles. The comfortable estate of widowhood is the only hope that keeps up a wife's spirits. Where is the woman who would scruple to be a wife, if she had it in her power to be a widow whenever she pleased ? If you have any views of this sort, Polly, I shall think the match not so very unreasonable.

Polly. How I dread to hear your advice ! yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

Peach. Secure what he hath got, have him peached the next sessions, and then at once you are made a rich widow.

Polly. What ! murder the man I love ! the blood runs cold at my heart with the very thought of it !

Peach. Fy, Polly ! what hath murder to do in the affair ? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say that the captain himself would like that we should get the reward for his death sooner than a stranger. Why, Polly, the captain knows that as 'tis his employment to rob, so 'tis ours to take robbers ; every man in his business : so that there is no malice in the case.

Mrs. P. To have him peached is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

Polly. O ponder well ! be not severe ;

Save a wretched wife :

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For on the rope that hangs my dear,
Depends poor Polly's life.

Mrs. P. But your duty to your parents, hussy, obliges you to hang him. What would many a wife give for such an opportunity !

Polly. What is a jointure, what is widowhood, to me ? I know my heart ; I cannot survive him. Thus, Sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

Mrs. P. What ! is the fool in love in earnest then ? I hate thee for being particular. Why, wench, thou art a shame to thy very sex !

Polly. But hear me, mother—if you ever loved—

Mrs. P. Those cursed play books she reads have been her ruin ! One word more, hussy, and I shall knock your brains out, if you have any.

Peach. Keep out of the way, Polly, for fear of mischief, and consider of what is proposed to you.

Mrs. P. Away, hussy. Hang your husband, and be dutiful. [*POLLY listens.*] The thing, husband, must and shall be done. If she will not know her duty, we know ours.

Peach. But really, my dear, it grieves one's heart to take off a great man. When I consider his personal bravery, his fine stratagems, how much we have already got by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I can't find in my heart to have a hand in his death : I wish you could have made Polly undertake it.

Mrs. P. But in case of necessity—our own lives are in danger.

Peach. Then indeed we must comply with the customs of the world, and make gratitude give way to interest—he shall be taken off.

Mrs. P. I'll undertake to manage Polly.

Peach. And I'll prepare matters for the Old Bailey.

[*Exeunt PEACHUM and MRS. PEACHUM.*]

Polly. Now I'm a wretch indeed !—Methinks I see him already in the cart, sweeter and more lovely than the nosegay in his hand !—I hear the crowd extolling his resolution and intrepidity !—I see him at the tree ! the whole circle are in tears !—What then will become of Polly ?—As yet I may inform him of their design, and aid him in his escape.—It shall be so.—But then he flies, absents himself, and I bar myself from his dear, dear conversation ! that too will distract me.—If he keeps out of the way, my papa and mamma may in time relent, and we may be happy.—If he stays he is hanged, and then he is lost for ever !—He intended to lie concealed in my room till the dusk of the evening. If they are abroad, I'll this instant let him out, lest some accident should prevent him.

Enter MACHEATH.

Mac. Pretty Polly, say,
When I was away,
Did your fancy never stray
To some newer lover ?

Polly. Without disguise,
Heaving sighs,
Doting eyes,
My constant heart discover.
Fondly let me loll !

Mac. O pretty, pretty Poll !

Polly. And are you as fond of me as ever, my dear ?

Mac. Suspect my honour, my courage, suspect any thing but my love.—May my pistols miss fire, and my mare slip her shoulder while I am pursued, if ever I forsake thee !

Polly. Nay, my dear! I have no reason to doubt you, for I find in the romance you lent me, none of the great heroes were false in love.

Mac. My heart was so free,
It roved like the bee,
Till Polly my passion requited;
I sipt each flower,
I chang'd every hour,
But here every flower is united.

Polly. Were you sentenced to transportation, sure, my dear, you could not leave me behind you—could you?

Mac. Is there any power, any force, that could tear me from thee? You might sooner tear a pension out of the hands of a courtier, a fee from a lawyer, a pretty woman from a looking-glass, or any woman from quadrille.—But to tear me from thee is impossible!

Mac. Were I laid on Greenland's coast,
And in my arms embraced my lass,
Warm amidst eternal frost,
Too soon the half year's night would pass.

Polly. Were I sold on Indian soil,
Soon as the burning day was closed,
I could mock the sultry toil

When on my charmer's breast repos'd.

Mac. And I would love you all the day,

Polly. Every night would kiss and play,

Mac. If with me you'd fondly stray,

Polly. Over the hills and far away.

Polly. Yes, I would go with thee. But oh!—how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee! We must part!

Mac. How! part!

Polly. We must, we must!—My papa and mamma are set against thy life: they now, even now, are in search after thee: they are preparing evidence against thee; thy life depends upon a moment!

O, what pain it is to part!

Can I leave thee, can I leave thee?

O, what a pain it is to part!

Can thy Polly ever leave thee?

But death my love should thwart,

And bring thee to the fatal cart,

Thus I tear thee from my bleeding heart!

Fly hence, and let me leave thee.

One kiss, and then!—one kiss!—Be gone!—Farewell!

Mac. My hand, my heart, my dear, is so rivetted to thine, that I cannot unloose my hold!

Polly. But my papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of hope. A few weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all. Shall thy Polly hear from thee?

Mac. Must I then go?

Polly. And will not absence change your love?

Mac. If you doubt it, let me stay—and be hanged.

Polly. Oh, how I fear! how I tremble!—Go—but, when safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again; for, till then, Polly is wretched.

Mac. The miser thus a shilling sees,
Which he's obliged to pay;
With sighs resigns it by degrees,
And fears 'tis gone for aye.

Polly. The boy thus when his sparrow's flown,
The bird in silence eyes;

But soon as out of sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs, and cries.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Tavern near Newgate.

JEMMY TWITCHER, CROOK-FINGERED JACK, WAT DREARY, ROBIN OF BAGSHOT, NIMMING NED, HARRY PADDINGTON, MAT-O'-THE-MINT, BEN BUDGE, and the rest of the gang, at the table, with wine, brandy, and tobacco.

Ben. But pr'ythee, Mat, what is become of thy brother Tom? I have not seen him since my return from transportation.

Mat. Poor brother Tom had an accident, this time twelvemonth, and so clever made a fellow as he was, I could not save him from these stealing rascals, the surgeons; and now, poor man, he is among the otamies, at Surgeons'-hall.

Ben. So, it seems, his time was come.

Jemmy. But the present time is ours, and nobody alive hath more. Why are the laws levelled at us? are we more dishonest than the rest of mankind? What we win, gentlemen, is our own, by the law of arms, and the right of conquest.

Jack. Where shall we find such another set of practical philosophers, who, to a man, are above the fear of death?

Wat. Sound men and true!

Robin. Of tried courage, and indefatigable industry!

Ned. Who is there here that would not die for his friend?

Harry. Who is there here that would betray him for his interest?

Mat. Show me a gang of courtiers that can say as much.

Ben. We are for a just partition of the world; for every man has a right to enjoy life.

Mat. We retrench the superfluities of mankind. The world is avaricious, and I hate avarice. A covetous fellow, like a jackdaw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the robbers of mankind; for money was made for the free-hearted and generous: and where is the injury of taking from another what he hath not the heart to make use of?

Jemmy. Our several stations for the day are fixed. Good luck attend us all! Fill the glasses!

Mat. Fill every glass, for wine inspires us,
And fires us,

With courage, love, and joy.

Women and wine should life employ;

Is there aught else on earth desirous?

Chorus. Fill every glass, &c.

Enter MACHEATH.

Mac. Gentlemen, well met; my heart hath been with you this hour, but an unexpected affair hath detained me. No ceremony, I beg you!

Mat. We were just breaking up to go upon duty. Am I to have the honour of taking the air with you, Sir, this evening, upon the Heath? I drink a dram now and then with the stage-coachmen, in the way of friendship, and intelligence; and I know that, about this time, there will be passengers upon the western road who are worth speaking with.

Mac. I was to have been of that party—but—

Mat. But what, Sir?

Mac. Is there any one that suspects my courage?

Mat. We have all been witnesses of it.

Mac. My honour and truth to the gang?

Mat. I'll be answerable for it.

Mac. In the division of our booty, have I ever shown the least marks of avarice and injustice?

Mat. By these questions, something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

Mac. I have a fixed confidence, gentlemen, in you all, as men of honour, and as such I value and respect you. Peachum is a man that is useful to us.

Mat. Is he about to play us any foul play? I'll shoot him through the head.

Mac. I beg you, gentlemen, act with conduct and discretion. A pistol is your last resort.

Mat. He knows nothing of this meeting.

Mac. Business cannot go on without him: he is a man who knows the world, and is a necessary agent to us. We have had a slight difference, and, till it is accommodated, I shall be obliged to keep out of his way. Any private dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my friends. You must continue to act under his discretion; for, the moment we break loose from him, our gang is ruined.

Mat. He is, to us, of great convenience.

Mac. Make him believe I have quitted the gang, which I can never do but with life. At our private quarters I will continue to meet you. A week or so will probably reconcile us.

Mat. Your instructions shall be observed. 'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several duties; so, till the evening, at our quarters in Moorfields, we bid you farewell.

Mac. I shall wish myself with you. Success attend you. [*Sits down melancholy at the table.*]

Mat-o'-the-Mint and Gang.

Let us take the road;

Hark! I hear the sound of coaches,

The hour of attack approaches,

To your arms, brave boys, and load,

See the ball I hold!

Let the chemists toil like asses,

Our fire their fire surpasses,

And turns all our lead to gold.

[*The gang, ranged in the front of the Stage, load their pistols, and stick them under their girdles; then go off, singing the first part in chorus.*]

Mac. What a fool is a fond wench! Polly is most confoundedly bit. I love the sex; and a man who loves money might as well be contented with one guinea, as I with one woman. The town, perhaps, hath been as much obliged to me for recruiting it with free-hearted ladies, as to any recruiting officer in the army. If it were not for us and the other gentlemen of the sword, Drury-lane would be uninhabited.

If the heart of a man is depress'd with cares,
The mist is dispell'd when a woman appears;
Like the notes of a fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly,
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.
Roses and lilies her cheeks disclose,
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those;

Press her,

Caress her,

With blisses,

Her kisses

Dissolve us in pleasure and soft repose.

I must have women—there is nothing unbends the mind like them: money is not so strong a cordial for the time—Drawer!

Enter DRAWER.

is the porter gone for all the ladies, according to my directions?

Drawer. I expect him back every minute: but you know, Sir, you sent him as far as Hockley-in-the-hole for three of the ladies; for one in Vi-regar-yard, and for the rest of them, somewhere about Lewkner's-lane. Sure some of them are below, for I hear the bar-bell. As they come, I will show them up. Coming! coming. [*Exit.*]

Enter MRS. COAXER, DOLLY TRULL, MRS. VIXEN, BETTY DOXY, JENNY DIVER, MRS. SLAMMEKIN, SUKEY TAWDRY, MOLLY BRAZEN.

Mac. Dear Mrs. Coaxer, you are welcome! you look charmingly to-day: I hope you don't want the repairs of quality, and lay on paint.—Dolly Trull! kiss me, you slut! are you as amorous as ever, hussy? you are always so taken up with stealing hearts, that you don't allow yourself time to steal any thing else.—Ah, Dolly thou wilt ever be a coquette.—Mrs. Vixen, I'm yours! I always loved a woman of wit and spirit: they make charming mistresses, but plaguy wives.—Betty Doxy! come hither, hussy: do you drink as hard as ever? you had better stick to good wholesome beer; for, in troth, Betty, strong waters will, in time, ruin your constitution; you should leave those to your betters.—What, and my pretty Jenny Diver too! as prim and demure as ever! there is not any prude, though ever so high bred, hath a more sanctified look, with a more mischievous heart: ah, thou art a dear, artful hypocrite!—Mrs. Slammekin! as careless and genteel as ever! all you fine ladies, who know your own beauty, affect an undress.—But see! here's Sukey Tawdry come to contradict what I was saying.—Molly Brazen! [*She kisses him.*] That's well done! I love a free-hearted wench: thou hast a most agreeable assurance, girl, and art as willing as a turtle.

Macheath and Ladies.

Youth's the season made for joys,

Love is then our duty;

She alone who that employs,

Well deserves her beauty.

Let's be gay,

While we may,

Beauty's a flower despised in decay.

Chorus. Youth's the season, &c.

Let us drink and sport to-day,

Ours is not to-morrow;

Love with youth flies swift away,

Age is nought but sorrow.

Dance and sing,

Time's on the wing,

Life never knows the return of spring.

Chorus. Let us drink, &c.

Mac. Now, pray, ladies, take your places. Here, Drawer, bring us more wine. If any of the ladies choose gin, I hope they will be so free as to call for it.

Jenny. You look as if you meant me. Wine is

strong enough for me. Indeed, Sir, I never drink strong waters but when I have the colic.

Mac. Just the excuse of the fine ladies! why, a lady of quality is never without the colic. I hope, Mrs. Coaxer, you have had good success of late in your visits among the mercers.

Mrs. C. We have so many interlopers; yet, with industry, one may still have a little picking.—If any woman hath more art than another, to be sure 'tis Jenny Diver.

Mac. Have done with your compliments, ladies, and drink about. You are not so fond of me, Jenny, as you used to be.

Jenny. 'Tis not convenient, Sir, to show my fondness among so many rivals. 'Tis your own choice, and not the warmth of my inclinations, that will determine you.—But, to be sure, Sir, with so much good fortune as you have had upon the road, you must be grown immensely rich.

Mac. The road, indeed, hath done me justice, but the gaming-table hath been my ruin.

Jenny. A man of courage should never put any thing to the risk but his life. These are the tools of a man of honour; cards and dice are only fit for cowardly cheats, who prey upon their friends. [*She takes up one pistol; SUKEY TAWDRY the other.*]

Sukey. This, Sir, is fitter for your hand. Besides your loss of money, 'tis a loss to the ladies. How fond could I be of you! but, before company, 'tis ill bred.

Mac. Wanton hussies!

Jenny. I must, and will, have a kiss, to give my wine a zest.

PEACHUM and Constables rush in upon him.

Peach. I seize you, Sir, as my prisoner.

Mac. Was this well done, Jenny?—Women are decoy ducks; who can trust them? beasts, rades, jilts, harpies, furies, whores!

Peach. Your case, Mr. Macheath, is not particular. The greatest heroes have been ruined by women.—But, to do them justice, I must own they are a pretty sort of creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, Sir, take your leave of the ladies; and, if they have a mind to make you a visit, they will be sure to find you at home. This gentleman, ladies, lodges in Newgate. Constables, wait upon the captain to his lodgings.

Mac. At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure;
Let me go where I will,

In all kinds of ill,

I shall find no such furies as these are.

[*Exit MACHEATH, guarded with PEACHUM and Constables.*]

Mrs. V. Look ye, Mrs. Jenny, though Mr. Peachum may have made a private bargain with you and Sukey Tawdry, for betraying the captain, as we were all assisting we ought all to share alike.

Jenny. As far as a bowl of punch, or a treat, I believe, Mrs. Sukey will join me—as for any thing else, ladies, you cannot, in conscience, expect it.

Mrs. S. Dear Madam!

[*Offering the pass to MRS. VIXEN.*]

Mrs. V. I wouldn't for the world.

Mrs. S. Nay—thus I must stay all night.

Mrs. V. Since you command me—

Mrs. S. [*After giving way to MRS. VIXEN, pushes her from the door.*] Let your betters go before you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Newgate.

Enter LOCKIT, Turnkeys, MACHEATH, and Constables.

Lockit. Noble captain, you are welcome! you have not been a lodger of mine this year and a half. You know the custom, Sir; garnish, captain, garnish.—Hand me down those fetters there.

Mac. Those, Mr. Lockit, seem to be the heaviest of the whole set. With your leave, I should like the further pair better.

Lockit. Look ye, captain, we know what is fittest for our prisoners. When a gentleman uses me with civility, I always do the best I can to please him.—Hand them down, I say. We have them of all prices, from one guinea to ten; and 'tis fitting every gentleman should please himself.

Mac. I understand you, Sir. [*Gives money.*] The fees here are so many, and so exorbitant, that few fortunes can bear the expense of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a gentleman.

Lockit. Those, I see, will fit the captain better.—Take down the further pair.—Do but examine them, Sir—Never was better work—How genteelly they are made!—They will sit as easy as a glove, and the nicest man in England might not be ashamed to wear them. [*He puts on the chains.*] If I had the best gentleman in the land in my custody, I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, Sir—I now leave you to your private meditations.

[*Exit LOCKIT, Turnkeys, and Con.*]

Mac. Man may escape from rope and gun,

Nay, some have outlived the doctor's pill;

Who takes a woman must be undone,

That basilisk is sure to kill.

The fly, that sips treacle, is lost in the sweets,

So he that tastes woman, woman, woman,

He that tastes woman, ruin meets.

To what a woful plight have I brought myself! Here must I (all day long till I am hanged) be confidant to hear the reproaches of a wench, who lays her ruin at my door—I am in the custody of her father; and, to be sure, if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my execution.—But I promised the wench marriage.—What signifies a promise to a woman? does not man, in marriage itself, promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, women will believe us; for they look upon a promise as an excuse for following their own inclinations.—But here comes Lucy, and I cannot get from her—'would I were deaf!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. You base man, you!—how can you look me in the face, after what hath passed between us?—Oh, Macheath! thou hast robbed me of my quiet—to see thee tortured would give me pleasure.

Thus, when a good housewife sees a rat,

In her trap in the morning taken,

With pleasure her heart goes pit-a-pat,

In revenge for her loss of bacon.

Then she throws him

To the dog or cat

To be worried, crush'd, and shaken.

Mac. Have you no tenderness, my dear Lucy to see a husband in these circumstances?

Lucy. A husband!

Mac. In every respect but the form, and that, my dear, may be said over us at any time. Friends should not insist upon ceremonies. From a man of honour his word is as good as his bond.

Lucy. It is the pleasure of all you fine men to insult the women you have ruined.

Mac. The very first opportunity, my dear (but have patience,) you shall be my wife in whatever manner you please.

Lucy. Insinuating monster! And so you think I know nothing of the affair of Miss Polly Peachum?—I could tear thy eyes out.

Mac. Sure, Lucy, you can't be such a fool as to be jealous of Polly.

Lucy. Are you not married to her, you brute, you?

Mac. Married! very good. The wench gives it out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy good opinion. 'Tis true I go to the house, I chat with the girl, I kiss her, I say a thousand things to her (as all gentlemen do) that mean nothing, to divert myself; and now the silly jade hath set it about that I am married to her, to let me know what she would be at. Indeed, my dear Lucy! those violent passions may be of ill consequence to a woman in your condition.

Lucy. Come, come, captain, for all your assurance, you know that Miss Polly hath put it out of your power to do me the justice you promised me.

Mac. A jealous woman believes every thing her passion suggests. To convince you of my sincerity, if we can find the ordinary, I shall have no scruples of making you my wife; and I know the consequence of having two at a time.

Lucy. That you are only to be hanged, and so get rid of them both.

Mac. I am ready, my dear Lucy! to give you satisfaction—if you think there is any in marriage.—What can a man of honour say more?

Lucy. So then it seems you are not married to Miss Polly?

Mac. You know, Lucy, the girl is prodigiously conceited: no man can say a civil thing to her, but (like other fine ladies) her vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

The first time at the looking glass

The mother sets her daughter,

The image strikes the smiling lass

With self-love ever after.

Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,

Thinks every charm grows stronger;

But, alas, vain maid! all eyes but your own

Can see you are not younger.

When women consider their own beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their demands; for they expect their lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

Lucy. Yonder is my father—Perhaps this way we may light upon the ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your word—for I long to be made an honest woman. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter PEACHUM, and LOCKIT, with an account-book.

Lockit. In this last affair, brother Peachum, we are agreed. You have consented to go halves in Macheath.

Peach. We shall never fall out about an execution. But as to that article, pray how stands your last year's account?

Lockit. If you will run your eye over it, you'll find 'tis fair and clearly staved.

Peach. This long arrears of the government is very hard upon us. Can it be expected that we should hang our acquaintance for nothing, when our betters will hardly save theirs without being paid for it? Unless the people in employment pay better, I promise them for the future I shall let other rogues live besides their own.

Lockit. Perhaps, brother, they are afraid those matters may be carried too far. We are treated too by them with contempt, as if our profession were not reputable.

Peach. In one respect indeed our employments may be reckoned dishonest, because, like great statesmen, we encourage those who betray their friends.

Lockit. Such language, brother, any where else might turn to your prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be;
If you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
Each cries—That was level'd at me.

Peach. Here's poor Ned Clincher's name, I see: sure, brother Lockit, there was a little unfair proceeding in Ned's case; for he told me in the condemned hold, that, for value received, you had promised him a session or two longer without molestation.

Lockit. Mr. Peachum—this is the first time my honour was ever called in question.

Peach. Business is at an end—if once we act dishonourably.

Lockit. Who accuses me?

Peach. You are warm, brother.

Lockit. He that attacks my honour, attacks my livelihood—and this usage—Sir—is not to be borne.

Peach. Since you provoke me to speak—I must tell you too, that Mrs. Coaxer charges you with defrauding her of her information money for the apprehending of Curl-pated Hugh. Indeed, indeed, brother, we must punctually pay our spies, or we shall have no information.

Lockit. Is this language to me, sirrah—who have saved you from the gallows, sirrah!

[*They collar each other.*]

Peach. If I am hanged it shall be for ridding the world of an arrant rascal.

Lockit. This hand shall do the office of the halter you deserve, and throttle you—you dog!

Peach. Brother, brother—we are both in the wrong—we shall be both losers in the dispute—for you know we have it in our power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate.

Lockit. Nor you so provoking.

Peach. 'Tis our mutual interest, 'tis for the interest of the world, we should agree. If I said any thing, brother, to the prejudice of your character, I ask pardon.

Lockit. Brother Peachum—I can forgive as well as resent—Give me your hand; suspicion does not become a friend.

Peach. I only meant to give you occasion to justify yourself. But I must now step home, for I expect the gentleman about his snuff-box—that Filch nimmed two nights ago in the Park. I appointed him at this hour. [*Exit.*]

Enter LUCY.

Lockit. Whence come you, hussy?

Lucy. My tears might answer that question.

Lockit. You have been whimpering and fondling like a spaniel, over the fellow that hath abused you.

Lucy. One can't help love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my power to obey you and hate him.

Lockit. Learn to bear your husband's death like a reasonable woman; 'tis not the fashion nowadays so much as to affect sorrow upon these occasions. No woman would ever marry if she had not the chance of mortality for a release. Act like a woman of spirit, hussy, and thank your father for what he is doing.

Lucy. Is then his fate decreed, Sir,
Such a man can I think of quitting?
When first we met, so moves me yet,
O see how my heart is splitting!

Lockit. Look ye, Lucy, there is no saving him—so I think you must even do like other widows—buy yourself weeds, and be cheerful.

You'll think, ere many days ensue,
This sentence not severe;
I hang your husband, child, 'tis true,
But with him hang your care.
Twang dang dille dee.

Like a good wife, go moan over your dying husband: that, child, is your duty—Consider, girl, you can't have the man and the money too—so make yourself as easy as you can, by getting all you can from him. [*Exit.*]

Enter MACHEATH.

Lucy. Though the ordinary was out of the way to-day, I hope, my dear, you will, upon the first opportunity, quiet my scruples.—Oh, Sir! my father's hard heart is not to be softened, and I am in the utmost despair.

Mac. But if I could raise a small sum—would not twenty guineas, think you, move him?—Of all the arguments in the way of business, the perquisite is the most prevailing.—Money, well-timed, and properly applied, will do any thing.

If you at an office expect your due,
And would'nt have matters neglected,
You must quicken the clerk with perquisite too,
To do what his duty directed:
Or would you the frowns of a lady prevent,
She too has that palpable failing;
The perquisite softens her into consent,
That reason with all is prevailing.

Lucy. What love or money can do shall be done; for all my comfort depends upon your safety.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Where is my dear husband?—Was a rope ever intended for this neck?—Oh let me throw me throw my arms about it, and throttle thee with love!—Why dost thou turn away from me!—'tis thy Polly—'tis thy wife.

Mac. Was ever such an unfortunate rascal as I am?

Lucy. Was there ever such another villain?

Polly. Oh, Macheath! was it for this we parted?—Taken! imprisoned! tried! hanged!—Cruel reflection! I'll stay with thee till death—no force shall tear thy dear wife from thee now.—

What means my love?—not one kind word! not one kind look!—Think what thy Polly suffers to see thee in this condition!

Mac. I must disown her. [*Aside.*] The wench is distracted!

Lucy. Am I then bilked of my virtue? Can I have no reparation? Sure men were born to lie, and woman to believe them! Oh, villain! villain!

Polly. Am I not thy wife?—Thy neglect of me, thy aversion to me, too severely proves it.—Look on me—tell me, am I not thy wife?

Lucy. Perfidious wretch!

Polly. Barbarous husband!

Lucy. Hadst thou been hanged five months ago, I had been happy.

Polly. If you had been kind to me till death, it would not have vexed me—and that's no very unreasonable request (though from a wife) to a man who hath not above seven or eight days to live.

Lucy. Art thou, then, married to another? Hast thou two wives, monster?

Mac. If woman's tongue can cease for an answer—hear me.

Lucy. I wont.—Flesh and blood can't bear my usage!

Polly. Shall not I claim my own? Justice bids me speak.

Mac. How happy could I be with either

Were t'other dear charmer away!

But while ye thus tease me together,

To neither a word will I say;

But toll de roll, &c.

Polly. Sure, my dear, there ought to be some preference shown to a wife—at least she may claim the appearance of it. He must be distracted with misfortunes, or he could not use me thus.

Lucy. Oh villain! villain! thou hast deceived me!—I could even inform against thee with pleasure.—Not a prude wishes more heartily to have facts against her intimate acquaintance, than I now wish to have facts against thee. I would have her satisfaction, and they should all out.

Polly. I'm bubbled.

Lucy. I'm bubbled.

Polly. Oh, how I'm troubled!

Lucy. Bamboozled and bit!

Polly. My distresses are doubled.

Lucy. When you come to the tree, should the hangman refuse,
These fingers, with pleasure, could fasten the noose.

Polly. I'm bubbled, &c.

Mac. Be pacified, my dear Lucy—this is all a fetch of Polly's, to make me desperate with you, in case I get off. If I am hanged, she would fain have the credit of being thought my widow.—Really, Polly, this is no time for a dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of marriage, I am thinking of hanging.

Polly. And hast thou the heart to persist in disowning me?

Mac. And hast thou the heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, Polly, dost thou seek to aggravate my misfortunes?

Lucy. Really, Miss Peachum, you do but expose yourself; besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a gentleman in his circumstances.

Polly. Cease your funning,
Force or cunning

Never shall my heart trepan;
 All these sallies
 Are but malice,
 To seduce my constant man.
 'Tis most certain,
 By their flirting,
 Women oft have envy shown;
 Pleas'd to ruin
 Others' wooing,
 Never happy in their own!

Decency, Madam, methinks, might teach you to behave yourself with some reserve to the husband, while his wife is present.

Mac. But, seriously, Polly, this is carrying the joke a little too far.

Lucy. If you are determined, Madam, to raise a disturbance in the prison, I shall be obliged to send for the turnkey, to show you the door. I am sorry, Madam, you force me to be so ill-bred.

Polly. Give me leave to tell you, Madam, these forward airs don't become you in the least, Madam; and my duty, Madam, obliges me to stay with my husband, Madam.

Lucy. Why, how now, Madam Flirt?
 If you thus must chatter,
 And are for flinging dirt,
 Let's try who best can spatter,
 Madam Flirt!

Polly. Why, how now, saucy jade?
 Sure the wench is tipsy?
 How can you see me made [To him.
 The scoff of such a gipsy?
 Saucy jade! [To her.

Enter PEACHUM.

Peach. Where's my wench? Ah, hussy, hussy!—Come home, you slut? and when your fellow is hanged, hang yourself, to make your family some amends.

Polly. Dear, dear father! do not tear me from him.—I must speak—I have more to say to him.—Oh, twist thy fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee! [To MACHEATH.

Peach. Sure, all women are alike! if ever they commit one folly, they are sure to commit another, by exposing themselves.—Away—not a word more.—You are my prisoner, now, hussy.

Polly. No power on earth can e'er divide
 The knot that sacred love hath tied;
 When parents draw against our mind,
 The true love's knot they faster bind.
 Oh, oh, ray, oh Amborah—Oh, oh,
 &c.

[Holding MACHEATH, PEACHUM pulling her;
 exeunt PEACHUM AND POLLY.

Mac. I am naturally compassionate, wife, so that I could not use the wench as she deserved, which made you, at first, suspect there was something in what she said.

Lucy. Indeed, my dear, I was strangely puzzled!

Mac. If that had been the case, her father would never have brought me into this circumstance.—No, Lucy, I had rather die than be false to thee!

Lucy. How happy am I, if you say this from your heart! for I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hanged, than in the arms of another.

Mac. But couldst thou bear to see me hanged?
Lucy. Oh, Macheath! I could never live to see that day!

Mac. You see, Lucy, in the account of love, you are in my debt.—Make me, if possible, love thee more, and let me owe my life to thee.—If you refuse to assist me, Peachum and your father will immediately put me beyond all means of escape.

Lucy. My father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the prisoners, and I fancy he is now taking his nap in his own room.—If I can procure the keys, shall I go off with thee, my dear?

Mac. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lie concealed. As soon as the search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee; till then, my heart is thy prisoner.

Lucy. Come then, my dear husband, owe thy life to me; and, though you love me not, be grateful.—But that Polly runs in my head strangely.

Mac. A moment of time may make us unhappy for ever.

Lucy. I like the fox shall grieve,
 Whose mate hath left her side;
 Whom hounds, from morn to eve,
 Chase o'er the country wide.
 Where can my lover hide?
 Where cheat the weary pack?
 If love be not his guide,
 He never will come back. [Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Newgate.

LOCKIT and LUCY.

Lockit. To be sure, wench, you must have been aiding and abetting to help him in this escape?

Lucy. Sir, here hath been Peachum, and his daughter Polly, and, to be sure, they know the ways of Newgate as well as if they had been born and bred in the place all their lives. Why must all your suspicion light upon me?

Lockit. Lucy, Lucy, I will have none of these shuffling answers!

Lucy. Well then, if I know any thing of him, I wish I may be burned!

Lockit. Keep your temper, Lucy, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

Lucy. Keep yours, Sir—I do wish I may be burned, I do; and what can I say more to convince you?

Lockit. Did he tip handsomely?—How much did he come down with? Come, hussy, don't cheat your father, and I shall not be angry with you—Perhaps, you have made a better bargain with him than I could have done—How much, my good girl?

Lucy. You know, Sir, I am fond of him, and would have given money to have kept him with me.

Lockit. Ah, Lucy! thy education might have put thee more upon thy guard: for a girl, in the bar of an alehouse, is always besieged.

Lucy. If you can forgive me, Sir, I will make a fair confession; for, to be sure, he hath been a most barbarous villain to me!

Lockit. And so you have let him escape, hussy—have you?

Lucy. When a woman loves, a kind look, a tender word, can persuade her to any thing, and I could ask no other bribe. Notwithstanding all he swore, I am now fully convinced, that Polly

Peachum is actually his wife—Did I let him escape, fool that I was! to go to her? Polly will wheedle herself into his money; and then Peachum will hang him, and cheat us both.

Lockit. So I am to be ruined because, forsooth, you must be in love!—A very pretty excuse!

Lucy. I could murder that impudent, happy strumpet!—I gave him his life, and that creature enjoys the sweets of it—Ungrateful Macheath!

My love is all madness and folly;
Alone I lie,

Toss, tumble, and cry,

What a happy creature is Polly!

Was e'er such a wretch as I?

With rage I redden like scarlet,

That my dear, inconstant varlet,

Stark blind to my charms,

Is lost in the arms

Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!

Stark blind to my charms,

Is lost in the arms

Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!

This, this my resentment alarms.

Lockit. And so, after all this mischief, I must stay here to be entertained with your caterwauling, Mistress Puss!—Out of my sight, wanton strumpet!—You shall fast, and mortify yourself into reason, with now and then a little handsome discipline, to bring you to your senses.—Go!—*[Exit Lucy.]* Peachum, then, intends to outwit me in this affair, but I'll be even with him!—The dog is leaky in his liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the secret from him, and turn this affair to my own advantage. *Lucy!*

Enter Lucy.

Are there any of Peachum's people now in the house?

Lucy. Filch, Sir, is drinking a quartern of strong waters in the next room, with Black Moll.

Lockit. Bid him come to me. *[Exit.]*

Enter Filch.

What, boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half starved,—like a shotten herring.—But, boy, canst thou tell me where thy master is to be found?

Filch. At his lock, Sir, at the Crooked Billet.

Lockit. Very well—I have nothing more with you. *[Exit Filch.]* I'll go to him there, for I have many important affairs to settle with him, and in the way of those transactions, I'll artfully get into his secret—so that Macheath shall not remain a day longer out of my clutches. *[Exit.]*

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Jealousy, rage, love, and fear, are at once tearing me to pieces. How am I weatherbeaten and shattered with distresses.

I'm like a skiff on the ocean toss'd,
Now high, now low, with each billow borne,
With rudder broke and anchor lost,
Deserted and all forlorn.

While thus I lie rolling and tossing all night,
That Polly lies sporting on seas of delight.

Revenge, revenge, revenge,
Shall appease my restless sprite.

I have the ratsbane ready—But say I were to be hanged—I never could be hanged for any thing that would give me greater comfort than the poisoning that slut.

Enter Filch.

Filch. Madam, here's Miss Polly come to wait upon you

Lucy. Show her in.

Enter Polly.

Dear Madam! your servant.—I hope you will pardon my passion when I was so happy to see you last—I was so overrun with the spleen, that I was perfectly out of myself; and really when one hath the spleen, every thing is to be excused by a friend.

When a wife's in the pout

(As she's sometimes, no doubt,)

The good husband, as meek as a lamb,

Her vapours to still,

First grants her her will,

And the quieting draught is a dram;

Poor man! and the quieting draught is a dram.

I wish all our quarrels might have so comfortable a reconciliation.

Polly. I have no excuse for my own behaviour, Madam, but my misfortunes—and really, Madam, I suffer too upon your account.

Lucy. But, Miss Polly—in the way of friendship, will you give me leave to propose a glass of cordial to you?

Polly. Strong waters are apt to give me the head-ache.—I hope, Madam, you will excuse me?

Lucy. Not the greatest lady in the land could have better in her closet for her own private drinking.—You seem mighty low in spirits, my dear.

Polly. I am sorry, Madam, my health will not allow me to accept of your offer—I should not have left you in the rude manner I did when we met last, Madam, had not my papa hauled me away so unexpectedly.—I was indeed somewhat provoked, and perhaps might use some expressions that were disrespectful—but really, Madam, the captain treated me with so much contempt and cruelty, that I deserved your pity rather than your resentment.

Lucy. But since his escape, no doubt, all matters are made up again.—Ah, Polly, Polly! 'tis I am the unhappy wife, and he loves you as if you were only his mistress.

Polly. Sure, Madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the object of your jealousy.—A man is always afraid of a woman who loves him too well.—So that I must expect to be neglected and avoided.

Lucy. Then our cases, my dear Polly, are exactly alike: both of us indeed have been too fond. Indeed, my dear Polly, we are both of us a cup too low; let me prevail upon you to accept of my offer.

Come, sweet lass,
Let's banish sorrow

Till to-morrow;

Come, sweet lass,

Let's take a chirping glass.

Wine can clear

The vapours of despair,

And make us light as air;

Then drink and banish care.

I can't bear, child, to see you in such low spirits—and I must persuade you to what I know will do you good *[Exit.]*

Polly. All this wheedling of Lucy can't be for nothing—at this time too, when I know she hates me!—The dissembling of a woman is always the forerunner of mischief.—By pouring strong waters down my throat she thinks to pump some secrets out of me—I'll be upon my guard, and wont taste a drop of her liquor, I'm resolved.

Re-enter LUCY, with strong waters.

Lucy. Come, Miss Polly.

Polly. Indeed, child, you have given yourself trouble to no purpose.—You must, my dear, excuse me.

Lucy. Really, Miss Polly, you are as squeamishly affected about taking a cup of strong waters as a lady before company.

Polly. What do I see? Macheath again in custody!—now every glimmering of happiness is lost. [*Drops the glass of liquor on the ground.*]

Enter LOCKIT, MACHEATH, and PEACHUM.

Lockit. Set your heart at rest, captain.—You have neither the chance of love or money for another escape, for you are ordered to be called down upon your trial immediately.

Peach. Away, hussies!—This is not a time for a man to be hampered with his wives—you see the gentleman is in chains already.

Lucy. O husband, husband! my heart longed to see thee, but to see thee thus distracts me!

Polly. Will not my dear husband look upon his Polly? Why hadst thou not flown to me for protection? with me thou hadst been safe.

Polly. Hither, dear husband, turn your eyes!

Lucy. Bestow one glance to cheer me.

Polly. Think, with that look, thy Polly dies.

Lucy. O shun me not, but hear me!

Polly. 'Tis Polly sues.

Lucy. 'Tis Lucy speaks.

Polly. Is this true love requited?

Lucy. My heart is bursting.

Polly. Mine, too, breaks.

Lucy. Must I—

Polly. Must I be slighted?

Mac. What would you have me say, ladies? You see the affair will soon be at an end, without my disobliging either of you.

Peach. But the settling of this point, captain, might prevent a lawsuit between your two ladies.

Mac. Which way shall I turn me? how can I decide?

Wives, the day of our death, are as fond as a bride.

One wife is too much for most husbands to hear, [bear,

But two at a time, there's no mortal can
This way and that way, and which way
I will,

What would comfort the one, t'other wife
would take ill.

Polly. But, if his own misfortunes have made him insensible to mine, a father, sure, will be more compassionate!—Dear, dear Sir! sink the material evidence, and bring him off at his trial—Polly, upon her knees, begs it of you.

When my hero in court appears,

And stands arraign'd for his life,

Then think of poor Polly's tears,

For ah! poor Polly's his wife.

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Like the sailor, he holds up his hand,
Distress'd on the dashing wave;
To die a dry death at land

Is as bad as a wat'ry grave.

And alas, poor Polly!

Alack, and well-a-day!

Before I was in love,

Oh! every month was May.

Peach. Set your heart at rest, Polly—your husband is to die to-day; therefore, if you are not already provided, 'tis high time to look about for another.—There's comfort for you, you slut!

Lockit. We are ready, Sir, to conduct you to the Old Bailey.

Mac. The charge is prepar'd, the lawyers are met,

The judges all ranged: (a terrible show!)

I go undismay'd, for death is a debt—

A debt on demand, so take what I owe.

Then farewell, my love—dear charmers,
adieu!

Contented I die—'tis the better for you.

Here ends all dispute, for the rest of our
lives,

For this way at once, I please all my wives.

Now, gentlemen, I am ready to attend you.

[*Exeunt PEACHUM, LOCKIT, MACHEATH &c.*]

SCENE II.—Another part of the Prison.

Dance of Prisoners in fetters.

SCENE III.—The condemned Cell.

MACHEATH in a melancholy posture.

MEDLEY.

Oh, cruel, cruel, cruel case!

Must I suffer this disgrace?

Of all the friends in time of grief,

When threat'ning death looks grimmer,

Not one so sure can bring relief,

As this best friend, a brimmer. [*Drinks.*]

Since I must swing—I scorn, I scorn to wince
or whine. [*Rises.*]

But now again, my spirits sink,

I'll raise them high with wine.

[*Drinks*]

But valour the stronger grows,

The stronger liquor we're drinking;

And how can we feel our woes,

When we've lost the trouble of think-
ing? [*Drinks.*]

If thus a man can die,
Much bolder with brandy.

[*Pours out a bumper of Brandy.*]

So I drink off this bumper—and now I can stand
the test,

And my comrades shall see that I die as brave as
the best. [*Drinks.*]

But can I leave my pretty hussies

Without one tear, or tender sigh?

Their eyes, their lips, their busses,

Recall my love—Ah! must I die?

Since laws were made of every degree,

To curb vice in others, as well as in me,

I wonder we ha'n't better company

Upon Tyburn tree.

But gold from law can take out the sting;

And if rich men, like us, were to swing,

'T would thin the land, such numbers to string

Upon Tyburn tree.

Enter GAOLER.

Gaoler. Some friends of yours, captain, desire to be admitted—I leave you together. [*Exit.*]

Enter BEN BUDGE and MAT-O'-THE-MINT.

Mac. For my having broke prison, you see, gentlemen, I am ordered immediate execution—The sheriff's officers, I believe, are now at the door. That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me, I own surprised me—'Tis a plain proof that the world is all alike, and that even our gang can no more trust one another than other people; therefore, I beg you, gentlemen, to look well to yourselves, for, in all probability, you may live some months longer.

Mat. We are all heartily sorry, captain, for your misfortune; but 'tis what we must all come to.

Mac. Peachum and Lockit, you know, are infamous scoundrels—their lives are as much in your power, as yours are in theirs—Remember your dying friend—'Tis my last request—Bring those villains to the gallows before you, and I am satisfied.

Mat. We'll do it.

Re-enter GAOLER.

Gaoler. Miss Polly and Miss Lucy entreat a word with you. [*Exit.*]

Mac. Gentlemen, adieu!

[*Exeunt BEN BUDGE and MAT.*]

Enter LUCY and POLLY.

My dear Lucy! my dear Polly! whatsoever hath passed between us is now at an end.

TRIO.

Lucy. 'Would I might be hanged!

Polly. And I would so too!

Lucy. To be hang'd with you.

Polly. My dear with you.

Mac. Oh, leave me to thought! I fear, I doubt! I tremble—I droop!—See, my courage is out! [*Turns up the empty pot*]

Polly. No token of love?

Mac. See, my courage is out! [*Turns up the empty bottle.*]

Lucy. No token of love?

Polly. Adieu!

Lucy. Farewell!

Mac. But hark! I hear the toll of the bell.

Re-enter GAOLER.

Gaoler. Four women more, captain, with a child a-piece.

Mac. Tell the sheriff's officers I am ready.

[*Exeunt.*]

Mob. [*Within.*] A reprieve! a reprieve!

Re-enter MACHEATH, POLLY, LUCY, &c.

Mac. So, it seems, I am not left to my choice, but must have a wife at last—Look ye, my dears, we will have no controversy now—Let us give this day to mirth; and, ladies, I hope you will give me leave to present a partner to each of you; and for this time I take Polly for mine—and for life, you slut, for we are really married.

FINALE.

Thus, I stand like a Turk, and his doxies around, [*found;*]

From all sides, their glances his passion con-
For black, brown, and fair, his inconstancy burns,
And the different beauties subdue him by turns:
Each calls forth her charms, to provoke his de-
sires,

Though willing to all, but with one he retires;
Then think of this maxim, and put off all sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

CHORUS.

Then think of this maxim, and cast away sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

GEORGE BARNWELL:

OR,

THE LONDON MERCHANT;

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GEORGE LILLO.

REMARKS.

This play was first acted at Drury Lane Theatre, with great success. In the newspapers of the time, we find, that "the queen sent to the play-house in Drury Lane, for the manuscript of George Barnwell, to peruse, which Mr. Wilkes carried to Hampton-court."—It is written in prose well adapted to the subject, and exalted enough to express the sentiments of the characters, which are all thrown into domestic life. The plot is ingenious, and the conduct of it affecting. No lesson can be more necessary to inculcate among the valuable body of youths who are trained to mercantile business, so essential in a commercial country, and who must necessarily have very large trusts confided to them, than this warning, how impossible it will be to avoid the snares of ruin, if they suffer themselves to be drawn into the paths of the harlot, where they will be sure to meet with the most insatiable avarice on one hand, and an unguarded sensibility on the other, which will excite the practice of the most abandoned artifices, and plunge them headlong into vice, infamy, and ruin.

There are authentic instances on record, one of which we subjoin,* wherein this play has raised such horror and contrition, as to produce in servants an immediate return to honourable conduct, and to the confidence and esteem of their employers and friends.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted in 1759. COVENT GARDEN, 1812. DRURY LANE, 1814.			
THOROWGOOD,.....	<i>Mr. Bridgewater</i>	<i>Mr. Egerton</i>	<i>Mr. Powell</i> .
BARNWELL, Uncle to	} <i>Mr. Roberts</i>	<i>Mr. Murray</i>	<i>Mr. R. Phillips</i> .
George,.....			
GEORGE BARNWELL,.....	<i>Mr. Cibber, jun</i>	<i>Mr. C. Kemble</i>	<i>Mr. Rae</i> .
TRUEMAN,.....	<i>Mr. W. Mills</i>	<i>Mr. Abbot</i>	<i>Mr. Holland</i> .
BLUNT,.....	<i>Mr. R. Whetherill</i>	<i>Mr. Atkins</i>	<i>Mr. Ray</i> .
GAOLER,.....	<i>Mr. Louis</i> .		
JOHN,.....	<i>Mr. Jefferies</i> .		
ROBERT,.....	<i>Mr. Sarjant</i> .		
MARIA,.....	<i>Mrs. Cibber</i>	<i>Miss S. Booth</i>	<i>Mrs. Horne</i> .
MILLWOOD,.....	<i>Mrs. Butler</i>	<i>Mrs. Powell</i>	<i>Mrs. Glover</i> .
LUCY,.....	<i>Mrs. Charke</i>	<i>Mrs. Gibbs</i>	<i>Mrs. Sparks</i> .

Officers, with their Attendants, Keeper, and Footmen.

SCENE.—London and an adjacent Village.

* *Extract of a Letter from Mr. Ross, the actor, to a friend.*

In the year 1732, during the Christmas holidays, I played George Barnwell, and the late Mrs. Pritchard played Millwood. Doctor Barrowby, physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, told me he was sent for by a young gentleman, in Great St. Helex's, apprentice to a very capital merchant. He found him very ill with a slow fever, a heavy hammer pulse, that no medicine could touch. The doctor sent every body out of the room, and told his patient he was sure there was something that oppressed his mind. After much solicitation on the part of the Doctor, the youth confessed there was something lay heavy at his heart; but that he would sooner die than

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in THOROWGOOD'S House.

Enter THOROWGOOD and TRUEMAN.

True. Sir, the packet from Genoa is arrived.

[*Gives letters.*]

Thorow. Heaven be praised! the storm that threatened our royal mistress, pure religion, liberty, and laws, is for a time diverted. By this means, time is gained to make such preparation on our part, as may, Heaven concurring, prevent his malice, or turn the meditated mischief on himself.

True. He must be insensible indeed, who is not affected when the safety of his country is concerned. Sir, may I know by what means? If I am not too bold—

Thorow. Your curiosity is laudable; and I gratify it with the greater pleasure, because from thence you may learn how honest merchants, as such, may sometimes contribute to the safety of their country, as they do at all times to its happiness; that if hereafter you should be tempted to any action that has the appearance of vice or meanness in it, upon reflecting on the dignity of our profession, you may with honest scorn reject whatever is unworthy of it.

True. Should Barnwell, or I, who have the benefit of your example, by our ill conduct bring any imputation on that honourable name, we must be left without excuse.

Thorow. You compliment, young man, [*TRUEMAN bows respectfully.*] Nay, I'm not offended. As the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him: only take heed not to purchase the character of complaisant at the expense of your sincerity.

True. Sir, have you any commands for me at this time?

Thorow. Only look carefully over the files, to see whether there are any tradesmen's bills unpaid; if there are, send and discharge 'em. We must not let artificers lose their time, so useful to the public and their families, in unnecessary attendance.

[*Exit TRUEMAN.*]

Enter MARIA.

Well, Maria, have you given orders for the entertainment? I would have it in some measure

worthy the guests. Let their be plenty and of the best, that the courtiers may at least commend our hospitality.

Maria. Sir, I have endeavoured not to wrong your well-known generosity by an ill-timed parsimony.

Thorow. Nay, 'twas a needless caution; I have no cause to doubt your prudence.

Maria. Sir, I find myself unfit for conversation. I should but increase the number of the company, without adding to their satisfaction.

Thorow. Nay, my child, this melancholy must not be indulged.

Maria. Company will but increase it. I wish you would dispense with my presence. Solitude best suits my present temper.

Thorow. You are not insensible, that it is chiefly on your account these noble lords do me the honour so frequently to grace my board. Should you be absent, the disappointment may make them repent of their condescension, and think their labour lost.

Maria. He that shall think his time or honour lost in visiting you, can set no real value on your daughter's company, whose only merit is that she is yours. The man of quality who chooses to converse with a gentleman and merchant of your worth and character, may confer honour by so doing, but he loses none.

Thorow. Come, come, Maria, I need not tell you, that a young gentleman may prefer your conversation to mine, and yet intend me no disrespect at all; for, though he may lose no honour in my company, 'tis very natural for him to expect more pleasure in yours. I remember the time when the company of the greatest and wisest man in the kingdom, would have been insipid and tiresome to me, if it had deprived me of an opportunity of enjoying your mother's.

Maria. Yours, no doubt, was as agreeable to her: for generous minds know no pleasure in society but where 'tis mutual.

Thorow. Thou knowest I have no heir, no child but thee; the fruits of many years' successful industry must all be thine. Now it would give me pleasure, great as my love, to see on whom you will bestow it. I am daily solicited by men of the greatest rank and merit for leave to address you; but I have hitherto declined it, in

divulge it, as it must be his ruin if it was known. The doctor assured him, if he would make him his confidant, he would by every means in his power serve him. After much conversation, he told the doctor, he was the second son to a gentleman of good fortune in Hertfordshire; that he had made an improper acquaintance with a kept mistress of a captain of an Indiaman, then abroad; that he was within a year of being out of his time, and had been entrusted with cash, drafts, and notes, which he had made free with, to the amount of two hundred pounds. That going two or three nights before to Drury Lane, to see Ross and Mrs. Pritchard, in their characters of George Barnwell and Millwood, he was so forcibly struck, he had not enjoyed a moment's peace since, and wished to die, to avoid the shame he saw hanging over him. The doctor asked where his father was? He replied, he expected him there every minute, as he was sent for by his master upon his being taken so very ill. The doctor desired the young gentleman to make himself perfectly easy, as he would undertake his father should make all right. The father soon arrived. The doctor took him into another room, and, after explaining the whole cause of his son's illness, begged him to save the honour of his family, and the life of his son. The father, with tears in his eyes, gave him a thousand thanks, said he would step to his banker, and bring the money. While the father was gone, Doctor Barrowby went to his patient, and told him every thing would be settled in a few minutes, to his ease and satisfaction. What is very extraordinary, the doctor told me, that in a few minutes after he communicated this news to his patient, upon feeling of his pulse, without the help of any medicine, he was quite another creature. The father returned with notes to the amount of £200 which he put into his son's hands—they wept, kissed, embraced. The son soon recovered, and lived to be a very eminent merchant. Doctor Barrowby never told me the name; but the story he mentioned often in the green-room of Drury Lane Theatre; and after telling it one night when I was standing by, he said to me, 'You have done some good in your profession, more, perhaps, than many a clergyman who preached last Sunday'—for the patient told the doctor, that the play raised such horror and contrition in his soul, that he would, if it would please God to raise a friend to extricate him out of that distress, dedicate the rest of his life to religion and virtue. Though I never knew his name, or saw him to my knowledge, I had for nine or ten-years, at my benefit, a note sealed up with ten guineas, and these words, '*A tribute of gratitude from one who was highly obliged, and saved from ruin, by seeing Mr. Ross's performance of Barnwell.*'"

hopes that, by observation, I should learn which way your inclination tends; for, as I know love to be essential to happiness in the marriage state, I had rather my approbation should confirm your choice than direct it.

Maria. What can I say? How shall I answer as I ought this tenderness, so uncommon even in the best of parents? But you are without example; yet, had you been less indulgent, I had been most wretched. That I look on the crowd of courtiers that visit here, with equal esteem, but equal indifference, you have observed, and I must needs confess; yet, had you asserted your authority, and insisted on a parent's right to be obeyed, I had submitted, and to my duty sacrificed my peace.

Thorow. From your perfect obedience in every other instance, I feared as much; and therefore would leave you without a bias in an affair wherein your happiness is so immediately concerned.

Maria. Whether from a want of that just ambition that would become your daughter, or from some other cause, I know not; but I find high birth and titles don't recommend the man who owns them to my affections.

Thorow. I would not that they should, unless his merit recommends him more. A noble birth and fortune, though they make not a bad man good yet they are a real advantage to a worthy one, and place his virtues in the fairest light.

Maria. I cannot answer for my inclinations; but they shall ever be submitted to your wisdom and authority. And as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, love shall never make me act contrary to my duty. Sir, have I your permission to retire?

Thorow. I'll see you to your chamber.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in MILLWOOD's House.

Enter MILLWOOD and LUCY.

Mill. How do I look to-day, Lucy?

Lucy. O, killingly, Madam! A little more red, and you'll be irresistible!—But why this more than ordinary care of your dress and complexion! What new conquest are you aiming at?

Mill. A conquest would be new indeed!

Lucy. Not to you, who make 'em every day—but to me—Well, 'tis what I'm never to expect—unfortunate as I am—But your wit and beauty—

Mill. First made me a wretch, and still continue me so. Men, however generous and sincere to one another, are all selfish hypocrites in their affairs with us; we are no otherwise esteemed or regarded by them, but as we contribute to their satisfaction.

Lucy. You are certainly, Madam, on the wrong side of this argument. Is not the expense all theirs? And I am sure it is our own fault if we ha'n't our share of the pleasure.

Mill. We are but slaves to men.

Lucy. Nay, 'tis they that are slaves most certainly, for we lay them under contribution.

Mill. Slaves have no property; no, not even in themselves; all is the victor's.

Lucy. You are strangely arbitrary in your principles, Madam.

Mill. I would have my conquest complete, like those of the Spaniards in the new world; who first plundered the natives of all the wealth they

had, and then condemned the wretches to the mines for life, to work for more.

Lucy. Well, I shall never approve of your scheme of government; I should think it much more politic, as well as just, to find my subjects an easier employment.

Mill. It is a general maxim among the knowing part of mankind, that a woman without virtue, like a man without honour or honesty, is capable of any action, though never so vile; and yet what pains will they not take, what arts not use, to seduce us from our innocence, and make us contemptible and wicked, even in their own opinion? Then is it not just, the villains to their cost, should find us so? But guilt makes them suspicious, and keeps them on their guard; therefore we can take advantage only of the young and innocent part of the sex, who, never having injured women, apprehend no danger from them.

Lucy. Ay, they must be young indeed!

Mill. Such a one I think I have found. As I have passed through the city, I have often observed him receiving and paying considerable sums of money; from thence I conclude he is employed in affairs of consequence.

Lucy. Is he handsome?

Mill. Ay, ay, the stripling is well made, and has a good face.

Lucy. About—

Mill. Eighteen.

Lucy. Innocent, handsome, and about eighteen! You'll be vastly happy. Why, if you manage well, you may keep him to yourself these two or three years.

Mill. If I manage well, I shall have done with him much sooner. Having long had a design on him, and meeting him yesterday, I made a full stop, and gazing wishfully on his face, asked his name. He blushed, and, bowing very low, answered, George Barnwell. I begged his pardon for the freedom I had taken, and told him that he was the person I had long wished to see, and to whom I had an affair of importance to communicate at a proper time and place. He named a tavern; I talked of honour and reputation, and invited him to my house. He swallowed the bait, promised to come, and this is the time I expect him. [*Knocking at the door.*] Somebody knocks. D'ye hear, I'm at home to nobody to-day but him. [*Exit LUCY.*] Less affairs must give way to those of more consequence; and I am strangely mistaken if this does not prove of great importance to me, and him too, before I have done with him. Now, after what manner shall I receive him? Let me consider—What manner of person am I to receive? He is young, innocent, and bashful; therefore I must take care not to put him out of countenance at first.

Enter BARNWELL, bowing very low. LUCY at a distance.

Mill. Sir, the surprise and joy!

Barn. Madam!

Mill. This is such a favour— [*Advancing.*]

Barn. Pardon me, Madam!

Mill. So unhop'd for! [*Still advances. BARNWELL salutes her, and retires in confusion.*] To see you here—excuse the confusion—

Barn. I fear I am too bold.

Mill. Alas, Sir, I may justly apprehend you think me so. Please, Sir, to sit. I am as much at a loss how to receive this honour as I ought,

as I am surprised at your goodness in conferring it.

Barn. I thought you had expected me: I promised to come.

Mill. That is the more surprising: few men are such religious observers of their word.

Barn. All who are honest are.

Mill. To one another; but we simple women are seldom thought of consequence enough to gain a place in their remembrance.

[*Laying her hand on his, as by accident.*

Barn. Her disorder is so great, she don't perceive she has laid her hand on mine. Heavens! how she trembles! What can this mean? [*Aside.*

Mill. The interest I have in all that relates to you (the reason of which you shall know hereafter) excites my curiosity; and were I sure you would pardon my presumption, I should desire to know your real sentiments on a very particular subject.

Barn. Madam, you may command my poor thoughts on any subject. I have none that I would conceal.

Mill. You'll think me bold.

Barn. No, indeed.

Mill. What then are your thoughts of love?

Barn. If you mean the love of women, I have not thought of it at all. My youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper in me yet. But if you mean the general love we owe to mankind, I think no one has more of it in his temper than myself. I don't know that person in the world, whose happiness I don't wish, and wouldn't promote, were it in my power. In an especial manner, I love my uncle and my master; but above all, my friend.

Mill. You have a friend, then, whom you love?

Barn. As he does me, sincerely.

Mill. He is, no doubt, often blessed with your company and conversation.

Barn. We live in one house, and both serve the same worthy merchant.

Mill. Happy, happy youth! Whoe'er thou art, I envy thee; and so must all who see and know this youth. What have I lost by being formed a woman! I hate my sex, myself. Had I been a man, I might perhaps have been as happy in your friendship, as he who now enjoys it is; but as it is—Oh!—

Barn. I never observed woman before; or this is, sure, the most beautiful of her sex. [*Aside.*] You seem disordered, Madam;—may I know the cause?

Mill. Do not ask me.—I can never speak it, whatever is the cause. I wish for things impossible. I would be a servant, bound to the same master, to live in the same house with you.

Barn. How strange, and yet how kind, her words and actions are! and the effect they have on me is as strange. I feel desires I never knew before; I must begone, while I have power to go. [*Aside.*] Madam, I humbly take my leave.

Mill. You will not, sure, leave me so soon!

Barn. Indeed, I must.

Mill. You cannot be so cruel! I have prepared a poor supper, at which I promised myself your company.

Barn. I am sorry I must refuse the honour you designed me; but my duty to my master calls me hence. I never yet neglected his service. He is so gentle, and so good a master, that, should I wrong him, though he might forgive me, I should never forgive myself.

Mill. Am I refused by the first man, the second favour I ever stooped to ask? Go then, thou proud, hard-hearted youth; but know, you are the only man that could be found, who would let me sue twice for greater favours.

Barn. What shall I do? How shall I go or stay?

Mill. Yet do not, do not leave me. I with my sex's pride would meet your scorn; but when I look upon you, when I behold those eyes—Oh! spare my tongue, and let my blushes—this flood of tears too, that will force its way, declare—what woman's modesty should hide.

Barn. Oh, heavens! she loves me, worthless as I am. Her looks, her words, her flowing tears, confess it. And can I leave her then? Oh, never, never! Madam, dry up your tears; you shall command me always. I will stay here for ever, if you would have me.

Lucy. So, she has wheedled him out of his virtue of obedience already, and will strip him of all the rest, one after another, till she has left him as few as her ladyship or myself. [*Aside.*

Mill. Now you are kind indeed; but I mean not to detain you always; I would have you shake off all slavish obedience to your master; but you may serve him still.

Lucy. Serve him still! Ay, or he'll have no opportunity of fingering his cash; and then he'll not serve your end, I'll be sworn. [*Aside.*

Enter BLUNT.

Blunt. Madam, supper's on the table.

Mill. Come, Sir, you'll excuse all defects. My thoughts were too much employed on my guest to observe the entertainment.

[*Exeunt BARN. and MILL.*

Blunt. What, is all this preparation, this elegant supper, variety of wines, and music, for the entertainment of that young fellow?

Lucy. So it seems.

Blunt. How! is our mistress turned fool at last? She's in love with him, I suppose.

Lucy. I suppose not. But she designs to make him in love with her, if she can.

Blunt. What will she get by that? He seems under age, and can't be supposed to have much money.

Lucy. But his master has, and that's the same thing, as she'll manage it.

Blunt. I don't like this fooling with a handsome young fellow; while she's endeavouring to ensnare him, she may be caught herself.

Lucy. Nay, were she like me, that would certainly be the consequence; for, I confess, there is something in youth and innocence that moves me mightily.

Blunt. Yes, so does the smoothness and plumpness of a partridge move a mighty desire in the hawk to be the destruction of it.

Lucy. Why, birds are their prey, and men ours: though, as you observed, we are sometimes caught ourselves. But that, I dare say, will never be the case with our mistress.

Blunt. I wish it may prove so; for you know we all depend upon her. Should she trifle away her time with a young fellow that there's nothing to be got by, we must all starve.

Lucy. There's no danger of that: for I am sure she has no view in this affair but interest.

Blunt. Well, and what hopes are there of success in that?

Lucy. The most promising that can be. 'Tis true, the youth has his scruples; but she'll soon teach him to answer them, by stifling his conscience. Oh, the lad is in a hopeful way, depend upon it. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in THOROWGOOD'S House.

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. How strange are all things round me! Like some thief who treads forbidden ground, and fain would lurk unseen, fearful I enter each apartment of this well-known house. To guilty love, as if that were too little, already have I added breach of trust. A thief! Can I know myself that wretched thing, and look my honest friend and injured master in the face? Though hypocrisy may awhile conceal my guilt, at length it will be known, and public shame and ruin must ensue. In the mean time, what must be my life? Ever to speak a language foreign to my heart; hourly to add to the number of my crimes, in order to conceal 'em. Sure such was the condition of the grand apostate, when first he lost his purity. Like me, disconsolate he wandered; and while yet in heaven, bore all his future hell about him.

Enter TRUEMAN.

True. Barnwell, oh! how I rejoice to see you safe! So will our master, and his gentle daughter; who, during your absence, often inquired after you.

Barn. Would he were gone! His officious love will pry into the secrets of my soul. *[Aside.]*

True. Unless you knew the pain the whole family has felt on your account, you can't conceive how much you are beloved. But why thus cold and silent?—When my heart is full of joy for your return, why do you turn away—why thus avoid me? What have I done? How am I altered since you saw me last? Or rather, what have you done—and why are you thus changed? for I am still the same.

Barn. What have I done, indeed! *[Aside.]*

True. Not speak!—nor look upon me!—

Barn. By my face he will discover all I would conceal. Methinks already I begin to hate him. *[Aside.]*

True. I cannot bear this usage from a friend; one whom till now I ever found so loving; whom yet I love; though his unkindness strikes at the root of friendship, and might destroy it in any breast but mine.

Barn. I am not well. *[Turning to him.]* Sleep has been a stranger to these eyes since you beheld 'em last.

True. Heavy they look, indeed, and swol'n with tears;—now they overflow. Rightly did my sympathizing heart forebode last night, when thou wast absent, something fatal to our peace.

Barn. Your friendship engages you too far. My troubles, whate'er they are, are mine alone; you have no interest in them, nor ought your concern for me to give you a moment's pain.

True. You speak as if you knew of friendship nothing but the name. Before I saw your grief I felt it. E'en now, though ignorant of the cause, your sorrow wounds me to the heart.

Barn. 'Twill not be always thus. Friendship and all engagements cease as circumstances and occasions vary; and since you once may hate me,

perhaps it might be better for us both that now you loved me less.

True. Sure I but dream! Without a cause would Barnwell use me thus? Ungenerous and ungrateful youth, farewell; I shall endeavour to follow your advice. *[Going.]* Yet, stay; perhaps I am too rash and angry, when the cause demands compassion. Some unforeseen calamity may have befallen him too great to bear.

Barn. What part am I reduced to act? 'Tis vile and base to move his temper thus, the best of friends and men. *[Aside.]*

True. I am to blame; pr'ythee forgive me, Barnwell. Try to compose your ruffled mind; and let me know the cause that thus transports you from yourself; my friendly counsel may restore your peace.

Barn. All that is possible for man to do for man your generous friendship may effect; but here, even that 's in vain.

True. Something dreadful is labouring in your breast; oh, give it vent, and let me share your grief; 'twill ease your pain, should it admit no cure, and make it lighter by the part I bear.

Barn. Vain supposition! My woes increase by being observed: should the cause be known, they would exceed all bounds.

True. So well I know thy honest heart, guilt cannot harbour there.

Barn. Oh, torture insupportable! *[Aside.]*

True. Then why am I excluded? Have I a thought I would conceal from you?

Barn. If still you urge me on this hated subject, I'll never enter more beneath this roof, nor see your face again.

True. 'Tis strange—but I have done—say but you hate me not.

Barn. Hate you! I am not that monster yet.

True. Shall our friendship still continue?

Barn. It's a blessing I never was worthy of, yet now must stand on terms; and but upon conditions can confirm it.

True. What are they?

Barn. Never hereafter, though you should wonder at my conduct, desire to know more than I am willing to reveal.

True. 'Tis hard; but upon any conditions I must be your friend.

Barn. Then, as much as one lost to himself can be another's, I am yours. *[Embracing.]*

True. Be ever so; and may Heaven restore your peace! But business requires our attendance: business, the youth's best preservative from ill, as idleness his worst of snares. Will you go with me?

Barn. I'll take a little time to reflect on what has passed, and follow you. *[Exit TRUEMAN.]* I might have trusted Trueman, and engaged him to apply to my uncle to repair the wrong I have done my master:—but what of Millwood? Yet shall I leave her, for ever leave her, and not let her know the cause? she who loves me with such a boundless passion! Can cruelty be duty? I judge of what she then must feel, by what I now endure. The love of life, and fear of shame, opposed by inclination strong as death or shame, like wind and tide in raging conflict met, when neither can prevail, keep me in doubt. How then can I determine?

Enter THOROWGOOD.

Thorow. Without a cause assigned or notice

given, to absent yourself last night was a fault, young man, and I came to chide you for it, but hope I am prevented. That modest blush, the confusion so visible in your face, speak grief and shame. When we have offended Heaven, it requires no more: and shall man, who needs himself to be forgiven, be harder to appease? If my pardon, or love, be of moment to your peace, look up secure of both.

Barn. This goodness has o'ercome me. [*Aside.*] Oh, Sir, you know not the nature and extent of my offence; and I should abuse your mistaken bounty to receive it. Though I had rather die than speak my shame, though racks could not have forced the guilty secret from my breast, your kindness has.

Thorow. Enough, enough; whate'er it be, this concern shows you're convinced, and I am satisfied. How painful is the sense of guilt to an ingenuous mind; some youthful folly, which it were prudent not to inquire into.

Barn. It will be known, and you'll recall your pardon, and abhor me.

Thorow. I never will. Yet be upon your guard in this gay, thoughtless season of your life: when vice becomes habitual, the very power of leaving it is lost.

Barn. Hear me, on my knees, confess—

Thorow. Not a syllable more upon this subject: it were not mercy, but cruelty, to hear what must give you such torment to reveal.

Barn. This generosity amazes and distracts me!

Thorow. This remorse makes thee dearer to me, than if thou hadst never offended. Whatever is your fault, of this I am certain, 'twas harder for you to offend, than me to pardon. [*Exit.*]

Barn. Villain! villain! villain! basely to wrong so excellent a man. Should I again return to folly?—Detested thought! But what of Millwood then?—Why, I renounce her—I give her up—The struggle's over, and virtue has prevailed. Reason may convince, but gratitude compels. This unlooked-for generosity has saved me from destruction. [*Going.*]

Enter a FOOTMAN.

Foot. Sir, two ladies from your uncle in the country desire to see you.

Barn. Who should they be? [*Aside.*] Tell them I'll wait upon 'em. [*Exit FOOT.*] Methinks I dread to see 'em—Now, every thing alarms me! Guilt, what a coward hast thou made me! [*Exit.*]

SCENE I.—Another Room in THOROWGOOD'S House.

Enter MILLWOOD, LUCY, and a FOOTMAN.

Foot. Ladies, he'll wait upon you immediately.

Mill. 'Tis very well—I thank you.

[*Exit FOOTMAN.*]

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. Confusion! Millwood!

Mill. That angry look tells me, that here I am an unwelcome guest: I feared as much: the unhappy are so every where.

Barn. Will nothing but my utter ruin content you?

Mill. Unkind and cruel. Lost myself, your happiness is now my only care.

Barn. How did you gain admission?

Mill. Saying we were desired by your uncle to

visit and deliver a message to you, we were received by the family without suspicion, and with much respect conducted here.

Barn. Why did you come at all?

Mill. I never shall trouble you more. I'm come to take my leave for ever. Such is the malice of my fate! I go hopeless, despairing ever to return. This hour is all I have left; one short hour is all I have to bestow on love and you, for whom I thought the longest life too short.

Barn. Then we are met to part for ever.

Mill. It must be so. Yet think not that time or absence shall ever put a period to my grief, or make me love you less. Though I must leave you, yet condemn me not.

Barn. Condemn you! No, I approve your resolution, and rejoice to hear it; 'tis just, 'tis necessary;—I have well weighed, and found it so.

Lucy. I am afraid the young man has more sense than she thought he had. [*Aside.*]

Barn. Before you came, I had determined never to see you more.

Mill. Confusion!

Lucy. Ay, we are all out; this is a turn so unexpected, that I shall make nothing of my part; they must e'en play the scene betwixt themselves. [*Aside.*]

Mill. It was some relief to think, though absent, you would love me still; but to find this, as I never could expect, I have not learned to bear.

Barn. I am sorry to hear you blame me in a resolution that so well becomes us both.

Mill. I have reason for what I do, but you have none.

Barn. Can we want a reason for parting, who have so many to wish we had never met?

Mill. Look on me, Barnwell. Am I deformed or old, that satiety so soon succeeds enjoyment? Nay, look again; am I not she whom yesterday you thought the fairest and the kindest of her sex; whose hand, trembling with ecstasy, you pressed and moulded thus, while on my eyes you gazed with such delight, as if desire increased by being fed?

Barn. No more: let me repent my former follies, if possible, without remembering what they were.

Mill. Why?

Barn. Such is my frailty, that 'tis dangerous.

Mill. Where is the danger, since we are to part. *Barn.* The thought of that already is too painful.

Mill. If it be painful to part, then I may hope, at least, you do not hate me.

Barn. No—No—I never said I did—Oh, my heart!

Mill. Perhaps you pity me?

Barn. I do—I do—Indeed I do.

Mill. You'll think upon me!

Barn. Doubt it not, while I can think at all.

Mill. You may judge an embrace at parting too great a favour, though it would be the last. [*BARNWELL draws back.*] A look shall then suffice—farewell—for ever.

[*Exeunt MILLWOOD and LUCY.*]

Barn. If to resolve to suffer be to conquer—I have conquered—Painful victory!

Re-enter MILLWOOD and LUCY.

Mill. One thing I had forgot—I never must return to my own house again. This I thought proper to let you know, lest your mind should

change, and you should seek in vain to find me there. Forgive me this second intrusion; I only came to give you this caution, and that perhaps was needless.

Barn. I hope it was; yet it is kind, and I must thank you for it.

Mill. My friend, your arm. [*To Lucy.*] Now, I am gone for ever. [*Going.*]

Barn. One thing more—sure there's no danger in knowing where you go? If you think otherwise—

Mill. Alas!

Lucy. We are right, I find; that's my cue. [*Aside.*] Ah, dear Sir, she's going she knows not whither; but go she must.

Barn. Humanity obliges me to wish you well; why will you thus expose yourself to needless troubles?

Lucy. Nay, there's no help for it; she must quit the town immediately, and the kingdom as soon as possible. It was no small matter, you may be sure, that could make her resolve to leave you.

Mill. No more, my friend; since he for whose dear sake alone I suffer, and am content to suffer, is kind and pities me; where'er I wander, through wilds and deserts, benighted and forlorn, that thought shall give me comfort.

Barn. For my sake!—Oh, tell me how, which way am I so cursed to bring such ruin on thee!

Mill. To know it will but increase your troubles.

Barn. My troubles can't be greater than they are.

Lucy. Well, well, Sir, if she won't satisfy you, I will.

Barn. I am bound to you beyond expression.

Mill. Remember, Sir, that I desired you not to hear it.

Barn. Begin and ease my expectation.

Lucy. Why you must know my lady here was an only child, and her parents dying while she was young, left her and her fortune (no inconsiderable one, I assure you) to the care of a gentleman who has a good estate of his own.

Mill. Ay, ay, the barbarous man is rich enough; but what are riches when compared to love!

Lucy. For awhile he performed the office of a faithful guardian, settled her in a house, hired her servants—But you have seen in what manner she has lived, so I need say no more of that.

Mill. How I shall live hereafter, Heaven knows!

Lucy. All things went on as one could wish, till some time ago, his wife dying, he fell violently in love with his charge, and would fain have married her. Now the man is neither old nor ugly, but a good, personable sort of a man; but I don't know it was, she could never endure him. In short, her ill usage so provoked him, that he brought in an account of his executorship, wherein he makes her debtor to him—

Mill. A trifle in itself, but more than enough to ruin me, whom, by this unjust account he had stripped of all before.

Lucy. Now, she having neither money nor friend, except me, who am as unfortunate as herself, he compelled her to pass his account, and give bond for the sum he demanded; but still provided handsomely for her, and continued his courtship, till being informed by his spies (truly, I suspect some in her own family) that you were entertained in her house, and staid with her all

night, he came this morning, raving and storming like a madman; talks no more of marriage (so there's no hope of making up matters that way,) but vows her ruin, unless she'll allow him the same favour that he supposes she granted you.

Barn. Must she be ruined, or find a refuge in another's arms?

Mill. He gave me but an hour to resolve in: that's happily spent with you—And now I go—

Barn. To be exposed to all the rigours of the various seasons; the summer's parching heat, and winter's cold; unhoused to wander friendless through the inhospitable world, in misery and want; attended with fear and danger, and pursued by malice and revenge. Wouldst thou endure all this for me, and can I do nothing, nothing, to prevent it?

Lucy. 'Tis really a pity there can be no way found out.

Barn. Oh, where are all my resolutions now?

Lucy. Now, I advised her, Sir, to comply with the gentleman.

Barn. Tormenting fiend, away! I had rather perish, nay, see her perish, than have her saved by him. I will myself prevent her ruin, though with my own. A moment's patience; I'll return immediately. [*Exit.*]

Lucy. 'Twas well you came, or, by what I can perceive, you had lost him.

Mill. Hush! he's here.

Re-enter BARNWELL, with a bag of money.

Barn. What am I about to do?—Now you, who boast your reason all-sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me; whether 'tis right to let her suffer for my faults, or, by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past.—Here, take this, and with it purchase your deliverance; return to your house, and live in peace and safety.

Mill. So, I may hope to see you there again?

Barn. Answer me not, but fly—lest in the agonies of my remorse, I again take what is not mine to give, and abandon thee to want and misery.

Mill. Say but you'll come.

Barn. You are my fate—my heaven, or my hell; only leave me now—dispose of me hereafter as you please. [*Exeunt MILLWOOD and LUCY.*] What have I done? Were my resolutions founded on reason, and sincerely made? Why then has heaven suffered me to fall? I sought not the occasion; and if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives.—But why should I attempt to reason? All is confusion, horror, and remorse. I find I am lost, cast down from all my late-erected hope, and plunged again in guilt, yet scarce know how or why—

Such undistinguish'd horrors make my brain,

Like hell, the seat of darkness and of pain. [*Exit*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in THOROWGOOD's House.

THOROWGOOD and TRUEMAN discovered, with account-books, sitting at a table.

Thorow. Well, I have examined your accounts; they are not only just, as I have always found them, but regularly kept and fairly entered. I commend your diligence: method in business is the surest guide. Are Barnwell's accounts ready

for my inspection? He does not use to be the last on those occasions.

True. Upon receiving your orders he retired, I thought, in some confusion. If you please, I'll go and hasten him.

Thorow. I'm now going to the Exchange: let him know, at my return I expect to find him ready. *[Exit.]*

Enter MARIA, with a book. Sits and reads.

Maria. How forcible is truth! The weakest mind, inspired with love of that, fixed and collected in itself, with indifference beholds the united force of earth and hell opposing. Such souls are raised above the sense of pain, or so supported that they regard it not. The martyr cheaply purchases his heaven; small are his sufferings, great is his reward. Not so the wretch who combats love with duty; whose mind, weakened and dissolved by the soft passion, feeble and hopeless, opposes his own desires.—What is an hour, a day, a year of pain, to a whole life of tortures such as these?

Enter TRUAMAN.

True. Oh, Barnwell! Oh, my friend! how art thou fallen!

Maria. Ha! Barnwell! What of him? Speak, say, what of Barnwell?

True. 'Tis not to be concealed: I've news to tell of him that will afflict your generous father, yourself, and all who know him.

Maria. Defend us, Heaven!

True. I cannot speak it. See there.

[Gives a letter.]

Maria. *[Reads.]* I know my absence will surprise my honoured master and yourself, and the more, when you shall understand, that the reason of my withdrawing is, my having embezzled part of the cash with which I was entrusted. After this, 'tis needless to inform you, that I intend never to return again. Though this might have been known by examining my accounts, yet to prevent that unnecessary trouble, and to cut off all fruitless expectations of my return, I have left this from the lost

GEORGE BARNWELL.

True. Lost, indeed! Yet how he should be guilty with what he here charges himself withal, raises my wonder equal to my grief. Never had youth a higher sense of virtue. Justly he thought, and as he thought he practised; never was life more regular than his. An understanding uncommon at his years; an open, generous manliness of temper; his manners easy, unaffected, and engaging.

Maria. This and much more you might have said with truth. He was the delight of every eye, and joy of every heart that knew him.

True. Since such he was, and was my friend, can I support his loss? See, the fairest, happiest maid, this wealthy city boasts, kindly condescends to weep for thy unhappy fate, poor, ruined Barnwell!

Maria. Trueman, do you think a soul so delicate as his, so sensible of shame, can e'er submit to live a slave to vice?

True. Never, never: so well I know him, I'm sure this act of his, so contrary to his nature, must have been caused by some unavoidable necessity.

Maria. Are there no means yet to preserve him?

True. Oh, that there were! But few men recover their reputation lost, a merchant never. Nor would he, I fear, though I should find him, ever be brought to look his injured master in the face.

Maria. I fear as much, and therefore would never have my father know it.

True. That's impossible.

Maria. What's the sum?

True. 'Tis considerable. I've marked it here, to show it, with the letter, to your father, at his return.

Maria. If I should supply the money, could you so dispose of that and the account, as to conceal this unhappy mismanagement from my father?

True. Nothing more easy. But can you intend it? Will you save a helpless wretch from ruin? Oh, 'twere an act worthy such exalted virtue as Maria's! Sure Heaven, in mercy to my friend, inspired the generous thought.

Maria. Doubt not but I would purchase so great a happiness at a much dearer price. But how shall he be found?

True. Trust to my diligence for that. In the mean time I'll conceal his absence from your father, or find such excuses for it, that the real cause shall never be suspected.

Maria. In attempting to save from shame one whom we hope may yet return to virtue, to Heaven, and you, the only witnesses of this action, I appeal whether I do any thing unbecoming my sex and character.

True. Earth must approve the deed, and Heaven, I doubt not, will reward it.

Maria. If Heaven succeeds it, I am well rewarded. A virgin's fame is sullied by suspicion's lightest breath; and, therefore, as this must be a secret from my father and the world, for Barnwell's sake, for mine, let it be so to him. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—A Room in MILLWOOD'S House.

Enter LUCY and BLUNT.

Lucy. Well, what do you think of Millwood's conduct now? Her artifice in making him rob his master at first, and the various stratagems by which she has obliged him to continue that course, astonish even me, who know her so well. Being called by his master to make up his accounts, he was forced to quit his house and service, and wisely flies to Millwood for relief and entertainment.

Blunt. How did she receive him?

Lucy. As you would expect. She wondered what he meant, was astonished at his impudence, and, with an air of modesty peculiar to herself, swore so heartily that she never saw him before, that she put me out of countenance.

Blunt. That's much, indeed! But how did Barnwell behave?

Lucy. He grieved; and, at length, enraged at this barbarous treatment, was preparing to be gone; and making towards the door, showed a sum of money, which he had brought from his master's, the last he is ever likely to have from thence.

Blunt. But then, Millwood—

Lucy. Ay, she with her usual address, returned to her old arts of lying, swearing, and dissembling; hung on his neck, wept, and swore 'twas meant in jest. The amorous youth melted into tears,

threw the money into her lap, and swore he had rather die than think her false.

Blunt. Strange infatuation!

Lucy. But what ensued was stranger still. Just then, when every passion with lawless anarchy prevailed, and reason was in the raging tempest lost, the cruel, artful Millwood prevailed upon the wretched youth to promise—what I tremble but to think on.

Blunt. I am amazed! What can it be?

Lucy. You will be more so to hear—it is to attempt the life of his nearest relation, and best benefactor.

Blunt. His uncle! whom we have often heard him speak of, as a gentleman of a large estate, and fair character in the country where he lives.

Lucy. The same. She was no sooner possessed of the last dear purchase of his ruin, but her avarice, insatiate as the grave, demanded this horrid sacrifice; Barnwell's near relation, whose blood must seal the dreadful secret, and prevent the terrors of her guilty fears.

Blunt. 'Tis time the world were rid of such a monster. But there is something so horrid in murder, that all other crimes seem nothing, when compared to that; I would not be involved in the guilt of it for all the world!

Lucy. Nor I, Heaven knows. Therefore let us clear ourselves, by doing all that 's in our power to prevent it. I have just thought of a way that to me seems probable. Will you join with me to detect this cursed design?

Blunt. With all my heart. He who knows of a murder intended to be committed, and does not discover it, in the eye of the law and reason, is a murderer.

Lucy. Let us lose no time. I'll acquaint you with the particulars as we go. *[Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A walk some distance from a country-seat.*

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. A dismal gloom obscures the face of the day. Either the sun has slipped behind a cloud, or journeys down the west of heaven with more than common speed, to avoid the sight of what I am doomed to act. Since I set forth on this accursed design, where'er I tread, methinks the solid earth trembles beneath my feet. Murder my uncle! my father's only brother, and since his death, has been to me a father; that took me up an infant and an orphan, reared me with tenderest care, and still indulged me with most paternal fondness! Yet here I stand, his destined murderer.—I stiffen with horror at my own impiety.—'Tis yet unperformed.—What if I quit my bloody purpose, and fly the place? *[Going, then stops.]*—But whither, oh, whither shall I fly? My master's once friendly doors are ever shut against me; and without money, Millwood will never see me more; and she has got such firm possession of my heart, and governs there with such despotic sway, that life is not to be endured without her. Ay, there's the cause of all my sin and sorrow: 'tis more than love; it is the fever of the soul, and madness of desire. In vain does nature, reason, conscience, all oppose it; the impetuous passion bears down all before it, and drives me on to lust, to theft, and murder. Oh, conscience, feeble guide to virtue, thou only showest us when we go astray; but wantest power to stop us in our course!—Ha! in yonder shady walk I see my

uncle.—He's alone.—Now for my disguise. *[Plucks out a vizard.]*—This is his hour of private meditation. Thus daily he prepares his soul for heaven, while I—But what have I to do with heaven?—Ha! no struggles, conscience—

Hence hence, remorse, and ev'ry thought that 's good;

The storm that lust began, must end in blood.

[Puts on a vizard, draws a pistol, and exit.]

SCENE IV.—*A close walk in a wood.*

Enter UNCLE.

Uncle. If I were superstitious, I should fear some danger lurked unseen, or death were nigh. A heavy melancholy clouds my spirits. My imagination is filled with ghastly forms of dreary graves, and bodies changed by death; when the pale, lengthened visage attracts each weeping eye, and fills the musing soul at once with grief and horror, pity and aversion. I will indulge the thought. The wise man prepares himself for death by making it familiar to his mind. When strong reflections hold the mirror near, and the living in the dead behold their future self, how does each inordinate passion and desire cease, or sicken at the view! The mind scarce moves! the blood, curdling and chilled, creeps slowly through the veins; fixed, still, and motionless we stand, so like the solemn objects of our thoughts, we are almost at present what we must be hereafter; till curiosity awakes the soul, and sets it on inquiry.

Enter GEORGE BARNWELL, at a distance.

Oh, death! thou strange, mysterious power, seen every day, yet never understood but by the incommunicative dead, what art thou? The extensive mind of man, that with a thought circles the earth's vast globe, sinks to the centre, or ascends above the stars; that worlds exotic finds, or thinks it finds; thy thick clouds, attempts to pass in vain; lost and bewildered in the horrid gloom, defeated, she returns more doubtful than before, of nothing certain but of labour lost.

[During this speech, BARNWELL sometimes presents the pistol, and draws it back again.]

Barn. Oh, 'tis impossible!

[Throws down the pistol. UNCLE starts, and attempts to draw his sword.]

Uncle. A man so near me! armed and masked—

Barn. Nay, then there's no retreat.

[Plucks a poniard from his breast, and stabs him.]

Uncle. Oh, I am slain! All gracious Heaven, regard the prayer of thy dying servant; bless, with the choicest blessings, my dearest nephew; forgive my murderer; and take my fleeting soul to endless mercy!

[BARNWELL throws off his mask, runs to him, and kneeling by him, raises him.]

Barn. Expiring saint! Oh, murdered, martyred uncle! lift up your dying eyes, and view your nephew in your murderer.—Oh, do not look so tenderly upon me—Let indignation lighten from your eyes, and blast me ere you die—By Heaven, he weeps, in pity of my woes.—Tears, tears, for blood.—The murdered, in the agonies of death, weeps for his murderer—Oh, speak your pious purpose; pronounce your pardon then, and take me with you—He would, but cannot.—Oh, why with such fond affection do you press

my murdering hand?—[*UNCLE sighs, and dies.*] Life, that hovered on his lips but till he had sealed my pardon, in that sigh expired! He's gone for ever—and oh! I follow—[*Swoons away upon the dead body.*] Do I still breathe, and taint with my infectious breath the wholesome air? Let Heaven from its high throne, in justice or in mercy, now look down on that dear, murdered saint, and me the murderer, and if his vengeance spares, let pity strike, and end my wretched being.—Murder, the worst of crimes, and parricide, the worst of murders, and this the worst of parricides!

Oh may it ever stand alone accurst,
The last of murders, as it is the worst. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in THOROWGOOD'S House.

Enter MARIA, meeting TRUEMAN.

Maria. What news of Barnwell?

True. None; I have sought him with the greatest diligence, but all in vain.

Maria. Does my father yet suspect the cause of his absence?

True. All appeared so just and fair to him, it is not possible he ever should. But his absence will no longer be concealed. Your father is wise; and though he seems to hearken to the friendly excuses I would make for Barnwell, yet I am afraid he regards 'em only as such, without suffering them to influence his judgment.

Enter THOROWGOOD and LUCY.

Thorow. This woman here has given me a sad, and, bating some circumstances, too probable an account of Barnwell's defection.

Lucy. I am sorry, Sir, that my frank confession of my former unhappy course of life should cause you to suspect my truth on this occasion.

Thorow. It is not that; your confession has in it all the appearance of truth. Among many other particulars, she informs me that Barnwell has been influenced to break his trust, and wrong me, at several times, of considerable sums of money. Now, as I know this to be false, I would fain doubt the whole of her relation, too dreadful to be willingly believed.

Maria. Sir, your pardon; I find myself on a sudden so indisposed that I must retire. Poor, ruined Barnwell! Wretched, lost Maria!

[*Aside; exit.*]

Thorow. How am I distressed on every side! Pity for that unhappy youth, fear for the life of a much valued friend—and then my child—the only joy and hope of my declining life!—Her melancholy increases hourly, and gives me painful apprehensions of her loss—Oh, Trueman, this person informs me that your friend, at the instigation of an impious woman, is gone to rob and murder his venerable uncle.

True. Oh, execrable deed! I'm blasted with horror at the thought!

Lucy. This delay may ruin all.

Thorow. What to do or think I know not. That he ever wronged me I know is false; the rest may be so too; there's all my hope.

True. Trust not to that; rather suppose all true, than lose a moment's time. Even now the horrid deed may be doing—dreadful imagination!—or it may be done; and we be vainly debating on the means to prevent what is already past.

Thorow. This earnestness convinces me that he knows more than he has yet discovered. What, ho! without there, who waits?

Enter a Servant.

Order the groom to saddle the swiftest horse, and prepare to set out with speed; an affair of life and death demands his diligence. [*Exit Servant.*] For you, whose behaviour on this occasion I have no time to commend as it deserves, I must engage your further assistance. Return, and observe this Millwood till I come. I have your directions, and will follow you as soon as possible. [*Exit LUCY.*] Trueman, you I am sure will not be idle on this occasion. [*Exit.*]

True. He only who is a friend, can judge of my mistress. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—MILLWOOD'S House.

Enter MILLWOOD.

Mill. I wish I knew the event of his design. The attempt without success would ruin him.—Well, what have I to apprehend from that? I fear too much. The mischief being only intended, his friends, through pity of his youth, turn all their rage on me. I should have thought of that before. Suppose the deed done; then and then only I shall be secure—Or what if he returns without attempting it at all—

Enter BARNWELL, bloody.

But he is here, and I have done him wrong. His bloody hands show he has done the deed, but show he wants the prudence to conceal it.

Barn. Where shall I hide me? Whither shall I fly to avoid the swift unerring hand of justice?

Mill. Dismiss your fears; though thousands had pursued you to the door, yet, being entered here, you are as safe as innocence. I have a cavern by heart so cunningly contrived, that the piercing eyes of jealousy and revenge may search in vain, nor find the entrance to the safe retreat. There will I hide you, if any danger's near.

Barn. Oh, hide me—from myself, if it be possible: for while I bear my conscience in my bosom, though I were hid where man's eye never saw, nor light ere dawned, 'twere all in vain. For, oh, that innate, that impartial judge, will try, convict, and sentence me for murder, and execute me with never-ending torments. Behold these hands all crimsoned o'er with my dear uncle's blood. Here's a sight to make a statue start with horror, or turn a living man into a statue!

Mill. Ridiculous! Then it seems you are afraid of your own shadow, or, what is less than a shadow, your conscience.

Barn. Though to man unknown I did the accursed act, what can hide me from Heaven's all-seeing eye?

Mill. No more of this stuff! What advantage have you made by his death: or what advantage may yet be made of it? Did you secure the keys of his treasure, which no doubt were about him? What gold, what jewels, or what else of value have you brought me?

Barn. Think you I added sacrilege to murder! Oh, had you seen him as his life flowed from him in a crimson flood, and heard him praying for me by the double name of nephew and of murderer; (alas, alas, he knew not then that his nephew was his murderer!) how would you have wished,

as I did, though you had a thousand years of life to come, to have given them all to have lengthened his one hour. But being dead, I fled the sight of what my hands had done; nor could I, to have gained the empire of the world, have violated by theft his sacred corpse.

Mill. Whining, preposterous, canting villain! to murder your uncle, rob him of life, nature's first, last, dear prerogative, after which there's no injury, then fear to take what he no longer wanted, and bring to me your penury and guilt. Do you think I'll hazard my reputation, nay my life, to entertain you?

Barn. Oh, Millwood!—this from thee?—But I have done—If you hate me, if you wish me dead, then are you happy; for, oh, 'tis sure my grief will quickly end me.

Mill. In this madness he will discover all, and involve me in his ruin. We are on a precipice, from whence there's no retreat for both. Then to preserve myself—[*Pauses.*]—There is no other way. 'Tis dreadful; but reflection comes too late when danger's pressing, and there's no room for choice. It must be done.

[*Aside; rings a bell.*]

Enter a Servant.

Fetch me an officer, and seize this villain. He has confessed himself a murderer. Should I let him escape, I might justly be thought as bad as he.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Barn. Oh, Millwood! sure you do not, you cannot mean it. Stop the messenger; upon my knees, I beg you'd call him back. 'Tis fit I die, indeed, but not by you. I will this instant throw myself into the hands of justice, indeed I will; for death is all I wish. But thy ingratitude so tears my wounded soul, 'tis worse ten thousand times than death with torture.

Mill. Call it what you will; I am willing to live, and live secure, which nothing but your death can warrant.

Barn. If there be a pitch of wickedness that sets the author beyond the reach of vengeance, you must be secure. But what remains for me, but a dismal dungeon, hard galling fetters, an awful trial, and an ignominious death, justly to fall, unpitied and abhorred? This I could bear, may wish not to avoid, had it but come from any hand but thine.

Enter BLUNT, Officer, and Attendants.

Mill. Heaven defend me! conceal a murderer! here, Sir, take this youth into your custody, I accuse him of murder, and will appear to make good my charge.

[*They seize him.*]

Barn. To whom, or what, or how, shall I complain? I'll not accuse her. The hand of Heaven is in it, and this the punishment of lust and parricide.

Be warn'd, ye youths, who see my sad despair;

Avoid lewd women, false as they are fair.

By my example, learn to shun my fate,

(How wretched is the man who's wise too late!)

Ere innocence, and fame, and life be lost,

Here purchase wisdom cheaply at my cost.

[*Exit BARNWELL, Officer, and Attendants.*]

Mill. Where's Lucy? why is she absent at such a time?

Blunt. Would I had been so too! Lucy will soon be here; and I hope to thy confusion, thou devil!

Mill. Insolent! this to me!

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Blunt. The worst that we know of the devil is that he first seduces to sin, and betrays to punishment. [*Exit BLUNT.*]

Mill. They disapprove of my conduct then. My ruin is resolved. I see my danger, but scorn both it and them. I was not born to fall by such weak instruments. [*Going.*]

Enter THOROWGOOD.

Thorow. Where is the scandal of her own sex, and curse of ours?

Mill. What means this insolence? whom do you seek for?

Thorow. Millwood!—

Mill. Well, you have found her then, I am Millwood!

Thorow. Then you are the most impious wretch that e'er the sun beheld!

Mill. From your appearance I should have expected wisdom and moderation; but your manners belie your aspect. What is your business here? I know you not.

Thorow. Hereafter you may know me better. I am Barnwell's master.

Mill. Then you are master to a villain; which, I think, is not much to your credit.

Thorow. Had he been as much above thy arts, as my credit is superior to thy malice, I need not have blushed to own him.

Mill. My arts! I don't understand you, Sir. If he has done amiss, what's that to me? was he my servant, or yours? you should have taught him better.

Thorow. Why should I wonder to find such uncommon impudence in one arrived to such a height of wickedness? know, sorceress, I'm not ignorant of any of the arts, by which you first deceived the unwary youth. I know how, step by step, you've led him on, reluctant and unwilling, from crime to crime, to this last horrid act, which you contrived, and by your cursed wiles even forced him to commit.

Mill. Ha! Lucy has got the advantage, and accused me first. Unless I can turn the accusation, and fix it upon her and Blunt, I am lost.

[*Aside.*]

Thorow. Had I known your cruel design sooner, it had been prevented. To see you punished, as the law directs, is all that now remains. Poor satisfaction! For he, innocent as he is, compared to you, must suffer too.

Mill. I find, Sir, we are both unhappy in our servants. I was surprised at such ill treatment without cause, from a gentleman of your appearance, and therefore too hastily returned it, for which I ask your pardon. I now perceive you have been so far imposed on, as to think me engaged in a former correspondence with your servant, and some way or other accessory to his undoing.

Thorow. I charge you as the cause, the sole cause, of all his guilt, and all his suffering, of all he now endures, and must endure, till a violent and shameful death shall put a dreadful period to his life and miseries together.

Mill. 'Tis very strange! But who's secure from scandal and detraction? So far from contributing to his ruin, I never spoke to him till since this fatal accident, which I lament as much as you. 'Tis true I have a servant, on whose account he hath of late frequented my house. If she has abused my good opinion of her, am I to

blame? Has not Barnwell done the same by you?

Thorow. I hear you. Pray go on.

Mill. I have been informed he had a violent passion for her, and she for him; but till now I always thought it innocent. I know her poor, and given to expensive pleasures. Now, who can tell but she may have influenced the amorous youth to commit this murder, to supply her extravagancies—It must be so. I now recollect a thousand circumstances that confirm it. I'll have her, and a man-servant whom I suspect as an accomplice, secured immediately. [*Offers to go.*]

Thorow. Madam, you pass not this way. I see your design, but shall protect them from your malice.

Mill. I hope you will not use your influence, and the credit of your name, to screen such guilty wretches. Consider, Sir, the wickedness of persuading a thoughtless youth to such a crime!

Thorow. I do—and of betraying him when it was done.

Mill. That which you call betraying him, may convince you of my innocence. She who loves him, though she contrived the murder, would never have delivered him into the hands of justice, as I, struck with horror at his crimes, have done.

Thorow. How should an unexperienced youth escape her snares? Even I, that with just prejudice came prepared, had by her artful story been deceived, but that my strong conviction of her guilt makes even a doubt impossible. [*Aside.*] Those whom subtly you would accuse, you know are your accusers; and, which proves unanswerably their innocence and your guilt, they accused you before the deed was done, and did all that was in their power to prevent it.

Mill. Sir, you are very hard to be convinced; but I have a proof, which, when produced, will silence all objection. [*Exit MILLWOOD.*]

Enter LUCY, TRUEMAN, BLUNT, Officers, &c.

Lucy. Gentlemen, pray place yourselves, some on one side of that door, and some on the other; watch her entrance, and act as your prudence shall direct you. This way; [*To THOROWGOOD.*] and note her behaviour; I have observed her; she's driven to the last extremity, and is forming some desperate resolution. I guess at her design.

Re-enter MILLWOOD with a pistol, TRUEMAN secures her.

True. Here thy power of doing mischief ends, deceitful, cruel, bloody woman!

Mill. Fool, hypocrite, villain, man! Thou canst not call me that.

True. To call thee woman were to wrong thy sex, thou devil.

Mill. That imaginary being is an emblem of thy cursed sex collected. A mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness, and that of all mankind.

Thorow. Think not, by aggravating the faults of others, to extenuate thy own, of which the abuse of such uncommon perfections of mind and body is not the least.

Mill. If such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex, who robbed me of 'em ere I knew their worth; then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss.—Another, and another spoiler came, and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdained, and yet disdains, dependence

and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw secured the worst of men from both; I found it therefore necessary to be rich, and to that end summoned all my arts. You call 'em wicked; be it so; they were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal.

Thorow. Sure none but the worst of men conversed with thee!

Mill. Men of all degrees, and all professions, I have known, yet found no difference, but in their several capacities; all were alike, wicked to the utmost of their power. What are your laws of which you make your boast, but the fool's wisdom, and the coward's valour, the instrument and screen of all your villainies? By them you punish in others what you act yourselves, or would have acted, had you been in their circumstances. The judge, who condemns the poor man for being a thief, had been a thief himself had he been poor.—Thus you go on deceiving and deceived, harassing, plaguing, and destroying one another. But women are your universal prey:

*Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,
With cruel arts you labour to destroy:
A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.
Oh, may from hence each violated maid,
By flattering, faithless, barbarous man betray'd,
When robb'd of innocence and virgin fame,
From your destruction raise a nobler name;
T'avenge their sex's wrongs devote their mind
And future Millwood's prove to plague mankind.*

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

*SCENE I.—A Dungeon. A table, and a lamp.
BARNWELL reading.*

Enter THOROWGOOD, at a distance.

Thorow. There see the bitter fruits of passion's detested reign, and sensual appetite indulged: severe reflections, penitence, and tears.

Barn. My honoured, injured master, whose goodness has covered me a thousand times with shame, forgive this last unwilling disrespect. Indeed I saw you not.

Thorow. 'Tis well; I hope you are better employed in viewing of yourself; your journey's long, your time for preparation almost spent. I sent a reverend divine to teach you to improve it, and should be glad to hear of his success.

Barn. The word of truth which he recommended for my constant companion in this my sad retirement, has at length removed the doubts I laboured under. From thence I have learned the infinite extent of heavenly mercy. How shall I describe my present state of mind? I hope in doubt, and trembling I rejoice; I feel my grief increase, even as my fears give way. Joy and gratitude now supply more tears than the horror and anguish of despair before.

Thorow. These are the genuine signs of true repentance; the only preparatory, the certain way to everlasting peace.

Barn. What do I owe for all your generous kindness? But though I cannot, Heaven can and will reward you.

Thorow. To see thee thus, is joy too great for words. Farewell.—Heaven strengthen thee!—Farewell.

Barn. Oh, Sir, there's something I would say, if my sad swelling heart would give me leave.

Thorow. Give it vent awhile and try.

Barn. I had a friend—'tis true I am unworthy—yet methinks your generous example might persuade. Could I not see him once, before I go from whence there's no return?

Thorow. He's coming, and as much thy friend as ever. I will not anticipate his sorrow; too soon he'll see the sad effects of this contagious ruin.—This torrent of domestic misery bears too hard upon me. I must retire, to indulge a weakness I find impossible to overcome. [*Aside.*] Much loved—and much lamented youth!—Farewell.—Heaven strengthen thee!—Eternally farewell.

Barn. The best of masters, and of men—Farewell. While I live let me not want your prayers.

Thorow. Thou shalt not. Thy peace being made with Heaven, death is already vanquished. Bear a little longer the pains that attend this transitory life, and cease from pain for ever. [*Exit.*]

Barn. Perhaps I shall. I find a power within, that bears my soul above the fears of death, and, spite of conscious shame and guilt, gives me a taste of pleasure more than mortal.

Enter TRUEMAN.

Barn. Trueman!—My friend, whom I so wished to see; yet, now he's here, I dare not look upon him. [*Weeps.*]

True. Oh, Barnwell, Barnwell!

Barn. Mercy! mercy! gracious Heaven! For death, but not for this, was I prepared.

True. What have I suffered since I saw thee last! What pain has absence given me!—But oh, to see thee thus!—

Barn. I know it is dreadful! I feel the anguish of thy generous soul—But I was born to murder all who love me. [*Both weep.*]

True. I come not to reproach you; I thought to bring you comfort. Oh, had you trusted me when first the fair seducer tempted you, all might have been prevented.

Barn. Alas, thou knowest not what a wretch I've been. Breach of friendship was my first and least offence. So far was I lost to goodness, so devoted to the author of my ruin, that had she insisted on my murdering thee—I think—I should have done it.

True. Pr'ythee, aggravate thy faults no more.

Barn. I think I should! Thus good and generous as you are, I should have murdered you!

True. We have not yet embraced, and may be interrupted. Come to my arms.

Barn. Never, never, will I taste such joys on earth; never will I sooth my just remorse. Are those honest arms and faithful bosom fit to embrace and support a murderer? These iron fetters only shall clasp, and flinty pavement bear me; [*Throwing himself on the ground.*] even these are too good for such a bloody monster.

True. Shall fortune sever those whom friendship joined? Thy miseries cannot lay thee so low, but love will find thee. Here will we offer to stern calamity; this place the altar, and ourselves the sacrifice. Our mutual groans shall echo to each other through the dreary vault; our sighs shall number the moments as they pass; and mingling tears communicate such anguish, as words were never made to express.

Barn. Then be it so. [*Rising.*] Since you propose an intercourse of wo, pour all your griefs into my breast, and in exchange take mine. [*Em-*

bracing.] Where's now the anguish that you promised? Oh, take, take some of the joy that overflows my breast!

True. I do, I do. Almighty Power! how hast thou made us capable to bear at once the extremes of pleasure and of pain!

Enter KEEPER.

Keep. Sir.

True. I come.

[*Exit KEEPER.*]

Barn. Must you leave me? Death would soon have parted us for ever.

True. Oh, my Barnwell, there's yet another task behind. Again your heart must bleed for others' woes.

Barn. To meet and part with you, I thought was all I had to do on earth. What is there more for me to do or suffer?

True. I read to tell thee, yet it must be known! Maria—

Barn. Our master's fair and virtuous daughter?

True. The same.

Barn. No misfortune, I hope, has reached that maid! Preserve her, Heaven, from every ill, to show mankind that goodness is your care!

True. Thy, thy misfortunes, my unhappy friend have reached her ear. Whatever you and I have felt, and more, if more be possible, she feels for you.

Barn. This is indeed the bitterness of death.

[*Aside.*]

True. You must remember (for we all observed it) for some time past, a heavy melancholy weighed her down. Disconsolate she seemed, and pined and languished from a cause unknown; till, hearing of your dreadful fate, the long stifled flame blazed out, and in the transport of her grief discovered her own lost state, while she lamented yours.

Barn. [*Weeping.*] Why did you not let me die, and never know it?

True. It was impossible. She makes no secret of her passion for you; she is determined to see you ere you die, and waits for me to introduce her.

[*Exit.*]

Barn. Vain, busy thoughts, be still! What avails it to think on what I might have been? I am now what I've made myself.

Re-enter TRUEMAN, with MARIA.

True. Madam, reluctant I lead you to this dismal scene. This is the seat of misery and guilt. Here awful justice reserves her public victims. This is the entrance to a shameful death.

Maria. To this sad place then, no improper guest, the abandoned and lost Maria brings despair, and sees the subject and the cause of all this world of wo. Silent and motionless she stands, as if his soul had quitted her abode, and the lifeless form alone was left behind.

Barn. I groan, but murmur not. Just Heaven! I am your own; do with me what you please.

Maria. Why are your streaming eyes still fixed below, as though thou'dst give the greedy earth thy sorrows, and rob me of my due? Were happiness within your power, you should bestow it where you pleased; but in your misery I must and will partake.

Barn. Oh, say not so; but fly, abhor, and leave me to my fate. Consider what you are. So shall I quickly be to you—as though I had never been.

Maria. When I forget you, I must be so indeed. Reason, choice, virtue, all forbid it. Let women, like Millwood, if there are more such women, smile in prosperity, and in adversity forsake. Be it the pride of virtue to repair, or to partake, the ruin such have made.

True. Lovely, ill-fated maid!

Maria. Yes, fruitless is my love, and unavailing all my sighs and tears. Can they save thee from approaching death?—from such a death?—Oh, sorrow insupportable!

Barn. Preserve her, Heaven, and restore her peace, nor let her death be added to my crimes!—*[Bell tolls.]* I'm summoned to my fate.

Re-enter KEEPER.

Keep. Sir, the officers attend you. Millwood is already summoned.

Barn. Tell 'em I'm ready. *[Exit KEEPER.]* And now, my friend, farewell. *[Embracing.]* Support and comfort, the best you can, this mourning fair. No more—Forget not to pray for me.—*[Turning to MARIA.]*—Would you, bright excellence, permit me the honour of a chaste embrace, the last happiness this world could give

were mine.—*[She inclines towards him; they embrace.]*—Exalted goodness! Oh, turn your eyes from earth and me to Heaven, where virtue like yours is ever heard. Pray for the peace of my departing soul! Early my race of wickedness began, and soon I reached the summit. Thus justice, in compassion to mankind, cuts off a wretch like me; by one such example to secure thousands from future ruin.

*If any youth, like you, in future times
Shall mourn my fate, though he abhors my crimes,
Or tender maid, like you, my tale shall hear,
And to my sorrows give a pitying tear;
To each such melting eye and throbbing heart
Would gracious Heaven this benefit impart:
Never to know my guilt, nor feel my pain,
Then must you own you ought not to complain,
Since you nor weep, nor I shall die, in vain.*

[Exit BARNWELL]

True. In vain

*With bleeding hearts, and weeping eyes, we show
A humane, gen'rous sense of others' wo,
Unless we mark what drew their ruin on,
And, by avoiding that, prevent our own.*

[The curtain descends to slow music]

THE HYPOCRITE:

A COMEDY

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

REMARKS.

This alteration of Cibber's *Nonjuror*, by Bickerstaff, was acted at Drury Lane, 1768. The ingenious alterer says, in his preface, that he should be under no obligation to answer objections to his play, being accountable for none of its faults, as he claims none of its beauties.

The *Nonjuror*, written to expose a party, would not interest the present age, because the folly and roguery it was designed to ridicule no longer exist; but the substitution, for Doctor Wolf, of the *Tartuffe* of Moliere: (Doctor Cantwell of the Hypocrite) has rendered it agreeable to modern times. Little more than the character of Mawworm was written by Bickerstaff, and that principally for the sake of the comic talent of Weston.

It is a valuable trait of this comedy, that it carefully distinguishes between rational piety, and the hypocrisy, fanaticism, and outrageous pretensions to sanctity, which it so severely satirises.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY LANE, 1814.
SIR JOHN LAMBERT, *Mr. Powell.*
DOCTOR CANTWELL, *Mr. Downton.*
COLONEL LAMBERT, *Mr. Wrench.*
DARNLEY, *Mr. Holland.*
SEYWARD, *Mr. Barnard.*
MAWORM, *Mr. Oxberry.*

DRURY LANE, 1814.
OLD LADY LAMBERT, *Mrs. Sparks.*
YOUNG LADY LAMBERT, *Mrs. Orger.*
CHARLOTTE, *Mrs. Edwin.*
BETTY, *Mrs. Chatterley.*

SCENE.—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Hall in SIR JOHN LAMBERT'S House.

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT and COLONEL LAMBERT.

Col. L. Pray consider, Sir.

Sir J. So I do, Sir, that I am her father, and will dispose of her as I please.

Col. L. I do not dispute your authority, Sir; but as I am your son too, I think it my duty to be concerned for your honour. Have not you countenanced his addresses to my sister? has not she received them?—Mr. Darnley's birth and fortune are well known to you; and I dare swear, he may defy the world to lay a blemish on his character.

Sir J. Why then, Sir, since I am to be catechised, I must tell you I do not like his character; he is a world-server, a libertine, and has no more religion than you have.

Col. L. Sir, we neither of us think it proper to make a boast of our religion; but, if you please to inquire, you will find that we go to church as orderly as the rest of our neighbours.

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Sir J. Oh, you go to church! you go to church! —Wonderful! wonderful! to bow, and grin, and cough, and sleep: a fine act of devotion indeed.

Col. L. Well but, dear Sir—

Sir J. Colonel, you are an Atheist.

Col. L. Pardon me, Sir, I am none: it is a character I abhor; and next to that, I abhor the character of an enthusiast.

Sir J. Oh, you do so; an enthusiast!—this is the fashionable phrase, the bye-word, the nickname, that our pleasure-loving generation give to those few who have a sense of true sanctity.

Col. L. Say, canting, Sir.

Sir J. I tell you what, son, as I have told you more than once, you will draw some heavy judgment on your head one day or other.

Col. L. So says the charitable Doctor Cantwell; you have taken him into your house, and in return he gives over half your family to the devil.

Sir J. Do not abuse the doctor, colonel; it is not the way to my favour. I know you cannot bear him, because he is not one of your mincing preachers.—He holds up the glass to your enormities shows you to yourselves in your genuine colours

Col. L. I always respect piety and virtue, Sir; but there are pretenders to religion, as well as to courage; and as we never find the truly brave to be such as make much noise about their valour; so, I apprehend, the truly good seldom or never deal much in grimace.

Sir J. Very well, Sir; this is very well.

Col. L. Besides, Sir, I would be glad to know, by what authority the doctor pretends to exercise the clerical function. It does not appear clearly to me that he ever was in orders.

Sir J. That is no business of yours, Sir.—But, I am better informed.—However, he has the call of zeal.

Col. L. Zeal!

Sir J. Why, colonel, you are in a passion.

Col. L. I own I cannot see with temper, Sir, so many religious mountebanks impose on the unwary multitude; wretches, who make a trade of religion, and show an uncommon concern for the next world, only to raise their fortunes with greater security in this.

Sir J. Colonel, let me hear no more; I see you are too hardened to be converted now: but since you think it your duty, as a son, to be concerned for my errors, I think it as much mine, as a father, to be concerned for yours. If you think fit to amend them, so; if not, take the consequence.

Col. L. Well, Sir, may I ask you, without offence, if the reasons you have given me are your only reasons for discountenancing Mr. Darnley's addresses to my sister?

Sir J. Are they not flagrant? would you have me marry my daughter to a Pagan?

Col. L. He intends this morning paying his respects to you, in hopes to obtain your final consent; and desired me to be present as a mediator of articles between you.

Sir J. I am glad to hear it.

Col. L. That's kind indeed, Sir.

Sir J. May be not, Sir; for I will not be at home when he comes: and because I will not tell a lie for the matter, I'll go out this moment.

Col. L. Nay, dear Sir—

Sir J. And, do you hear—because I will not deceive him either, tell him I would not have him lose his time in fooling after your sister.—In short, I have another man in my head for her. [Exit.]

Col. L. Another man! It would be worth one's while to know him: pray Heaven this canting hypocrite has not got some beggarly rascal in his eye for her. I must rid the house of him at any rate, or all the settlement I can hope for from my father is a castle in the air.—My sister may be ruined too—here she comes. If there be another man in the case, she, no doubt, can let me into the secret.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Sister, good morrow; I want to speak with you.

Char. Pr'ythee then, dear brother, don't put on that wise, politic face, as if your regiment was going to be disbanded, or sent to the West Indies, and you obliged to follow it.

Col. L. Come, come, a truce with your railery: what I have to ask of you is serious, and I beg you would be so in your answer.

Char. Well, then, provided it is not upon the subject of love, I will be so—but make haste too—for I have not had my tea yet.

Col. L. Why it is, and it is not, upon that subject.

Char. Oh, I love a riddle dearly—Come—let's hear it.

Col. L. Nay, pshaw! if you will be serious, say so.

Char. O lard, Sir! I beg your pardon—there—there's my whole form and features, totally disengaged and lifeless, at your service; now, put them in what posture of attention you think fit.

[Leans on him awkwardly.]

Col. L. Was there ever such a giddy devil!—Pr'ythee, stand up. I have been talking with my father, and he declares positively you shall not receive any further addresses from Mr. Darnley.

Char. Are you serious?

Col. L. He said so this minute, and with some warmth.

Char. I am glad on't, with all my heart.

Col. L. How! glad!

Char. To a degree. Do you think a man has any more charms for me for my father's liking him? no, Sir, if Mr. Darnley can make his way to me now, he is obliged to me, and to me only. Besides, now it may have the face of an amour indeed, now one has something to struggle for; there's difficulty, there's danger, there's the dear spirit of contradiction in it too—Oh! I like it mightily.

Col. L. I am glad this does not make you think the worse of Darnley—but my father's consent might have clapped a pair of horses more to your coach perhaps, and the want of it may pinch your fortune.

Char. Burn fortune; am not I a fine woman? and have not I twenty thousand pounds in my own hands?

Col. L. Yes, sister; but with all your charms, you have had them in your hands almost these four years.

Char. Pshaw! and have not I had the full swing of my own airs and humours these four years? but if I humour my father, I warrant he'll make it three or four thousand more, with some unlicked lout—a comfortable equivalent, truly!—No, no; let him light his pipe with his consent, if he please. Wilful against wise for a wager.

Col. L. But pray, sister, has my father ever proposed any other man to you?

Char. Another man! let me know why you ask, and I'll tell you.

Col. L. Why, the last words he said to me were, that he had another man in his head for you.

Char. And who is it? who is it? tell me, dear brother.

Col. L. Why, you don't so much as seem surprised.

Char. No; but I'm impatient, and that's as well.

Col. L. Why how now, sister?

Char. Why sure, brother, you know very little of female happiness, if you suppose the surprise of a new lover ought to shock a woman of my temper—don't you know that I am a coquette?

Col. L. If you are, you are the first that ever was sincere enough to own her being so.

Char. To a lover, I grant you; but not to you; I make no more of you than a sister: I can say any thing to you.

Col. L. I should have been better pleased, if you had not owned it to me—it's a hateful character.

Char. Ay, it's no matter for that, it's violently pleasant, and there's no law against it, that I know of.

Col. L. Darnley's like to have a hopeful time with you.

Char. Well, but don't you really know who it is my father intends me?

Col. L. Not I, really; but I imagined you might, and therefore thought to advise with you about it.

Char. Nay, he has not opened his lips to me yet—are you sure he is gone out?

Col. L. You are very impatient to know, methinks; what have you to do to concern yourself about any man but Darnley?

Char. O lud! O lud! prythee brother don't be so wise; if you had an empty house to let, would you be displeased to hear there were two people about it? besides, to be a little serious, Darnley has a tincture of jealousy in his temper, which nothing but a substantial rival can cure.

Col. L. Oh, your servant, Madam! now you talk reason. I am glad you are concerned enough for Darnley's faults, to think them worth your mending; ha, ha!

Char. Concerned! why, did I say that?—look you, I'll deny it all to him—well, if ever I'm serious with him again—

Col. L. Here he comes; be as merry with him as you please.

Enter DARNLEY.

Darn. My dear colonel, your servant.

Col. L. I am glad you did not come sooner; for in the humour my father left me, 'twould not have been a proper time for you to have pressed your affair—I touched upon't—but—I'll tell you more presently; in the meantime lose no ground with my sister.

Darn. I shall always think myself obliged to your friendship, let my success be what it will—Madam—your most obedient—what have you got there, pray?

Char. [Reading.] *"Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose;
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those—"*

Darn. Pray, Madam, what is't?

Char. *"Favours to none, to all she smiles extends—"*

Darn. Nay, I will see.

Char. *"Oft she rejects, but never once offends."*

Col. L. Have a care; she has dipped into her own character, and she'll never forgive you, if you don't let her go through with it.

Darn. I beg your pardon, Madam.

Char. *"Bright as the sun her eyes the gazers strike,
And like the sun they shine on all alike."* Um—um—

Darn. That is something like indeed.

Col. L. You would say so, if you knew all.

Darn. All what? pray what do you mean?

Col. L. Have a little patience; I'll tell you immediately.

Char. *"If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face—and you'll forget them all."* Is not that natural, Mr. Darnley?

Darn. For a woman to expect, it is indeed.

Char. And can you blame her, when 'tis at the same time a proof of the poor man's passion and her power?

Darn. So that you think the greatest compliment a lover can make his mistress, is to give up his reason to her.

Char. Certainly; for what have your lordly sex to boast of but your understanding, and till that's

entirely surrendered to her discretion, while the least sentiment holds out against her, a woman must be downright vain to think her conquest completed!

Darn. There we differ, Madam; for, in my opinion, nothing but the most excessive vanity could value or desire such a conquest.

Char. Oh, d'ye hear him, brother? the creature reasons with me; nay, has the effrontery to think me in the wrong too! O lud! he'd make a horrid tyrant—positively I won't have him.

Darn. Well, my comfort is, no other man will easily know whether you'll have him or not.

Char. Am I not a vain, silly creature, Mr. Darnley?

Darn. A little bordering upon the baby, I must own.

Char. Laud! how can you love a body so then? but I don't think you love me though—do you?

Darn. Yes, faith, I do; and so shamefully, that I'm in hopes you doubt it.

Char. Poor man! he'd fain bring me to reason.

Darn. I would indeed.—Nay, were it but possible to make you serious only when you should be so, I should think you the most amiable—

Char. O lud! he's civil—

Darn. Come, come, you have good sense; use me but with that, and make me what you please.

Char. Laud! I don't desire to make any thing of you, not I.

Darn. Come then, be generous, and swear at least you'll never marry another.

Char. Ah, laud! now you have spoiled all again:—besides, how can I be sure of that, before I have seen this other man my brother spoke to me of?

Darn. What riddle's this?

Col. L. I told you, you did not know all. To be serious, my father went out but now, on purpose to avoid you.—In short, he absolutely retracts his promises; says, he would not have you fool away your time after my sister; and in plain terms told me, he had another man in his head for her.

Darn. Another man! who? what is he? did not he name him?

Col. L. No; nor has he yet spoke of him to my sister.

Darn. This is unaccountable!—what can have given him this sudden turn?

Col. L. Some whim our conscientious doctor has put in his head, I'll lay my life.

Darn. He! he can't be such a villain; he professes a friendship for me.

Col. L. So much the worse.

Darn. But on what pretence, what grounds, what reason, what interest, can he have to oppose me?

Col. L. Are you really now as unconcerned as you seem to be?

Char. You are a strange dunce, brother—you know no more of love than I do of a regiment—You shall see now how I'll comfort him—Poor Darnley, ha, ha, ha!

Darn. I don't wonder at your good humour, Madam, when you have so substantial an opportunity to make me uneasy for life.

Char. O lud! how sentimental he is! well, his reproaches have that greatness of soul—the confusion they give is insupportable.—

Enter BETTY.

Betty, is the tea ready?

Bet. Yes, Madam.

Char. Mr. Darnley, your servant.

[*Exeunt CHAR. and BET.*]

Col. L. So; you have made a fine piece of work on't, indeed!

Darn. Dear Tom, pardon me if I speak a little freely; I own the levity of her behaviour, at this time, gives me harder thoughts than I once believed it possible to have of her.

Col. L. Indeed, my friend, you mistake her.

Darn. Nay, nay; had she any real concern for me, the apprehensions of a man's addresses, whom yet she never saw, must have alarmed her to some degree of seriousness.

Col. L. Not at all; for let this man be whom he will, I take her levity as a proof of her resolution to have nothing to say to him.

Darn. And pray, Sir, may I not as well suspect, that this artful delay of her good nature to me now, is meant as a provisional defence against my reproaches, in case, when she has seen this man, she should think it convenient to prefer him.

Col. L. No, no; she's giddy, but not capable of so studied a falsehood.

Darn. But still, what could she mean by going away so abruptly?

Col. L. You grew too grave for her.

Darn. Why, who could bear such trifling?

Col. L. You should have laughed at her.

Darn. I can't love at that easy rate.

Col. L. No—if you could, the uneasiness would lie on her side.

Darn. Do you then really think she has any thing in her heart for me?

Col. L. Ay, marry, Sir—ah! if you could but get her to own that seriously now; Lord! how you could love her!

Darn. And so I could, by Heaven!

Col. L. Well, well, I'll undertake for her; if my father don't stand in the way, we are well enough.

Darn. What says my lady? you don't think she's against us?

Col. L. I dare say she is not. She's of so soft, so sweet a disposition—

Darn. Pr'ythee, how came so fine a woman to marry your father, with such a vast inequality of years?

Col. L. Want of fortune, Frank; she was poor and beautiful—he, rich and amorous—she made him happy, and he her—

Darn. A lady—

Col. L. And a jointure—now she's the only one in the family that has power with our precise doctor; and, I dare engage, she'll use it with him to persuade my father from any thing that is against your interest. By the way, you must know I have some shrewd suspicion that this sanctified rogue is in love with her.

Darn. In love!

Col. L. You shall judge by the symptoms—but hush!—here he comes with my grandmother—stop this way, and I'll tell you. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL, old LADY LAMBERT, and SEYWARD.

Dr. C. Charles, step up into my study; bring down a dozen more of those manuals of devotion, with the last hymns I composed; and, when he calls, give them to Mr. Mawworm; and, do you

hear, if any one inquires for me, say I am gone to Newgate, and the Marshalsea, to distribute alms.

[*Exit SEYWARD.*]

Old Lady L. Well but, worthy doctor, why will you go to the prisons yourself—cannot you send the money?—ugly distempers are often caught there—have a care of your health; let us keep one good man, at least, amongst us.

Dr. C. Alas, Madam, I am not a good man; I am a guilty, wicked sinner, full of iniquity; the greatest villain that ever breathed; every instant of my life is clouded with stains; it is one continued series of crimes and defilements; you do not know what I am capable of; you indeed take me for a good man; but the truth is, I am a worthless creature.

Old Lady L. Have you then stumbled? alas! if it be so, who shall walk upright? what horrid crime have you been hurried into, that calls for this severe self-accrimination?

Dr. C. None, Madam, that perhaps humanity may call very enormous; yet am I sure, that my thoughts never stray a moment from celestial contemplations? do they not sometimes, before I am aware, turn to things of this earth? am I not often hasty, and surprised into wrath? nay, the instance is recent; for last night, being snarled at and bit by Minxy, your daughter-in-law's lap-dog, I am conscious I struck the little beast with a degree of passion, for which I have never been able to forgive myself since.

Old Lady L. Oh! worthy, humble soul! this is a slight offence, which your suffering and mortifications may well atone for.

Dr. C. No, Madam, no; I want to suffer; I ought to be mortified; and I am obliged now to tell you, that, for my soul's sake, I must quit your good son's family; I am pampered too much here, live too much at my ease.

Old Lady L. Good doctor!

Dr. C. Alas, Madam! it is not you that should shed tears; it is I ought to weep; you are a pure woman.

Old Lady L. I pure! who, I? no, no; sinful, sinful—but do not talk of quitting our family; what will become of us—for friendship—for charity—

Dr. C. Enough; say no more, Madam; I submit; while I can do good, it is my duty.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT and DARNLEY.

Col. L. Your ladyship's most humble servant.

Old Lady L. Grandson, how do you?

Darn. Good day to you, doctor!

Dr. C. Mr. Darnley, I am your most humble servant; I hope you and the good colonel will stay and join in the private duties of the family.

Old Lady L. No, doctor, no; it is too early; the sun has not risen upon them; but, I doubt not, the day will come.

Dr. C. I warrant, they would go to a play now!

Old Lady L. Would they—I am afraid they would.

Darn. Why, I hope it is no sin, Madam; if I am not mistaken, I have seen your ladyship at a play.

Old Lady L. Me, Sir! see me at a play! you may have seen the prince of darkness, or some of his imps, in my likeness, perhaps—

Darn. Well but, Madam—

Old Lady L. Mr. Darnley, do you think I would commit murder?

Dr. C. No, Sir, no; these are not the plants usually to be met with in that rank soil; the seeds of wickedness indeed sprout up every where too fast; but a playhouse is the devil's hot-bed—

Col. L. And yet, doctor, I have known some of the leaders of your tribe, as scrupulous as they are, who have been willing to gather fruit there for the use of the brethren—as in case of a benefit—

Dr. C. The charity covereth the sin: and it may be lawful to turn the wages of abomination to the comfort of the righteous.

Col. L. Ha, ha, ha!

Dr. C. Reprobate! reprobate!

Col. L. What is that you mutter, sirrah?

Old Lady L. Oh Heavens!

Darn. Let him go, colonel.

Col. L. A canting hypocrite!

Dr. C. Very well, Sir; your father shall know my treatment. *[Exit.]*

Old Lady L. Let me run out of the house; I shall have it fall upon my head, if I stay among such wicked wretches. O grandson! grandson!

[Exit.]

Darn. Was there ever such an insolent rascal!

Col. L. The dog will one day provoke me to beat his brains out.

Darn. But what the devil is he? whence comes he?—what is his original?—how has he so ingratiated himself with your father, as to get footing in the house?

Col. L. Oh, Sir, he is here in quality of chaplain; he was first introduced by the good old lady that's just gone out. You know, she has been a long time a frequenter of our modern conventicles, where it seems she got acquainted with this sanctified pastor. His disciples believe him a saint; and my poor father, who has been for some time tainted with their pernicious principles, has been led into the same snare.

Darn. Hah! here's your sister again.

Re-enter CHARLOTTE and DOCTOR CANTWELL.

Char. You'll find, Sir, I will not be used thus; nor shall your credit with my father protect your insolence to me.

Col. L. What's the matter?

Char. Nothing; pray be quiet.—I don't want you—stand out of the way—how durst you bolt with such authority into my chamber, without giving me notice?

Darn. Confusion!

Col. L. Hold—if my father wont resent this, 'tis then time enough for me to do it.

Dr. C. Compose yourself, Madam; I came by your father's desire, who, being informed that you were entertaining Mr. Darnley, grew impatient, and gave his positive commands that you attend him instantly, or he himself, he says, will fetch you.

Darn. Ay, now the storm is rising.

Dr. C. So, for what I have done, Madam, I had his authority, and shall leave him to answer you.

Char. 'Tis false. He gave you no authority to insult me; or, if he had, did you suppose I would bear it from you? What is it you presume upon? your function? does that exempt you from the manners of a gentleman?

Dr. C. Shall I have an answer to your father, lady?

Char. I'll send him none by you.

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Dr. C. I shall inform him so. *[Exit.]*

Char. A saucy puppy!

Col. L. Pray, sister, what has the fellow done to you?

Char. Nothing.

Darn. I beg you would tell us, Madam.

Char. Nay, no great matter—but I was sitting carelessly in my dressing-room—a—a fastening my garter, and this impudent cur comes bounce in upon me—

Darn. The rogue must be corrected.

Col. L. Yet, 'egad, I cannot help laughing at the accident; what a ridiculous figure she must make—ha, ha!

Char. Hah! you're as impudent as he, I think.

Darn. Now, dear Tom, speak to her before she goes.

Char. What does he say, brother?

Col. L. Why, he wants to have me speak to you; and I would have him do it himself.

Char. Ay, come, do, Darnley; I am in a good humour now.

Darn. Oh, Charlotte! my heart is bursting—

Char. Well, well; out with it then.

Darn. Your father now, I see, is bent on parting us—nay, what's worse perhaps, will give you to another—I cannot speak—imagine what I want from you.—

Char. Well—O lud! one looks so silly though when one is so serious—O dear,—in short, I cannot get it out.

Col. L. I warrant you; try again.

Char. O lud—well—if one must be teased, then—why, he must hope, I think.

Darn. Is't possible!—thus—

Col. L. Buz—not a syllable; she has done very well.—I bar all heroics; if you press it too far, I'll hold six to four she's off again in a moment.

Darn. I'm silenced.

Char. Now am I on tiptoe to know what odd fellow my father has found out for me.

Darn. I'd give something to know him.

Char. He's in a terrible fuss at your being here, I find.

Col. L. 'Sdeath! here he comes.

Char. Now we are all in a fine pickle.

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT hastily; and, looking sternly at DARNLEY, takes CHARLOTTE under his arm, and carries her off. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Antechamber at SIR JOHN LAMBERT'S.

Enter SEYWARD, with a writing in his hand.

Sey. 'Tis so—I have long suspected where his zeal would end, in the making of his private fortune. But then, to found it on the ruin of his patron's children!—I shudder at the villany! What desperation may a son be driven to, so barbarously disinherited!—Besides, his daughter, fair Charlotte, too, is wronged; wronged in the tenderest point: for so extravagant is this settlement, that it leaves her not a shilling, unless she marries with the doctor's consent; which is intended, by what I have heard, as an expedient to oblige her to marry the doctor himself. Now, were but an honest part to let Charlotte know the snare that's laid for her. This deed's not signed, and may yet be prevented. It shall be so.

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT, LADY LAMBERT,
and CHARLOTTE.

Sir J. Oh! Seyward, your uncle wants you to transcribe some hymns.

Sey. Sir, I'll wait on him. [*Exit.*]

Char. A pretty, well-bred fellow, that.

Sir J. Ay, ay; but he has better qualities than his good breeding.

Char. He's always clean too.

Sir J. I wonder, daughter, when you will take notice of a man's real merit. Humph—well bred and clean, forsooth. Would not one think now she was describing a coxcomb? When do you hear my wife talk at this rate? and yet she is as young as your fantastical ladyship.

Lady L. Charlotte is of a cheerful temper, my dear; but I know you don't think she wants discretion.

Sir J. I shall try that presently; and you, my dear, shall judge between us. In short, daughter, your course of life is but one continued round of playing the fool to no purpose; and therefore I am resolved to make you think seriously, and marry.

Char. That I shall do before I marry, Sir, you may depend upon it.

Sir J. Um—That I am not so sure of; but you may depend upon my having thought seriously, and that's as well; for the person I intend you is, of all the world, the only man who can make you truly happy.

Char. And, of all the world, Sir, that's the only man I'll positively marry.

Lady L. You have rare courage, Charlotte; if I had such a game to play, I should be frightened out of my wits.

Char. Lord! Madam, he'll make nothing of it, depend upon it. [*Aside.*]

Sir J. Mind what I say to you. This wonderful man, I say—first, in his public character, is religious, zealous, and charitable.

Char. Very well, Sir.

Sir J. In his private character, sober.

Char. I should hate a sot.

Sir J. Chaste.

Char. A hem! [*Stifling a laugh.*]

Sir J. What is it you sneer at, Madam? You want one of your fine gentlemen rakes, I suppose, that are snapping at every woman they meet with.

Char. No, no, Sir; I am very well satisfied.—I—I should not care for such a sort of a man, no more than I should for one that every woman was ready to snap at.

Sir J. No, you'll be secure from jealousy; he has experience, ripeness of years—he is almost forty-nine. Your sex's vanity will have no charms for him.

Char. But all this while, Sir, I don't find that he has charms for our sex's vanity. How does he look? Is he tall, well made? Does he dress, sing, talk, laugh, and dance well? Has he good hair, good teeth, fine eyes? Does he keep a chaise, coach, and vis-a-vis? Has he six prancing ponies? Does he wear the prince's uniform, and subscribe to Brookes's?

Sir J. Was there ever so profligate a creature? What will this age come to?

Lady L. Nay, Charlotte, here I must be against you. Now you are blind indeed. A woman's happiness has little to do with the pleasure her husband takes in his own person.

Sir J. Right

Lady L. It is not how he looks, but how he loves, is the point.

Sir J. Good again.

Lady L. And a wife is much more secure that has charms for her husband, than when the husband has only charms for her.

Sir J. Admirable! go on, my dear.

Lady L. Do you think a woman of five and twenty may not be much happier with an honest man of fifty, than the finest woman of fifty with a young fellow of five and twenty?

Sir J. Mark that!

Char. Ay, but when two five and twenties come together—dear papa, you must allow they have a chance to be fifty times as pleasant and frolicsome.

Sir J. Frolicsome! Why, you sensual idiot, what have frolics to do with solid happiness? I am ashamed of you.—Go, you talk worse than a girl at a boarding-school.—Frolicsome! as if marriage was only a license for two people to play the fool according to law. Methinks, Madam, you have a better example of happiness before your face.—Here's one has ten times your understanding, and she, you find, has made a different choice.

Char. Lord, Sir, how you talk! you don't consider people's tempers. I don't say my lady is not in the right; but then you know, papa, she's a prude, and I am a coquette; she becomes her character very well, I don't deny it; and I hope you see every thing I do, is as consistent with mine.—Your wise people may talk what they will, but 'tis constitution governs us all; and be assured, you will no more be able to bring me to endure a man of forty-nine, than you can persuade my lady to dance in church to the organ.

Sir J. O horrible! My poor sister has ruined her: leaving her fortune in her own hands, has turned her brain. In short, Charlotte, your sentiments of life are shameful, and I am resolved upon your instant reformation: therefore, as an earnest of your obedience, I shall first insist that you never see young Darnley more; for, in one word, the good and pious doctor Cantwell's the man I have decreed for your husband.

Char. Ho, ho, ho!

Sir J. 'Tis very well; this laugh you think becomes you, but I shall spoil your mirth—no more—give me a serious answer.

Char. I ask your pardon, Sir; I should not have smiled indeed, could I suppose it possible that you were serious.

Sir J. You'll find me so.

Char. I'm sorry for it; but I have an objection to the doctor, Sir, that most fathers think a substantial one.

Sir J. Name it.

Char. Why, Sir, we know nothing of his fortune; he's not worth a groat.

Sir J. That's more than you know, Madam; I am able to give him a better estate than I am afraid you'll deserve.

Char. How, Sir?

Sir J. I have told you what's my will, and shall leave you to think on't.

Enter SEYWARD.

Sey. Sir, if you are at leisure, the doctor desires to speak with you, upon business of importance.

Sir J. Where is he?

Sey. In his own chamber, Sir.

Sir J. I will come to him immediately.—[*Exit SEYWARD.*]—Daughter, I am called away, and therefore have only time to tell you as my last resolution, doctor Cantwell is your husband, or I am no more your father. [*Exit.*]

Char. O Madam! I am at my wit's end; not for the little fortune I may lose in disobeying my father, but it startles me to find what a dangerous influence this fellow has over all his actions.

Lady L. Here's your brother.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT.

Col. L. Madam, your most obedient—Well, sister, is the secret out? Who is this pretty fellow my father has picked up for you?

Char. Even our agreeable doctor.

Col. L. You are not serious?

Lady L. He is the very man, I can assure you, Sir.

Col. L. Confusion! what, would the cormorant devour the whole family? Your ladyship knows he is secretly in love with you too.

Lady L. Fy, fy, colonel.

Col. L. I ask your pardon, Madam, if I speak too freely; but I am sure, by what I have seen, your ladyship must suspect something of it.

Lady L. I am sorry any body else has seen it; but I must own, his behaviour to me of late, both in private and before company, has been something warmer than I thought became him.

Col. L. How are these opposites to be reconciled? Can the rascal have the assurance to think both points are to be carried?

Char. Truly, one would not suspect the gentleman to be so termagant.

Col. L. Especially while he pretends to be so shocked at all indecent amours. In the country he used to make the maids lock up the turkey-cocks every Saturday night, for fear they should gallant the hens on a Sunday.

Lady L. Oh! ridiculous!

Col. L. Upon my life, Madam, my sister told me so.

Char. I tell you so, impudent—

Lady L. Fy, Charlotte; he only jests with you.

Char. How can you be such a monster, to stay playing the fool here, when you have more reason to be frightened out of your wits? You don't know perhaps, that my father declares he'll settle a fortune upon this fellow too.

Col. L. What do you mean?

Lady L. 'Tis too true; 'tis not three minutes since he said so.

Col. L. Nay then, 'tis time indeed his eyes were opened; and give me leave to say, Madam, 'tis only in your power.

Lady L. What is 't you propose?

Col. L. Why, if this fellow, which I'm sure of, is really in love with you, give him a fair opportunity to declare it, and leave me to make my advantage.

Lady L. I should be loath to do a wrong thing—

Char. Dear Madam, it is the only way in the world to expose him to my father.

Lady L. I'll think of it.

Col. L. Pray do, Madam; but in the mean time I must leave you—poor Darnley stays for me at the Smyrna, and will sit upon thorns till I bring him an account of his new rival.

Char. Well, well, get you gone then; here is my grandmother. [*Exit COLONEL LAMBERT.*]

Enter Old LADY LAMBERT.

Lady L. This is kind, Madam; I hope your ladyship's come to dine with us.

Old Lady L. No; don't be afraid: only in my way from Tottenham-court, I just called to see whether any dreadful accident happened to the family since I was here last.

Lady L. Accident! did your ladyship say?

Old Lady L. I shall be sorry, daughter, but not surprised, when I hear it; for there are goings on under this roof, that will bring temporal punishments along with them.

Lady L. Indeed, Madam, you astonish me!

Old Lady L. We'll drop the subject; and I beg leave to address myself to you, Miss Charlotte; I see you have a bit of lace upon your neck; I desire to know what you wear it for.

Char. Wear it for, Madam! it's the fashion.

Old Lady L. In short, I have been at my linen draper's to-day, and have bought you some thick muslin, which I desire you will make handkerchiefs of—for I must tell you that slight covering is indecent, and gives much offence.

Lady L. Indecent, did your ladyship say?

Old Lady L. Yes, daughter-in-law, doctor Cantwell complains to me that he can't sit at table, the sight of her bare neck disturbs him so; and he's a good man, and knows what indecency is.

Char. Yes, indeed, I believe he does, better than any one in this house. But you may tell the doctor from me, Madam, that he is an impudent coxcomb, a puppy, and deserves to have his bones broke.

Old Lady L. Fy, Charlotte, fy! He speaks but for your good, and this is the grateful return you make.

Char. Grateful return, Madam!—how can you be so partial to that hypocrite?—The doctor is one of those who start at a feather.—Poor good man! yet he has his vices of the graver sort—

Old Lady L. Come, come; I wish you would follow his precept, whose practice is conformable to what he teaches.—Virtuous man!—Above all sensual regards, he considers the world merely as a collection of dirt and pebble-stones.—How has he weaned me from temporal connections! My heart is now set upon nothing sublunary: and, I thank Heaven, I am so insensible to every thing in this vain world, that I could see you, my son, my daughters, my brothers, my grandchildren, all expire before me; and mind it no more than the going out of so many snuffs of candle.

Char. Upon my word, Madam, it is a very humane disposition you have been able to arrive at, and your family is much obliged to the doctor for his instructions.

Old Lady L. Well, child, I have nothing more to say to you at present; Heaven mend you, that's all.

Lady L. But pray, Madam, stay and dine with us.

Old Lady L. No, daughter, I have said it, and you know I never tell a lie; but here's my son. if you'll give me leave, I'll stay and speak to him.

Lady L. Your ladyship's time is your own

Char. Ay, here's that abominable doctor.—This fellow puts me beyond my patience.

[*Exit LADY L. and CHAR.*]

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT and DOCTOR CANTWELL.

Sir J. Oh, Madam, Madam! I'm glad you're here to join me in solicitations to the doctor.—Here is my mother, friend, my mother; a pious woman; you will hear her, more worthy to advise you than I am.

Dr. C. Alas! the dear good lady, I will kiss her hand!—but what advice can she give me? The riches of this world, Sir, have no charms for me; I am not dazzled with their false glare; and was I, I repeat it, to accept of the trust you want to repose in me, Heaven knows, it would only be lest the means should fall into wicked hands, who would not lay it out as I would do, for the glory of Heaven, and the good of my neighbour.

Old Lady L. What's the matter, son?

Dr. C. Nothing, Madam; nothing.—But you were witness how the worthy colonel treated me this morning—Not that I speak it on my own account—for to be reviled is my portion.

Sir J. O the villain! the villain!

Dr. C. Indeed, I did not think he had so hard a nature.

Old Lady L. Ah! your charitable heart knows not the rancour that is in his.—His wicked sister too, has been here this moment, abusing this good man.

Dr. C. O Sir, 'tis plain; 'tis plain; your whole family are in a combination against me—your son and daughter hate me; they think I stand between them and your favour: and indeed it is not fit I should do so; for, fallen as they are, they are still your children, and I an alien, an intruder, who ought in conscience to retire and heal those unhappy breaches.

Old Lady L. See; if the good man does not wipe his eyes!

Dr. C. Oh Heavens! the thought of their ingratitude wounds me to the quick—but I'll remove this eye-sore—here, Charles!

Enter SEYWARD.

Sir J. For goodness' sake—

Dr. C. Bring me that writing, I gave you to lay up this morning.

Sir J. Make haste, good Charles; it shall be signed this moment. *[Exit SEYWARD.]*

Dr. C. Not for the world, Sir John—every minute tends to corroborate my last intentions—I must not, will not take it, with the curses of your children.

Sir J. But consider, doctor—shall my wicked son then be heir to my lands, before repentance has entitled him to favour—No, let him depend upon you, whom he has wronged; perhaps, in time he may reflect on his father's justice, and be reconciled to your rewarded virtues.—If Heaven should at last reclaim him, in you I know he still would find a fond, forgiving father.

Dr. C. The imagination of so blessed an hour, softens me to a tenderness I cannot support!

Old Lady L. Oh! the dear good man.

Sir J. With regard to my daughter, doctor, you know she is not wronged by it; because, if she proves not obstinate, she may still be happy.

Old Lady L. Yes, but the perverse wretch delights the blessing you propose for her.

Dr. C. We must allow, Madam, female modesty a time, which often takes the likeness of distress: the commands of your good son might

too suddenly surprise her—Maids must be gently dealt with—and might I humbly advise—

Sir J. Any thing you will: you shall govern me and her.

Dr. C. Then, Sir, abate of your authority, and let the matter rest awhile.

Sir J. Suppose we were to get my wife to speak to her; women will often hear, from their own sex, what sometimes, even from the man they like, will startle them.

Dr. C. Then, with your permission, Sir, I will take an opportunity of talking to my lady.

Sir J. She's now in her dressing-room; I'll go and prepare her for it. *[Exit.]*

Dr. C. You are too good to me, Sir—too bountiful.

Enter SEYWARD.

Sey. Sir, Mr. Mawworm is without, and would be glad to be permitted to speak with you.

Old Lady L. Oh pray, doctor, admit him; I have not seen Mr. Mawworm this great while; he's a pious man, though in an humble estate; desire the worthy creature to walk in.

Enter MAWWORM.

—How do you do, Mr. Mawworm?

Maw. Thank your ladyship's axing—I'm but deadly poorish indeed; the world and I can't agree—I got the books, doctor—and Mrs. Grunt bid me give her service to you, and thanks you for the eighteen-pence.

Dr. C. Hush, friend Mawworm! not a word more; you know I hate to have my little charities blazed about: a poor widow, Madam, to whom I sent my mite.

Old Lady L. Give her this.

[Offers a purse to MAW.]

Dr. C. I'll take care it shall be given to her.

[Takes it.]

Old Lady L. But what is the matter with you, Mr. Mawworm?

Maw. I don't know what's the matter with me—I'm a breaking my heart—I think it's a sin to keep a shop.

Old Lady L. Why if you think it a sin, indeed—pray what's your business?

Maw. We deals in grocery, tea, small-beer, charcoal, butter, brickdust, and the like.

Old Lady L. Well, you must consult with your friendly director here.

Maw. I wants to go a preaching.

Old Lady L. Do you?

Maw. I'm almost sure I have had a call.

Old Lady L. Ay!

Maw. I have made several sermons already; I does them extrumperty, because, I can't write; and now the devils in our alley says, as how my head's turned.

Old Lady L. Ay, devils indeed—but don't you mind them.

Maw. No, I don't—I rebukes them, and preaches to them, whether they will or not. We lets our house in lodgings to single men; and sometimes I gets them together, with one or two of the neighbours, and makes them all cry.

Old Lady L. Did you ever preach in public?

Maw. I got upon Kennington-common, the last review day; but the boys threw brickbats at me and pinned crackers to my tail; and I have been afraid to mount ever since.

Old Lady L. Do you hear this, doctor? throw

brickbats at him, and pin crackers to his tail! can these things be stood by?

Maw. I told them so—says I, I does nothing clandestinely; I stands here contagious to his majesty's guards, and I charge you upon your apparels not to mistlist me.

Old Lady L. And had it no effect?

Maw. No more than if I spoke to so many postesses: but if he advises me to go a preaching, and quit my shop, I'll make an exccessance further into the country.

Old Lady L. An excursion, you would say.

Maw. I am but a sheep, but my bleatings shall be heard afar off; and that sheep shall become a shepherd: nay, if it be only as it were a shepherd's dog, to bark the stray lambs into the fold.

Old Lady L. He wants method, doctor.

Dr. C. Yes, Madam; but there is the matter, and I despise not the ignorant.

Maw. He's a saint—till I went after him, I was little better than the devil; my conscience was tanned with sin, like a piece of neat's leather, and had no more feeling than the sole of my shoe; always a roving after fantastical delights: I used to go, every Sunday evening, to the Three Hats at Islington! it's a public-house! mayhap, your ladyship may know it: I was a great lover of skittles too, but now I can't bear them.

Old Lady L. What a blessed reformation!

Maw. I believe, doctor, you never know'd as how I was instigated one of the stewards of the reforming society. I convicted a man of five oaths, as last Thursday was a se'nnight, at the Pewter-platter, in the Borough; and another of three, while he was playing trap-ball in St. George's-fields: I bought this waistcoat out of my share of the money.

Old Lady L. But how do you mind your business?

Maw. We have lost almost all our customers; because I keeps extorting them whenever they come into the shop.

Old Lady L. And how do you live?

Maw. Better than ever we did: while we were worldly-minded, my wife and I (for I am married to as likely a woman as you shall see in a thousand) could hardly make things do at all; but since this good man has brought us into the road of the righteous, we have always plenty of every thing; and my wife goes as well dressed as a gentlewoman—we have had a child too.

Old Lady L. Merciful!

Maw. And between you and me, doctor, I believe Susy's breeding again.

Dr. C. Thus it is, Madam; I am constantly told, though I can hardly believe it, a blessing follows wherever I come.

Maw. And yet, if you would hear how the neighbours reviles my wife; saying as how she sets no store by me, because we have words now and then; but as I says, if such was the case, would ever she have cut me down that there time as I was melancholy, and she found me hanging behind the door; I don't believe there's a wife in the parish would have done so by her husband.

Dr. C. I believe 'tis near dinner-time; and Sir John will require my attendance.

Maw. Oh! I am troublesome—nay, I only come to you, doctor, with a message from Mrs. Grunt. I wish your ladyship heartily and heartily farewell; doctor, a good day to you.

Old Lady L. Mr. Mawworm, call on me some

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time this afternoon; I want to have a little private discourse with you; and, pray, my service to your spouse.

Maw. I will, Madam; you are a malefactor to all goodness; I'll wait upon your ladyship; I will indeed: [*Going, returns.*] Oh, doctor, that's true; Susy desired me to give her kind love and respects to you. [*Exit.*]

Dr. C. Madam, if you please, I will lead you into the parlour.

Old Lady L. No, doctor, my coach waits at the door.

Enter SEYWARD.

Dr. C. Charles, you may lay those papers by again, but in some place where you'll easily find them; for I believe we shall have occasion for them some time this afternoon.

Sey. I'll take care, Sir. [*Exit DR. CANT. and old LADY LAMBERT.*]—Occasion for them this afternoon!—Then there's no time to be lost; the coast is clear, and this is her chamber.—What's the matter with me? the thought of speaking to her throws me into a disorder. There's nobody within; I'll knock again.

Enter BETTY.

Is your lady busy?

Bet. I believe she's only reading, Sir.

Sey. Will you do me the favour to let her know, if she's at leisure, I beg to speak with her upon some earnest business.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Who's that?

Bet. She's here.—Mr. Seyward, Madam, desires to speak with you.

Char. Oh, your servant, Mr. Seyward.—Here, take this odious Homer, and lay him up again; he tires me.—[*Exit BETTY.*]—How could the blind wretch make such an horrid fuss about a fine woman, for so many volumes together, and give us no account of her amours? you have read him, I suppose, in the Greek, Mr. Seyward?

Sey. Not lately, Madam.

Char. But do you so violently admire him now?

Sey. The critics say he has his beauties, Madam; but Ovid has been always my favourite.

Char. Ovid—Oh, he is ravishing!

Sey. So art thou, to madness! [*Aside.*]

Char. Lord! how could one do, to learn Greek!—Were you a great while about it?

Sey. It has been half the business of my life, Madam.

Char. That's cruel, now; then you think one could not be mistress of it in a month or two?

Sey. Not easily, Madam.

Char. They tell me, it has the softest tone for love of any language in the world—I fancy I could soon learn it. I know two words of it already.

Sey. Pray, Madam, what are they?

Char. Stay—let me see—Oh—ay—*Zoe kai psuche.*

Sey. I hope you know the English of them, Madam.

Char. Oh lud! I hope there is no harm in it—I'm sure I heard the doctor say it to my lady—pray, what is it?

Sey. You must first imagine, Madam, a tender lover gazing on his mistress; and then indeed they have a softness in them; as thus—*Zoe kai psuche!*—my life! my soul!

Char. Oh the impudent young rogue! how his eyes spoke too! what the deuce can he want with me!

Sey. I have startled her!—she muses! [*Aside.*]

Char. It always run in my head that this fellow had something in him above his condition; I'll know immediately. [*Aside.*] Well, but your business with me, Mr. Seyward? you have something of love in your head, I'll lay my life on't.

Sey. I never durst own it, Madam.

Char. Why; what's the matter?

Sey. My story is too melancholy to entertain a mind so much at ease as yours.

Char. Oh, I love melancholy stories of all things:—pray how long have you lived with your uncle, Mr. Seyward?

Sey. With doctor Cantwell, I suppose you mean, Madam?

Char. Ay.

Sey. He's no uncle of mine, Madam.

Char. You surprise me! not your uncle?

Sey. No, Madam; but that's not the only character the doctor assumes, to which he has no right.

Char. Lord! I am concerned for you.

Sey. So you would, Madam, if you knew all.

Char. I am already; but if there are any further particulars of your story, pray let me hear them; and should any services be in my power, I am sure you may command them.

Sey. You treat me with so kind, so gentle a hand, that I will unbosom myself to you.—My father, Madam, was the younger branch of a genteel family in the north; his name Trueman—but dying while I was yet in my infancy, I was left wholly dependant on my mother; a woman really pious and well-meaning, but—In short, Madam, doctor Cantwell fatally got acquainted with her, and as he is now your father's bosom counsellor, soon became hers. She died, Madam, when I was but eight years old; and then I was, indeed, left an orphan.

Char. Melancholy!

Sey. She left doctor Cantwell her sole heir and executor; but I must do her the justice to say, I believe it was in the confirmation that he would take care of, and do justice to me; and, indeed, he has so far taken care of me, that he sent me to a seminary abroad; and for these three years last past has kept me with him.

Char. A seminary! Oh, heavens! but why have you not strove to do yourself justice?

Sey. Thrown so young into his power, as I was—unknown and friendless, but through his means, to whom could I apply for succour? nay, Madam, I will confess, that on my return to England, I was first tainted with his enthusiastic notions myself; and, for some time, as much imposed upon by him, as others; till, by degrees, as he found it necessary to make use of, or totally discard me (which last he did not think prudent to do,) he was obliged to unveil himself to me in his proper colours—And I believe I can inform you of some parts of his private character, that may be the means of detecting one of the wickedest impostors that ever practised upon credulity.

Char. But how has the wretch dared to treat you?

Sey. In his ill and insolent humours, Madam, he has sometimes the presumption to tell me, that I am the object of his charity; and I own, Madam, that I am humbled in my opinion, by his

having drawn me into a connivance at some actions, which I can't look back on without horror.

Char. Indeed, you can't tell how I pity you; and depend upon it, it is possible to serve you, by getting you out of the hands of this monster, I will.

Sey. Once more, Madam, let me assure you, that your generous inclination would be a consolation to me in the worst misfortunes; and, even in the last moment of painful death, would give my heart a joy.

Char. Lord! the poor unfortunate boy loves me too—what shall I do with him? [*Aside.*]—Pray, Mr. Seyward, what paper's that you have in your hand?—Is it relative to—

Sey. Another instance of the conscience and gratitude which animate our worthy doctor.

Char. You frighten me! pray, what is the purport of it? Is it neither signed nor sealed?—

Sey. No, Madam; therefore to prevent it, by this timely notice, was my business here with you; your father gave it to the doctor first, to show his counsel; who having approved it, I understand this evening it will be executed.

Char. But what is it?

Sey. It grants to doctor Cantwell, in present, four hundred pounds per annum, of which this very house is part; and, at your father's death, invests him in the whole remainder of his freehold estate.—For you, indeed, there is a charge of four thousand pounds upon it, provided you marry with the doctor's consent; if not, 'tis added to my lady's jointure—But your brother, Madam, is, without conditions, utterly disinherited.

Char. I am confounded!—What will become of us! my father now I find was serious—Oh, this insinuating hypocrite!—Let me see—ay—I will go this minute. Sir, dare you trust this in my hands for an hour only?

Sey. Any thing to serve you.— [*Bell rings.*]

Char. Hark! they ring to dinner: pray, Sir, step in: say I am obliged to dine abroad; and whisper one of the footmen to get a chair immediately; then do you take a proper occasion to slip out after me to Mr. Double's chambers in the Temple; there shall I have time to talk further with you. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A dressing-room, with table and chairs.

Enter CHARLOTTE, with BETTY, taking off her cloak, &c.

Char. Has any one been to speak with me, Betty?

Bet. Only Mr. Darnley, Madam; he said he would call again, and bid his servant stay below to give him notice when you came home.

Char. You don't know what he wanted?

Bet. No, Madam; he seemed very uneasy at your being abroad.

Char. Well, go and lay up those things— [*Exit BETTY.*] Ten to one but his wise head has found out something to be jealous of; if he lets me see it, I shall be sure to make him infinitely easy—here he comes.

Enter DARNLEY.

Darn. Your humble servant, Madam.

Char. Your servant, Sir.

Darn. You have been abroad, I hear.

Char. Yes, and now I am come home, you see,

Darn. You seem to turn upon my words, Madam! Is there any thing particular in them?

Char. As much as there is in my being abroad, I believe.

Darn. Might I not say you had been abroad, without giving offence?

Char. And might I not as well say I was come home, without your being so grave upon't?

Darn. Do you know any thing that should make me grave?

Char. I know, if you are so, I am the worst person in the world you can possibly show it to.

Darn. Nay, I don't suppose you do any thing you wont justify.

Char. Oh, then I find I have done something you think I can't justify.

Darn. I don't say that neither; perhaps I am wrong in what I have said; but I have been so often used to ask pardon for your being in the wrong, that I am resolved henceforth never to rely on the insolent evidence of my own senses.

Char. You don't know now perhaps that I think this pretty smart speech of yours is very dull; but, since that's a fault you can't help, I will not take it ill; come now, be as sincere on your side, and tell me seriously—Is not what real business I had abroad the very thing you want to be made easy in?

Darn. If I thought you would make me easy, I would own it.

Char. Now we come to the point.—To-morrow morning then I give you my word, to let you know it all; till then, there is a necessity for its being a secret; and I insist upon your believing it.

Darn. But pray, Madam, what am I to do with private imagination in the mean time? that is not in my power to confine; and sure you wont be offended, if, to avoid the tortures that may give me, I beg you'll trust me with the secret now.

Char. Don't press me; for, positively, I will not.

Darn. Will not—cannot had been a kinder term—Is my disquiet of so little moment to you?

Char. Of none, while your disquiet dares not trust the assurances I have given you. If you expect I should confide in you for life, don't let me see you dare not take my word for a day; and, if you are wise, you'll think so fair a trial a favour.—Come, come, there's nothing shows so low a mind, as those grave and insolent jealousies.

Darn. However, Madam, mine you wont find so low as you imagine; and since I see your tyranny arises from your mean opinion of me, 'tis time to be myself, and disavow your power; you use it now beyond my bearing; not only impose on me to disbelieve my senses, but do it with such an imperious air, as if my manly reason were your slave; and this despicable frame that follows you, durst show no signs of life but what you vouchsafe to give it.

Char. You are in the right: go on—suspect me still—believe the worst you can—'tis all true—I don't justify myself.—Why do you trouble me with your complaints? if you are master of that manly reason you have boasted, give a manly proof of it; at once resume your liberty; despise me; go off in triumph now, like a king in a tragedy.

Darn. Is this the end of all then? and are those tender protestations you have made me (for such I thought them) when, with a kind reluctance, you gave me something more than hope—what all—Oh, Charlotte! all come to this?

Char. Oh, lud! I am growing silly; if I hear on, I shall tell him every thing; 'tis but another struggle and I shall conquer it.—So, you are not gone, I see.

Darn. Do you then wish me gone, Madam?

Char. Your manly reason will direct you.

Darn. This is too much—my heart can bear no more—What, am I rooted here?

Enter SEYWARD.

Char. At last I am relieved—Well, Mr. Seyward, is it done?

Sey. I did not stir from the desk till it was entirely finished.

Char. Where's the original?

Sey. This is it, Madam.

Char. Very well; that, you know, you must keep; but come, we must lose no time; we will examine this in the next room—now I feel for him. *[Exit.]*

Darn. This is not to be borne—Pray, Mr. Charles, what business have you with that lady?

Sey. Sir!

Darn. I must know, young man.

Sey. Not quite so young, but I can keep a secret, and a lady's too—you'll excuse me, Sir! *[Exit.]*

Darn. 'Sdeath! to be laughed at by every body—I shall run distracted—this young fellow should repent his pertness, did not this house protect him—this is Charlotte's contrivance to distract me—but what?—Oh! I have love enough to bear this, and ten times as much.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT.

Col. L. What, in raptures!

Darn. Pr'ythee—I am unfit to talk with you.

Col. L. What, is Charlotte in her airs again?

Darn. I know not what she is.

Col. L. Do you know where she is?

Darn. Retired this moment to her chamber with the young fellow there—the doctor's nephew.

Col. L. Why, you are not jealous of the doctor, I hope?

Darn. Perhaps she'll be less reserved to you, and tell you wherein I have mistaken her.

Col. L. Poor Frank! every plot I lay upon my sister's inclination for you, you are sure to ruin by your own conduct.

Darn. I own I have too little temper, and too much real passion, for a modish lover.

Col. L. Come, come! make yourself easy once more; I'll undertake for you: if you'll fetch a cool turn in the Park, upon Constitution hill, in less than half an hour I'll come to you, and make you perfectly easy.

Darn. Dear Tom, you are a friend indeed!—I have a thousand things—but you shall find me there. *[Exit.]*

Enter CHARLOTTE and SEYWARD.

Col. L. How now, sister; what have you done to Darnley? the poor fellow looks as if he had killed your parrot.

Char. Pshaw! you know him well enough! I've only been setting him a love lesson; it a little puzzles him to get through it at first, but he'll know it all by to-morrow—you will be sure to be in the way, Mr. Seyward.

Sey. Madam, you may depend upon me, I have my full instructions. *[Exit.]*

Col. L. O, ho! here's the business then; and it seems Darnley was not to be trusted with it;

ha, ha!—and, pr'ythee, what is the mighty secret that is transacting between Seyward and you?

Char. That's what he would have known, indeed; but you must know, I don't think it proper to let you tell him neither, for all your sly manner of asking.

Col. L. Pray take your own time, dear Madam; I am not in haste to know, I assure you.

Char. Well, but hold; on second thoughts, you shall know part of this affair between Seyward and me; nay, I give you leave to tell Darnley too, on some conditions; 'tis true, I did design to have surprised you—but now my mind's altered, that's enough.

Col. L. Ay, for any mortal's satisfaction—but here comes my lady.

Enter LADY LAMBERT.

Lady L. Away, away, colonel and Charlotte; both of you away this instant.

Char. What's the matter, Madam?

Lady L. I am going to put the doctor to his trial, that's all. I have considered the proposal you have made me to-day, colonel, and am convinced it ought not to be delayed an instant; so just now I told the doctor, in a half-whisper, that I should be glad to have a word in private with him here; and he said he would wait upon me presently: but must I play a traitorous part now, and instead of persuading you to the doctor, persuade the doctor against you?

Char. Dear Madam, why not? one moment's truce with the prude, I beg of you; don't startle at his first declaration, but let him go on, till he shows the very bottom of his ugly heart.

Lady L. I warrant you, I'll give a good account of him—but as I live, here he comes!

Char. Come then, brother, you and I will be comode, and steal off.

[*Exit CHAR. and COL. L. who listens.*]

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL.

Dr. C. Here I am, Madam, at your ladyship's command; how happy am I that you think me worthy—

Lady L. Please to sit, Sir.

Dr. C. Well but, dear lady, ha! you can't conceive the joyousness I feel at this so much desired interview. Ah, ah! I have a thousand friendly things to say to you: and how stands your precious health? is your naughty cold abated yet? I have scarce closed my eyes these two nights with my concern for you.

Lady L. Your charity is too far concerned for me.

Dr. C. Ah! don't say so; don't say so; you merit more than mortal man can do for you.

Lady L. Indeed, you overrate me.

Dr. C. I speak it from my heart: indeed, indeed, indeed I do.

Lady L. O dear! you hurt my hand, Sir.

Dr. C. Impute it to my zeal, and want of words for expression: precious soul! I would not hurt you for the world: no, it would be the whole business of my life—

Lady L. But to the affair I would speak to you about.

Dr. C. Ah! thou heavenly woman!

Lady L. Your hand need not be there, Sir.

Dr. C. I was admiring the softness of this silk. They are indeed come to prodigious perfection in all manufactures: how wonderful is human art!

Here it disputes the prize with nature; that all this soft and gaudy lustre should be wrought from the labours of a poor worm!

Lady L. But our business, Sir, is upon another subject; Sir John informs me, that he thinks himself under no obligations to Mr. Darnley, and therefore resolves to give his daughter to you.

Dr. C. Such a thing has been mentioned, Madam; but to deal sincerely with you, that is not the happiness I sigh after; there is a soft and serious excellence for me, very different from what your step-daughter possesses.

Lady L. Well, Sir, pray be sincere, and open your heart to me.

Dr. C. Open my heart! can you then, sweet lady, be yet a stranger to it? has no action of my life been able to inform you of my real thoughts?

Lady L. Well, Sir, I take all this, as I suppose you intend it, for my good and spiritual welfare.

Dr. C. Indeed, I mean your cordial service.

Lady L. I dare say you do: you are above the low, momentary views of this world.

Dr. C. Why, I should be so; and yet, alas! I find this mortal clothing of my soul is made like other men's, of sensual flesh and blood, and has its frailties.

Lady L. We all have those, but yours are well corrected by your divine and virtuous contemplations.

Dr. C. Alas! Madam, my heart is not of stone: I may resist, call all my prayers, my fastings, tears, and penance, to my aid; but yet, I am not an angel; I am still but a man; and virtue may strive, but nature will be uppermost. I love you then, Madam.

Lady L. Hold, Sir! suppose I now should let my husband, your benefactor, know the favour you design him?

Dr. C. You cannot be so cruel!

Lady L. Nor will, on this condition; that instantly you renounce all claim and title to Charlotte, and use your utmost interest with Sir John, to give her, with her full fortune, to Mr. Darnley.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT.

Col. L. Villain! monster! perfidious and ungrateful traitor! your hypocrisy, your false zeal, is discovered; and I am sent here, by the hand of insulted Heaven, to lay you open to my father, and expose you to the world.

Dr. C. Ha!

Lady L. O, unthinking colonel!

Col. L. Well, Sir, what have you to say for yourself?

Dr. C. I have nothing to say to you, colonel, nor for you—but you shall have my prayers.

Col. L. Why, you profligate hypocrite! do you think to carry off your villany with that sanctified air?

Dr. C. I know not what you mean, Sir; I have been in discourse here with my good lady, by permission of your worthy father.

Col. L. Dog! did my father desire you to talk of love to my lady?

Dr. C. Call me not dog, colonel: I hope we are both brother Christians.—Yes, I will own I did beg leave to talk to her of love; for, alas! I am but a man; yet if my passion for your dear sister, which I cannot control be sinful—

Lady L. Your noise, I perceive, is bringing up Sir John; manage with him as you will at present: I will withdraw, for I have an after-game to

play, which may yet put this wretch effectually into our power. [Exit.]

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT.

Sir J. What uproar is this?

Col. L. Nothing, Sir, nothing; only a little broil of the good doctor's here—You are well rewarded for your kindnesses; and he would fain pay it back with triple interest to your wife: in short, I took him here in the very fact of making a criminal declaration of love to my lady.

Dr. C. Why, why Sir John, would you not let me leave your house? I knew some dreadful method would be taken to drive me hence—O, be not angry, good colonel: but indeed, and indeed, you use me cruelly.

Sir J. Horrible, wicked creature!—Doctor, let me hear it from you.

Dr. C. Alas, Sir, I am in the dark as much as you; but it should seem, for what purpose he best knows, your son hid himself hereabouts; and while I was talking to my lady, rushed in upon us—you know the subject, Sir, on which I was to entertain her; and I might speak of my love for your daughter with more warmth than, perhaps, I ought; which the colonel overhearing, he might possibly imagine I was addressing my lady herself; for I will not suspect, no Heaven forbid, I will not suspect that he would intentionally forge a falsehood to dishonour me.

Sir J. Now, vile detractor of all virtue! is your outrageous malice confounded? what he tells you is true; he has been talking to my lady by my consent, and what he said was by my orders—Good man! be not concerned; for I see through their vile design—Here, thou curse of my life, if thou art not lost to conscience and all sense of honour, repair the injury you have attempted, by confessing your rancour, and throwing yourself at his feet.

Dr. C. Oh, Sir John! for my sake—I will throw myself at the colonel's feet; nay, if that will please him, he shall tread on my neck.

Sir J. What, mute, defenceless, hardened in thy malice.

Col. L. I scorn the imputation, Sir; and with the same repeated honesty avow (however cunningly he may have devised this gloss,) that you are deceived—what I tell you, Sir, is true—these eyes, these ears, were witnesses of his audacious love, without the mention of my sister's name! directly, plainly, grossly tending to abuse the honour of your bed.

Sir J. Villain! this instant leave my sight, my house, my family, for ever.

Dr. C. Hold, good Sir John; I am now recovered from my surprise; let me then be an humble mediator—on my account this must not be—I grant it possible your son loves me not; but you must grant it too as possible, he might mistake me; to accuse me then, was but the error of his virtue; you ought to love him, thank him, for his watchful care.

Sir J. O miracle of charity!

Dr. C. Come, come; such breaches must not be betwixt so good a son and father; forget, forgive, embrace him, cherish him, and let me bless the hour I was the occasion of so sweet a reconciliation.

Sir J. Hear this, perverse and reprobate! Oh! couldst thou wrong such more than moral virtue?

Col. L. Wrong him! the hardened impudence of this painted charity—

Sir J. Peace, graceless infidel!

Col. L. No, Sir; though I would hazard life to gain you from the clutches of that wretch; could die to reconcile my duty to your favour; yet, on the terms his villany offers, it is merit to refuse it—but, Sir, I'll trouble you no more; to-day is his, to-morrow may be mine. [Exit.]

Sir J. Come, my friend, we'll go this instant and sign the settlement; for that wretch ought to be punished, who I now see is incorrigible, and given over to perdition.

Dr. C. And do you think I take your estate with such view?—No, Sir—I receive it that I may have an opportunity to rouse his mind to virtue, by showing him an instance of the forgiveness of injuries; the return of good for evil!—

Sir J. O, my dear friend! my stay and my guide! I am impatient till the affair is concluded.

Dr. C. The will of Heaven be done in all things.

Sir J. Poor, dear, man!

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Parlour at SIR JOHN LAMBERT'S.

Enter CHARLOTTE and SEYWARD.

Char. You were a witness, then?

Sey. I saw it signed, sealed, and delivered, Madam.

Char. And all passed without the least suspicion?

Sey. Sir John signed it with such earnestness, and the doctor received it with such seeming reluctance, that neither had the curiosity to examine a line of it.

Char. Well, Mr. Seyward, whether it succeeds to our ends or not, we have still the same obligations to you.—You saw with what friendly warmth my brother heard your story; and I don't in the least doubt his being able to do something for you.

Sey. What I have done, my duty bound me to; but pray, Madam, give me leave, without offence, to ask you one innocent question.

Char. Freely.

Sey. Have you never suspected, that in all this affair, I have had some secret, stronger motive, than barely duty?

Char. Yes.—But have you been in no apprehensions I should discover that motive?

Sey. Pray, pardon me; I see already I have gone too far.

Char. Not at all; it loses you no merit with me; nor is it my nature to use any one ill that loves me, unless I loved that one again: then, indeed, there might be danger. Come, don't look grave; my inclinations to another shall not hinder me paying every one what's due to their merit: I shall therefore always think myself obliged to treat your misfortunes and your modesty with the utmost tenderness.

Sey. Your good opinion is all I aim at.

Char. Ay; but the more I give it you, the better you'll think of me still; and then I must think the better of you again; and then you the better of me, upon that too; and so at last I shall seriously, and you'll begin to think ill of me. But I hope, Mr. Seyward, your good sense will prevent all this.

Sey. I see my folly, Madam, and blush at my presumption. Madam, I humbly take my leave.

[*Exit.*]

Char. Well, he's a pretty young fellow after all, and the very first, sure, that ever heard reason against himself with so good an understanding.

Enter LADY LAMBERT.

Lady L. Dear Charlotte, what will become of us?—The tyranny of this subtle hypocrite is insupportable. He has so fortified himself in Sir John's opinion, by this last misconduct of your brother, that I begin to lose my power with him.

Char. Pray, explain, Madam.

Lady L. In spite of all I could urge, he has consented that the doctor shall this minute come, and be his own advocate.

Char. I'm glad on't; for the beast must come like a bear to the stake. I'm sure, he knows I shall bait him.

Lady L. No matter for that; he presses it, to keep Sir John still blind to his wicked design upon me.—Therefore I come to give you notice, that you might be prepared to receive him.

Char. I'm obliged to your ladyship. Our meeting will be a tender scene, no doubt on't.

Lady L. But I think I hear the doctor coming up stairs. My dear girl, at any rate, keep your temper. I shall expect you in my dressing-room, to tell me the particulars of your conduct. [*Exit.*]

Char. He must have a great deal of impudence, to come in this manner to me.

Enter BETTY.

Bet. Doctor Cantwell desires to be admitted, Madam.

Char. Let him come in.

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL.

Your servant, Sir.—Give us chairs, Betty, and leave the room.—[*Exit BETTY.*—Sir, there's a seat—What can the ugly cur say to me?—he seems a little puzzled.

Dr. C. Lookye, young lady, I am afraid, notwithstanding your good father's favour, I am not the man you would desire to be alone with upon this occasion.

Char. Your modesty is pleased to be in the right.

Dr. C. I'm afraid too, notwithstanding all my endeavours to the contrary, that you entertain a pretty bad opinion of me.

Char. A worse, Sir, of no mortal breathing.

Dr. C. Which opinion is immovable.

Char. No rock so firm.

Dr. C. I am afraid then it will be a vain pursuit, when I solicit you, in compliance with my worthy friend's desire, and my own inclinations, to become my partner in that blessed estate in which we may be a comfort and support to each other.

Char. I would die rather than consent to it.

Dr. C. In other words, you hate me.

Char. Most transcendently.

Dr. C. Well, there is sincerity at least in your confession: you are not, I see, totally deprived of all virtue, though I must say I never could perceive in you but very little.

Char. Oh, fy! you flatter me.

Dr. C. No; I speak it with sorrow, because you are the daughter of my best friend. But how are we to proceed now? are we to preserve temper?

Char. Oh! never fear me, Sir, I shall not fly

out, being convinced that nothing gives so sharp a point to one's aversion as good breeding; as, on the contrary, ill manners often hide a secret inclination.

Dr. C. Well then, young lady, be assured so far am I from the unchristian disposition of returning injuries, that your antipathy to me causes no hatred in my soul towards you; on the contrary, I would willingly make you happy, if it may be done according to my conscience, with the interest of heaven in view.

Char. Why, I can't see, Sir, how heaven can be any way concerned in a transaction between you and me.

Dr. C. When you marry any other person, my consent is necessary.

Char. So I hear, indeed!—but pray, doctor, how could your modesty receive so insolent a power, without putting my poor father out of countenance with your blushes?

Dr. C. I sought it not; but he would crowd it among other obligations. He is good natured; and I foresaw it might serve to pious purposes.

Char. I don't understand you.

Dr. C. I take it for granted, that you would marry Mr. Darnley. Am I right?

Char. Once in your life, perhaps, you may.

Dr. C. Nay, let us be plain. Would you marry him?

Char. You're mighty nice, methinks. Well, I would.

Dr. C. Then I will not consent.

Char. You wont?

Dr. C. My conscience will not suffer me. I know you to be both luxurious and worldly-minded; and you would squander upon the vanities of the world, those treasures which ought to be bet ter laid out.

Char. Hum!—I believe I begin to conceive you.—

Dr. C. If you can think of any project to satisfy my conscience, I am tractable. You know there is a considerable moiety of your fortune which goes to my lady in case of our disagreement.

Char. That's enough, Sir.—You think we should have a fellow-feeling in it. At what sum do you rate your concurrence to my inclinations? that settled, I am willing to strike the bargain.

Dr. C. What do you think of half?

Char. How! two thousand pounds?

Dr. C. Why, you know you gain two thousand pounds; and really the severity of the times for the poor, and my own stunted pittance, which cramps my charities, will not suffer me to require less.

Char. But how is my father to be brought into this?

Dr. C. Leave that to my management.

Char. And what security do you expect for the money?

Dr. C. Oh! Mr. Darnley is wealthy: when I deliver my consent in writing, he shall lay it down to me in bank-bills.

Char. Pretty good security! On one proviso, though.

Dr. C. Name it.

Char. That you immediately tell my father, that you are willing to give up your interest to Mr. Darnley.

Dr. C. Hum!—stay—I agree to it; but in the mean time, let me warn you, child, not to expect to turn that, or what has now passed between us,

to my confusion, by sinister construction, or evil representation to your father. I am satisfied of the piety of my own intentions, and care not what the wicked think of them; but force me not to take advantage of Sir John's good opinion of me, in order to shield myself from the consequences of your malice.

Char. Oh! I shall not stand in my own light: I know your conscience and your power too well, dear doctor!

Dr. C. Well, let your interest sway you. Thank Heaven, I am actuated by more worthy motives.

Char. No doubt on't.

Dr. C. Farewell, and think me your friend.

[*Exit.*

Char. What this fellow's original was, I know not; but by his conscience and cunning, he would make an admirable Jesuit.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, Mr. Darnley.

Char. Desire him to walk in. [*Exit SERVANT.*

Enter DARNLEY.

Darn. To find you thus alone, Madam, is a happiness I did not expect, from the temper of our last parting.

Char. I should have been as well pleased now, to have been thanked, as reproached, for my good nature; but you will be in the right, I find.

Darn. Indeed, you take me wrong. I literally mean that I was afraid you would not so soon think I had deserved this favour.

Char. Well, but were you not silly now?

Darn. Come, you shall not be serious: you can't be more agreeable.

Char. Oh! but I am serious.

Darn. Then I'll be so.—Do you forgive me all?

Char. What?

Darn. Are we friends, Charlotte?

Char. O Lord; but you have told me nothing of poor Seyward!

Darn. Must you needs know that, before you answer me?

Char. Lord! you are never well till you have talked one out of countenance.

Darn. Come, I won't be too particular; you shall answer nothing—Give me but your hand only.

Char. Pshaw! I won't pull off my glove, not I.

Darn. I'll take it as it is then.

Char. Lord! there, there; eat it, eat it.

Darn. And so I could, by Heaven!

Char. Oh, my glove! my glove! my glove! you are in a perfect storm! Lord! if you make such a rout with one's hand, what would you do if you had one's heart?

Darn. That's impossible to tell.—But you were asking me of Seyward, Madam?

Char. Oh, ay! that's true. Well, now you are very good again.—Come, tell me all the affair, and then you shall see—how I will like you.

Darn. There is not much to tell—only this: we met the attorney-general, to whom he has given a very sensible account of himself, and the doctor's proceedings.—The attorney-general seems very clear in his opinion, that, as the doctor, at the time of the death of Seyward's mother, was intrusted with her whole affairs, the Court of Equity will oblige him to be accountable.

Char. If Seyward does not recover his fortune,

you must absolutely get him a commission, and bring him into acquaintance.

Darn. Upon my word I will.

Char. And show him to all the women of taste; and I'll have you call him my pretty fellow, too.

Darn. I will, indeed!—but hear me—

Char. You can't conceive how prettily he makes love.

Darn. Not so well as you make your defence, Charlotte.

Char. Lord! I had forgot, he is to teach me Greek, too.

Darn. Trifling tyrant! how long, Charlotte, do you think you can find new evasions for what I say unto you?

Char. Lord! you are horrid silly; but since 'tis love that makes you such a dunce—poor Darnley, I forgive you.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT, unobserved.

Darn. That's kind, however.—But, to complete my joy, be kinder yet—and—

Char. Oh! I can't! I can't!—Lord! did you never ride a horse-match?

Darn. Was ever so wild a question!

Char. Because, if you have, it runs in my head you galloped a mile beyond the winning-post, to make sure on't.

Darn. Now, I understand you. But since you will have me touch every thing so very tenderly, Charlotte, how shall I find proper words to ask you the lover's last necessary question?

Char. Oh! there's a thousand points to be adjusted before that's answered.

Col. L. [*Advances.*] Name them this moment; for, positively, this is the last time of asking.

Char. Pshaw! who sent for you?

Col. L. I only came to teach you to speak plain English, my dear.

Char. Lord! mind your own business; can't you!

Col. L. So I will; for I will make you do more of yours in two minutes, than you would have done without me in a twelvemonth. Why, how now!—do you think the man's to dangle after your ridiculous airs for ever?

Char. This is mighty pretty!

Col. L. You'll say so on Thursday se'nnight, for (let affairs take what turn they will in the family,) that's positively your wedding-day—Nay, you sha'n't stir.

Char. Was ever such assurance!

Darn. Upon my life, Madam, I'm out of countenance! I don't know how to behave myself.

Char. No, no; let him go on only—this is beyond what ever was known, sure!

Col. L. Ha, ha! if I was to leave you to yourselves what a couple of pretty out of countenanced figures you would make! humming and hawing upon the vulgar points of jointure and pin-money. Come, come, I know what's proper on both sides; you shall leave it to me.

Darn. I had rather Charlotte would name her own terms to me.

Col. L. Have you a mind to any thing particular, Madam?

Char. Why, sure! what, do you think I'm only to be filled out as you please, and sweetened and sipped up like a dish of tea?

Col. L. Why, pray, Madam, when your tea's ready, what have you to do but to drink it?—but you, I suppose, expect a lover's heart, like you:

lamp, should be always flaming at your elbow; and when it's ready to go out, you indolently supply it with the spirit of contradiction.

Char. And so you suppose, that your assurance has made an end of this matter?

Col. L. Not till you have given him your hand upon it.

Char. That then would complete it.

Col. L. Perfectly.

Char. Why, then take it, Darnley. Now I presume you are in high triumph, Sir.

Col. L. No, sister; now you are consistent with that good sense I always thought you mistress of.

Char. And now I beg we may separate; for our being seen together, at this critical juncture, may give that devil, the doctor, suspicion of a confederacy, and make him set some engine at work that we are not aware of.

Col. L. It's a very proper caution. Come along, Darnley; nay, you must leave her now, whatever violence you do yourself.

Char. Ay, ay, take him with you, brother—or stay, Darnley; if you please, you may come along with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Parlour at SIR JOHN LAMBERT'S.

Enter DARNLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Char. But really, will you stand to the agreement though, that I have made with the doctor?

Darn. Why not? you shall not break your word upon my account, though he might be a villain you gave it to. Suppose I should talk with Sir John myself?—'tis true, he has slighted me of late.

Char. No matter—here he comes—this may open another scene of action to that I believe my brother's preparing for.

Enter SIR JOHN and LADY LAMBERT.

Sir J. Mr. Darnley, I am glad I have met you here.

Darn. I have endeavoured twice to-day, Sir, to pay my respects to you.

Sir J. Sir, I'll be plain with you, I went out to avoid you; but where the welfare of a child is concerned, you must not take it ill if we don't stand upon ceremony—However, since I have reason now to be more in temper than perhaps I was at that time, I shall be glad to talk with you.

Darn. I take it as a favour, Sir.

Sir J. You must allow, Mr. Darnley, that conscience is the rule which every honest man ought to walk by.

Darn. 'Tis granted, Sir.

Sir J. Then give me leave to tell you, Sir, that giving you my daughter would be to act against that conscience I pretend to, while I think you an ill liver; and consequently the same tie obliges me to bestow her on a better man—

Darn. Well but, Sir, come to the point. Suppose the doctor (whom I presume you design her for) actually consents to give me up his interest?

Sir J. But why do you suppose, Sir, he will give up his interest?

Darn. I only judge from what your daughter tells me, Sir.

Sir J. My daughter!

Darn. I appeal to her.

Char. And I appeal even to yourself, Sir—

Has not the doctor, just now in the garden spoke in favour of Mr. Darnley to you? Nay pray, Sir be plain; because more depends on that than you can easily imagine or believe.

Sir J. What senseless insinuation have you got into your head now?

Char. Be so kind, Sir, first to answer me, that I may be better able to inform you.

Sir J. Well, I own he has declined his interest in favour of Mr. Darnley; but I must tell you, Madam, he did it in so modest, so friendly, so good natured, so conscientious a manner, that I now think myself more than ever bound in honour to espouse him.

Char. But now, Sir, only for argument's sake, suppose I could prove that all this seeming virtue was artificial; that this regard for Mr. Darnley was neither founded upon modesty, friendship, good nature, nor conscience; or in short that he has, like a villain, bartered, bargained to give me to Mr. Darnley, for half the four thousand pounds you valued his consent at; I say, Sir, suppose this could be proved, where would be his virtue then?

Sir J. It is impious to suppose it.

Char. Then, Sir, from what principle must you suppose that I accuse him?

Sir J. From an obstinate prejudice to all that's good and virtuous.

Char. That's too hard, Sir. But the worst your opinion can provoke me to, is to marry Mr. Darnley, without either his consent or yours.

Sir J. What, do you brave me, Madam?

Char. No, Sir; but I scorn a lie; and will so far vindicate my integrity, as to insist on your believing me; if not, as a child you abandon, I have a right to throw myself into other arms for protection.

Sir J. I am confounded. These tears cannot be counterfeit; nor can this be true.

Lady L. Indeed, my dear, I fear it is. Give me leave to ask one question. In all our mutual course of happiness, have I ever yet deceived you with a falsehood?

Sir J. Never.

Lady L. Would you then believe me, should I accuse him even of crimes which virtue blushes but to mention?

Sir J. To what extravagance would you drive me!

Lady L. I would before have undeceived you, when his late artifice turned the honest duty of your son into his own reproach and ruin; but, knowing then your temper was inaccessible, I durst not offer it. But suppose I should be able to let you see his villany, make him repeat his odious love to me in your own hearing, at once throw off the mask, and show the barefaced traitor?

Sir J. Is it possible?

Lady L. But then, Sir, I must prevail on you to descend to the poor shifts we are reduced to.

Sir J. All; to any thing, to ease me of my doubts; make me but a witness of this fact, and I shall soon accuse myself, and own my folly equal to his baseness.

Lady L. Behind that screen you may easily conceal yourself.

Sir J. Be it so.

Lady L. Mr. Darnley, shall we beg your leave and you, Charlotte, take the least suspected way to send the doctor to me directly.

Char. I have a thought will do it, Madam.

Sir J. Oh, Charlotte! Oh, Mr. Darnley.

Darn. Have but resolution, Sir, and fear nothing. [*Exeunt DARNLEY and CHARLOTTE.*]

Lady L. Now, Sir, you are to consider what a desperate disease I have undertaken to cure: therefore, be sure keep close and still; and when the proof is full, appear at your discretion.

Sir J. Fear not; I will conform myself—Yet, be not angry, my love, if, in a case like this, I have also charity enough to hope you may yet be deceived in what you charge him with, till the evidence of my own senses assure me of the contrary.

Lady L. 'Tis just.

Sir J. Hark! I think I hear him coming.

Lady L. Now, my dear, remember your promise to have patience.

Sir J. Rely upon't.

Lady L. To your post then.

[*SIR JOHN goes behind the screen.*]

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL, with a book.

Dr. C. Madam, your woman tells me, that, being here and alone, you desired to speak with me.

Lady L. I did, Sir—but that we may be sure that we are alone, pray shut the outward door—another surprise might ruin us—is all safe?

Dr. C. I have taken care, Madam.

Lady L. But I am afraid I interrupt your meditation.

Dr. C. No, Madam, no; I was only looking over some pious exhortations here, for the use of a society of chosen brethren.

Lady L. Ah, doctor, what have you done to me? the trouble of my mind since our last unfortunate conference is not to be expressed. You indeed discovered to me what, perhaps, for my own peace, 'twere better I had never been acquainted with; but I had not sufficient time to lay my heart open to you.

Dr. C. Whither, Madam, would you lead me?

Lady L. I have been uneasy too, not knowing how far you might mistake my behaviour on the last accident that happened, but I was really so shocked, so terrified, I knew not what I was doing: only, had I joined in your defence against the colonel, it would have been evident that I was his enemy, and I have uses for his friendship. Silence, therefore, was my own prudent part: and I knew your credit with Sir John needed no support.

Dr. C. Let me presume then to hope, that what I did, you judge was self-defence and pure necessity.

Lady L. And perhaps, after all, the accident was lucky; for Sir John, in order to obviate any ill constructions that may be put upon it, insists now that we should be more together, to let the world see his confidence in us both. This relieves us from restraint; and I now dare tell you—but no—I wont—

Dr. C. But why, Madam? let me beseech you—

Lady L. No—besides—what need you ask me—

Dr. C. Ah! do not endeavour to decoy my foolish heart, too apt to flatter itself. You cannot sure think kindly of me!

Lady L. Well, well, I would have you imagine so.

Dr. C. Besides, may I not with reason suspect, that this apparent goodness is but artifice; a

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shadow of compliance, meant only to persuade me from your daughter.

Lady L. Methinks, this doubt of me seems rather founded on your settled resolution not to resign her.—I am convinced of it. I can assure you, Sir, I should have saved you this trouble, had I known how deeply you were engaged to her.

Dr. C. Tears—then I must believe you—but indeed you wrong me. To prove my innocence, it is not an hour since I pressed Sir John to give Charlotte to young Darnley.

Lady L. Mere artifice. You knew that modest resignation would make Sir John warmer in your interest.

Dr. C. No, indeed, indeed. I had other motives, which you may hereafter be made acquainted with, and will convince you—

Lady L. Well, Sir, now I'll give you reason to guess the reason why, at our last meeting, I pressed you so warmly to resign Charlotte.

Dr. C. Ah dear! ah dear!

Lady L. You cannot blame me for having opposed your happiness, when my own, perhaps, depended upon it.

Dr. C. Spare me, spare me; you kill me with this kindness.

Lady L. But now that I have discovered my weakness, be secret; for the least imprudence—

Dr. C. It is a vain fear.

Lady L. Call it not vain; my reputation is dearer to me than life.

Dr. C. Where can it find so sure a guard? The grave austerities of my life will dumb-found suspicion, and yours may defy detraction.

Lady L. Well, doctor, 'tis you must answer for my folly.

Dr. C. I take it all upon myself.

Lady L. But there's one thing still to be afraid of.

Dr. C. Nothing, nothing.

Lady L. My husband, Sir John.

Dr. C. Alas, poor man! I will answer for him. Between ourselves, Madam, your husband is weak; I can lead him by the nose any where.

Sir J. [*Comes forward.*] No, caittiff, I'm to be led no farther.

Dr. C. Ah! woman.

Sir J. Is this your sanctity? this your doctrine? these your meditations?

Dr. C. Is then my brother in a conspiracy against me?

Sir J. Your brother! I have been your friend, indeed, to my shame; your dupe; but your spell has lost its hold: no more canting; it will not serve your turn any longer.

Lady L. Now, Heaven be praised.

Dr. C. It seems you wanted an excuse to part with me.

Sir J. Ungrateful wretch! but why do I approach you! Had I not been the weakest of mankind, you never could have proved so great a villain. Get out of my sight; leave my house; of all my follies, which is it tells you, that if you stay much longer, I shall not be tempted to wrest you out of the hands of the law, and punish you as you deserve!

Dr. C. Well; but first let me ask you, Sir, who is it you menace? consider your own condition, and where you are?

Sir J. What would the villain drive at? leave me. I forgive you: but once more I tell you, seek some other place; out of my house. This

instant be gone, and see my shameful face no more.

Dr. C. Nay, then, 'tis my duty to exert myself, and let you know that I am master here. Turn you out, Sir; this house is mine; and now, Sir, at your peril, dare to insult me.

Sir J. O Heavens! 'tis true: whither shall I fly to hide me from the world?

Lady L. Whither are you going, Sir?

Sir J. I know not—but here it seems I am a trespasser—the master of the house has warned me hence—and, since the right is now in him, 'tis just I should resign it.

Lady L. You shall not stir. He dares not act with such abandoned insolence. No, Sir, possession still is yours. If he pretends a right, let him by open course of law maintain it.

Dr. C. Ha! Here! Seyward! [Exit.]

Enter Old Lady LAMBERT and MAWworm.

Sir J. Who is this fellow? what do you want, man?

Maw. My lady, come up.

Old Lady L. How now!

Maw. He wants to know who I be.

Old Lady L. The gentleman is a friend of mine, son. I was carrying him in a coach to attend a controversy that's to be held this evening, at the Rev. Mr. Scruple's, about an affair of simony; and called to take up the doctor. But what strange tales are these I hear below?

Sir J. The doctor's a villain, Madam; I have detected him; detected him in the horrible design of seducing my wife.

Maw. It's impossible.

Sir J. What do you say, man?

Maw. I say, it's impossible. He has been locked up with my wife for hours together, morning, noon, and night, and I never found her the worse for him.

Old Lady L. Ah, son! son!

Sir J. What is your ladyship going to say now?

Old Lady L. The doctor is not in fault.

Sir J. 'Slife, Madam!

Old Lady L. Oh, he swears! he swears! years in growing good, we become profligate in a moment. If you swear again, I won't stay in the house.

Maw. Nor I neither; aren't you ashamed of yourself? have you no commensuration on your poor soul?—Ah! poor, wicked sinner! I pity you.

Sir J. 'Sdeath! and the devil!

Maw. If you swear any more, I'll inform against you.

Sir J. Why would you bring this idiot, Madam?

Maw. Ay, do despise me, I'm the prouder for it; I likes to be despised.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Oh dear papa, I shall faint away; there's murder doing.

Sir J. Who! when! what is it?

Char. The doctor, Sir, and Seyward, were at high words just now in the garden; and, upon a sudden, there was a pistol fired between them. Oh! I'm afraid poor Seyward is killed.

Sir J. How?

Char. Oh, ~~there~~ he comes himself; he'll tell you more.

Enter CANTWELL, DARNLEY, SEYWARD, and Servants.

Darn. Here, bring in this ruffian; this is villainy beyond example.

Sir J. What means this outrage?

Lady L. I tremble.

Sey. Don't be alarmed, Madam—there is no mischief done: what was intended, the doctor here can best inform you.

Sir J. Mr. Darnley, I am ashamed to see you.

Maw. So you ought: but this good man is ashamed of nothing.

Dr. C. Alas! my enemies prevail.

Sey. In short, gentlemen, the affair is circumstantially this—The doctor called me out into the pavilion in the garden; appeared in great disorder; told me here was a sudden storm raised, which he was not sufficiently prepared to weather. He said, his dependence was upon me; and at all events, I must be ready to swear, when he called upon me, I had seen him pay Sir John several large sums of money. He talked confusedly about giving value for an estate; but I boldly refused to perjure myself; and told him, on the contrary, I was satisfied he had fleeced Sir John of several large sums, under pretence of charitable uses, which he secretly converted to his own.—This stung him, and he fastened at my throat. Then, indeed, all temper left me; and, disengaging myself from his hold, with a home-blow, I struck him down. At this, grown desperate, he ran with fury to some pistols that hung about the chimney: but in the instant he reached one, I seized upon his wrist; and as we grappled, the pistol, firing to the ceiling, alarmed the family.

Old Lady L. This is a lie, young man; I see the devil standing at your elbow.

Maw. So do I, with a great big pitchfork, pushing him on.

Dr. C. Well, what have you more against me?

Darn. More, Sir, I hope is needless—but if Sir John is yet unsatisfied.

Sir J. Oh! I have seen too much.

Dr. C. I demand my liberty.

Sir J. Let him go.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT and Attendants.

Col. L. Hold, Sir! not so fast; you can't pass.

Dr. C. Who, Sir, shall dare to stop me?

Col. L. Within there!

Enter TIPSTAFF.

Tip. Is your name Cantwell, Sir?

Dr. C. What if it be, Sir?

Tip. Then, Sir, I have my lord chief justice's warrant against you.

Dr. C. Against me

Tip. Yes, Sir, for a cheat and impostor.

Old Lady L. What does he say?

Sir J. Dear son, what is this?

Col. L. Only some action of the doctor's, Sir, which I have affidavits in my hand here to prove, from more than one creditable witness; and I think it my duty to make the public acquainted with: if he can acquit himself of them, so; if not, he must take the consequence.

Dr. C. Well, but stay; let the accusations against me be what they will, by virtue of this conveyance I am still master here; and if I am forced to leave the house myself, I will shut up the doors—nobody shall remain behind.

Sir J. There! there! indeed, he stings me to

the heart! for that rash act, reproach and endless shame will haunt me!

Char. No, Sir!—be comforted.—Even there too his wicked hopes must leave him; for know, the fatal deed which you intended to sign is here, even yet unsealed and innocent?

Sir J. What mean you?

Char. I mean, Sir, that this deed by accident falling into this gentleman's hands, his generous concern for our family discovered it to me; and that in concert we procured that other to be drawn exactly like it; which, in your impatience to execute, passed unsuspected for the original. Their only difference is, that wherever here you read the doctor's name, there you'll find my brother's.

Dr. C. Come, Sir; lead me where you please.

[*Exit.*]

Col. L. Secure your prisoner.

Old Lady L. I don't know what to make of all this.

Maw. They'll all go to the devil for what they are doing—Come away, my lady, and let us see after the good dear doctor. Ay, do laugh, you'll go to the devil for all that.—Come, my lady, you go first.

[*Exeunt MAWORM and Old Lady LAMBERT.*]

Char. Now, Darnley, I hope I have made atonement for your jealousy.

Darn. You've banished it for ever! this was beyond yourself surprising.

Col. L. Sister—

Char. Come, no set speeches; if I deserve your thanks, return them in friendship to your first preserver.

Col. L. The business of my life shall be to merit it.

Sey. And mine, to speak my sense of obligations.

Sir J. Oh, my child! for my deliverance I can only reward you here.—For you, my son, whose filial virtue I have injured, this honest deed shall in every article be ratified.—And for the sake of that hypocritical villain, I declare, that from henceforward I renounce all pious folks; I will have an utter abhorrence for every thing that bears the appearance—

Char. Nay now, my dear Sir, I must take the liberty to tell you, you go from one extreme to another.—What, because a worthless wretch has imposed upon you, under the fallacious show of austere grimace, will you needs have it every body is like him; confound the good with the bad, and conclude there are no truly religious in the world?—Leave, my dear Sir, such rash consequences to fools and libertines.—Let us be careful to distinguish between virtue and the appearance of it. Guard if possible against doing honour to hypocrisy.—But, at the same time, let us allow there is no character in life, greater or more valuable than that of the truly devout—nor any thing more noble or more beautiful, than the fervour of a sincere piety.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE MOCK DOCTOR:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY HENRY FIELDING, Esq.

REMARK

MOLIERE's comedy of *Le Medecin malgre lui* is the parent-stock whence our ingenious countryman, Henry Fielding, has deduced the present whimsical farce; which is, however, but slightly altered from the original in plot, situation, and conduct. The knavery of Gregory will not find a parallel in English habits, though our continental neighbours enlarge on the credulity of honest John Bull; but similar portraits are frequent in the Sage and their other writers, probably derived from an experience we need not envy.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.
GREGORY,.....	Mr. Matthews.
SIR JASPER,.....	Mr. Maddocks.
LEANDER,.....	Mr. Cooke.
HARRY,.....	Mr. Fisher.
JAMES,.....	Mr. Abbot.
CHARLOTTE,.....	Miss Boyce.
DORCAS,.....	Miss Mellon.
MAID,.....	Miss Tidswell.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Wood.

Enter DORCAS and GREGORY.

Greg. I tell you no, I wont comply, and it is my business to talk and to command.

Dor. And I tell you, you shall conform to my will; and that I was not married to you to suffer your ill-humours.

Greg. O the intolerable fatigue of matrimony! Aristotle never said a better thing in his life, than when he told us, "that a wife is worse than a devil."

Dor. Hear the learned gentleman, with his Aristotles!

Greg. And a learned man I am too; find me out a maker of faggots, that's able, like myself, to reason upon things, or that can boast such an education as mine.

Dor. An education!

Greg. Ay, hussy, a regular education; first at the charity-school, where I learnt to read; then I waited on a gentleman at Oxford, where I learnt very near as much as my master; from whence

I attended a travelling physician six years, under the facetious denomination of a *Merry Andrew*, where I learnt physic.

Dor. O that thou hadst followed him still! cursed be the hour wherein I answered the parson—I will.

Greg. And cursed be the parson that asked me the question!

Dor. You have reason to complain of him, indeed, who ought be on your knees every moment, returning thanks to Heaven for that great blessing it sent you, when it sent you myself.—I hope you have not the assurance to think you deserve such a wife as me.

Greg. No, really, I don't think I do.—Come, come, Madam, it was a lucky day for you, when you found me out.

Dor. Lucky, indeed! a fellow who eats every thing I have.

Greg. That happens to be a mistake, for I drink some part on't.

Dor. That has not even left me a bed to lie on.

Greg. You'll rise the earlier.

Dor. And who from morning till night is eternally in an alehouse.

Greg. It s genteel, the squire does the same.

Dor. Pray, Sir, what are you willing I shall do with my family?

Greg. Whatever you please.

Dor. My four little children, that are continually crying for bread.

Greg. Give 'em a rod! best cure in the world for crying children.

Dor. And do you imagine, sot—

Greg. Hark ye, my dear; you know my temper is not over and above passive, and that my arm is extremely active.

Dor. I laugh at your threats, poor, beggarly, insolent fellow.

Greg. Soft object of my wishing eyes, I shall play with your pretty ears.

Dor. Touch me, if you dare, you insolent, impudent, dirty, lazy, rascally—

Greg. Oh, ho, ho! you will have it then, I find. [Beats her.

Dor. O murder! murder!

Enter SQUIRE ROBERT.

Rob. What's the matter here? fie upon you, neighbour, to beat your wife in this scandalous manner.

Dor. Well, Sir, and I have a mind to be beat, and what then?

Rob. O dear, Madam! I give my consent with all my heart and soul.

Dor. What's that you, saucebox? Is it any business of yours?

Rob. No, certainly, Madam.

Dor. Here's an impertinent fellow for you, wont suffer a husband to beat his own wife!

Rob. Neighbour, I ask your pardon heartily; here, take and thrash your wife, beat her as you ought to do.

Greg. No, Sir, I wont beat her.

Rob. O! Sir, that's another thing.

Greg. I'll beat her when I please, and will not beat her when I do not please. She is my wife, and not yours.

Rob. Certainly.

Dor. Give me the stick, dear husband.

Rob. Well, if ever I attempt to part husband and wife again, may I be beaten myself. [Exit.

Greg. Come, my dear, let us be friends.

Dor. What, after beating me so?

Greg. 'Twas but in jest.

Dor. I desire you will crack your jests on your own bones, not on mine.

Greg. Psha! you know, you and I are one, and I beat one half of myself when I beat you.

Dor. Yes, but for the future I desire you will beat the other half of yourself.

Greg. Come, my pretty dear, I ask pardon, I'm sorry for't.

Dor. For once I pardon you,—but you shall pay for it.

Greg. Psha! Psha! child, these are only little affairs, necessary in friendship; four or five good blows with a cudgel between your very fond couples, only tend to heighten the affections. I'll now to the wood, and I promise thee to make a hundred faggots before I come home again. [Exit.

Dor. If I am not revenged on those blows of yours!—Oh, that I could but think of some method to be revenged on him! Hang the rogue, he's quite insensible of cuckoldom.—Oh, that I could find out some invention to get him well drubbed!

Enter HARRY and JAMES.

Har. Were ever two fools sent on such a message as we are, in quest of a dumb doctor?

Jam. Blame your own cursed memory, that made you forget his name. For my part, I'll travel through the world rather than return without him; that were as much as a limb or two were worth.

Har. Was ever such a cursed misfortune! to lose the letter! I should not even know his name if I were to hear it.

Dor. Can I find no invention to be revenged?—Heyday! who are these?

Jam. Harkye, mistress, do you know where—where—where doctor what-d'ye-call him lives?

Dor. Doctor who?

Jam. Doctor—doctor—what's his name?

Dor. Hey! what has the fellow a mind to banter me?

Har. Is there no physician hereabouts, famous for curing dumbness?

Dor. I fancy you have no need of such a physician, Mr. Impertinence.

Har. Don't mistake us, good woman; we don't mean to banter you; we are sent by our master, whose daughter has lost her speech, for a certain physician, who lives hereabouts; we have lost our direction, and 'tis as much as our lives are worth to return without him.

Dor. There is one Doctor Lazy lives just by, but he has left off practising. You would not get him a mile, to save the lives of a thousand patients.

Jam. Direct us but to him; we'll bring him with us one way or other, I warrant you.

Har. Ay, ay, we'll have him with us, though we carry him on our backs.

Dor. Ha! Heaven has inspired me with one of the most admirable inventions to be revenged on my hang-dog! [Aside.] I assure you, if you can get him with you, he'll do your young lady's business for her; he's reckoned one of the best physicians in the world, especially for dumbness.

Har. Pray, tell us where he lives?

Dor. You'll never be able to get him out of his own house; but, if you watch hereabouts, you'll certainly meet with him, for he very often amuses himself here with cutting of wood.

Har. A physician cut wood?

Jam. I suppose he amuses himself in searching after herbs, you mean.

Dor. No, he's one of the most extraordinary men in the world: he goes dressed like a common clown; for there is nothing he so much dreads, as to be known for a physician.

Jam. All your great men have strange oddities about 'em.

Dor. Why, he will suffer himself to be beat, before he will own himself to be a physician: and I'll give you my word, you'll never make him own himself one, unless you both of you take a good cudgel, and thrash him into it; 'tis what we are all forced to do when we have any need of him.

Jam. What a ridiculous whim is here!

Dor. Very true; and in so great a man.

Jam. And is he so very skilful a man?

Dor. Skilful? why he does miracles. About half a year ago, a woman was given over by all her physicians, nay, she had been dead some time; when this great man came to her, as soon as he saw her, he poured a little drop of something

down her throat—he had no sooner done it, than she got out of her bed, and walked about the room, as if there had been nothing the matter with her.

Both. Oh, prodigious!

Dor. 'Tis not above three weeks ago, that a child of twelve years old fell from the top of a house to the bottom, and broke its skull, its arms, and legs.—Our physician was no sooner drubbed into making him a visit, than, having rubbed the child all over with a certain ointment, it got upon its legs, and ran away to play.

Both. Oh, most wonderful!

Har. Hey, gad, James we'll drub him out of a pot of this ointment.

Jam. But can he cure dumbness?

Dor. Dumbness! why the curate of our parish's wife was born dumb, and the doctor, with a sort of wash, washed her tongue 'till he set it a-going, so that in less than a month's time she out-talked her husband.

Har. This must be the very man we were sent after.

Dor. Yonder is the very man I speak of.

Jam. What, that he yonder?

Dor. The very same.—He has spied us, and taken up his bill.

Jam. Come, Harry, don't let us lose one moment.—Mistress, your servant; we give you ten thousand thanks for this favour.

Dor. Be sure and make good use of your sticks.

Jam. He sha'n't want that. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Another part of the Wood.

Enter JAMES, HARRY, and GREGORY.

Greg. Pox on't! 'tis most confounded hot weather. Hey! who have we here?

Jam. Sir, your most obedient, humble servant.

Greg. Sir, your servant.

Jam. We are mighty happy in finding you here.

Greg. Ay, like enough.

Jam. 'Tis in your power, Sir, to do us a very great favour.—We come, Sir, to implore your assistance in a certain affair.

Greg. If it be in my power to give you any assistance, masters, I am very ready to do it.

Jam. Sir, you are extremely obliging—but, dear Sir, let me beg you'd be covered, the sun will hurt your complexion.

Har. For Heaven's sake, Sir, be covered.

Greg. These should be footmen, by their dress; but should be courtiers, by their ceremony.

[*Aside.*]

Jam. You must not think it strange, Sir, that we come thus to seek after you; men of your capacity will be sought after by the whole world.

Greg. Truly, gentlemen, though I say it, that should not say it, I have a pretty good hand at a faggot.

Jam. O dear Sir!

Greg. You may, perhaps, buy faggots cheaper elsewhere; but, if you find such in all this country, you shall have mine for nothing. To make but one word then with you, you shall have mine for ten shillings a hundred.

Jam. Don't talk in that manner I desire you.

Greg. I could not sell 'em a penny cheaper, if 'twas to my father.

Jam. Dear Sir, we know you very well—don't jest with us in this manner.

Greg. Faith, master, I am so much in earnest, that I can't bate one farthing.

Jam. O pray, Sir, leave this idle discourse. Can a person, like you, amuse himself in this manner? Can a learned and famous physician, like you, try to disguise himself to the world, and bury such fine talents in the woods?

Greg. The fellow's a fool.

Jam. Let me intreat you, Sir, not to dissemble with us.

Har. It is in vain, Sir; we know what you are.

Greg. Know what you are! what do you know of me?

Jam. Why, we know you, Sir, to be a very great physician.

Greg. Physician in your teeth! I a physician!

Jam. The fit is on him.—Sir, let me beseech you to conceal yourself no longer, and oblige us to—you know what.

Greg. Devil take me, if I know what, Sir.—But I know this, that I'm no physician.

Jam. We must proceed to the usual remedy, I find. And so you are no physician?

Greg. No.

Jam. You are no physician?

Greg. No, I tell you.

Jam. Well, if we must, we must. [*Beats him.*]

Greg. Oh! oh! Gentlemen! Gentlemen! what are you doing? I am—I am—whatever you please to have me!

Jam. Why will you oblige us, Sir, to this violence?

Har. Why will you force us to this troublesome remedy?

Jam. I assure you, Sir, it gives me a great deal of pain.

Greg. I assure you, Sir, and so it does me. But pray, gentlemen, what is the reason that you have a mind to make a physician of me?

Jam. What! do you deny your being a physician again?

Greg. And the devil take me if I am.

Har. You are no physician?

Greg. May I be hanged, if I am. [*They beat him.*] Oh!—oh!—Dear gentlemen! Oh! for Heaven's sake; I am a physician, and an apothecary too, if you'll have me: I had rather be any thing, than be knocked off the head.

Jam. Dear Sir, I am rejoiced to see you come to your senses; I ask pardon ten thousand times for what you have forced us to.

Greg. Perhaps I am deceived myself, and am a physician without knowing it. But, dear gentlemen, are you certain I'm a physician?

Jam. Yes, the greatest physician in the world.

Greg. Indeed!

Har. A physician that has cured all sorts of distempers.

Greg. The devil I have!

Jam. That has made a woman walk about the room after she was dead six hours.

Har. That set a child upon its legs immediately after it had broke 'em.

Jam. That made the curate's wife, who was dumb, talk faster than her husband.

Har. Look ye, Sir, you shall have content; my master will give you whatever you will demand.

Greg. Shall I have whatever I will demand?

Jam. You may depend upon it.

Greg. I am a physician without doubt—I had forgot it, but I begin to recollect myself.—Well—and what is the distemper I am to cure?

Jam. My young mistress, Sir, has lost her tongue.

Greg. The devil take me if I have found it.—But come, gentlemen, if I must go with you, I must have a physician's habit; for a physician can no more prescribe without a full wig, than without a fee. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter DORCAS.

Dor. I don't remember my heart has gone so pit-a-pat with joy a long while. Revenge is surely the most delicious morsel the devil ever dropped into the mouth of a woman. And this is a revenge which costs nothing; for, lack-a-day! to plant horns upon a husband's head is more dangerous than is imagined.—Odd! I had a narrow escape when I met with this fool; the best of my market was over, and I began to grow almost as cheap as a cracked China cup. *[Exit.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—SIR JASPER'S House.

Enter SIR JASPER and JAMES.

Sir J. Where is he? where is he?

Jam. Only recruiting himself after his journey. You need not be impatient, Sir; for, were my young lady dead, he'd bring her to life again.—He makes no more of bringing a patient to life, than other physicians do of killing him.

Sir J. 'Tis strange so great a man should have those unaccountable odd humours you mentioned.

Jam. 'Tis but a good blow or two, and he comes immediately to himself. Here he is.

Enter GREGORY and HARRY.

Har. Sir, this is the doctor.

Sir J. Dear Sir, you're the welcomest man in the world.

Greg. Hippocrates says, we should both be covered.

Sir J. Ha! does Hippocrates say so? In what chapter, pray?

Greg. In his chapter of hats.

Sir J. Since Hippocrates says so, I shall obey him.

Greg. Doctor, after having exceedingly travelled in the highway of letters—

Sir J. Doctor! pray whom do you speak to?

Greg. To you, doctor.

Sir J. Ha, ha!—I am a knight, thank the king's grace for it; but no doctor.

Greg. What, you're no doctor?

Sir J. No, upon my word.

Greg. You're no doctor?

Sir J. Doctor! no.

Greg. There—'tis done. *[Beats him.]*

Sir J. Done, in the devil's name! what's done?

Greg. Why now you are made a doctor of physic—I am sure it's all the degrees I ever took.

Sir J. What devil of a fellow have you brought here?

Jam. I told you, Sir, the doctor had strange whims with him.

Sir J. Whims, quotha!—egad, I shall bind his physicianship over to his good behaviour, if he has any more of these whims.

Greg. Sir, I ask pardon for the liberty I have taken.

Sir J. Oh! it's very well, it's very well for once.

Greg. I am sorry for those blows.

Sir J. Nothing at all, nothing at all, Sir.

Greg. Which I was obliged to have the honour of laying so thick on you.

Sir J. Let's talk no more of 'em, Sir—my daughter, doctor, is fallen into a very strange distemper.

Greg. Sir, I am overjoyed to hear it: and I wish with all my heart, you and your whole family had the same occasion for me as your daughter, to show the great desire I have to serve you.

Sir J. Sir, I am obliged to you.

Greg. I assure you, Sir, I speak from the very bottom of my soul.

Sir J. I do believe you, Sir, from the very bottom of mine.

Greg. What is your daughter's name?

Sir J. My daughter's name is Charlotte.

Greg. Are you sure she was christened Charlotte?

Sir J. No, Sir, she was christened Charlotta.

Greg. Hum! I had rather she should have been christened Charlotte. Charlotte is a very good name for a patient; and let me tell you, the name is often of as much service to the patient as the physician is.

Enter CHARLOTTE and MAID.

Sir J. Sir, my daughter's here.

Greg. Is that my patient? Upon my word, she carries no distemper in her countenance, and I fancy a healthy young fellow would sit very well upon her.

Sir J. You make her smile, doctor.

Greg. So much the better; 'tis a very good sign when we can get a patient to smile; it is a sign that the distemper begins to clarify, as we say. Well, child, what's the matter with you? what's your distemper?

Char. Han, hi, hon, han—

Greg. What do you say?

Char. Han, hi, han, hon.

Greg. What, what, what?—

Char. Han, hi, hon—

Greg. Han! hon! honin! ha!—I don't understand a word she says. Han! hi! hon! what the devil of a language is this?

Sir J. Why, that's her distemper, Sir; she's become dumb, and no one can assign the cause—and this distemper, Sir, has kept back her marriage.

Greg. Kept back her marriage! why so?

Sir J. Because her lover refuses to have her till she's cured.

Greg. O lud! was ever such a fool, that would not have his wife dumb!—would to Heaven my wife was dumb, I'd be far from desiring to cure her. Does this distemper, this han, hi, hon, oppress her very much?

Sir J. Yes, Sir.

Greg. So much the better. Has she any great pains?

Sir J. Very great.

Greg. That's just as I would have it. Give me your hand, child. Hum—ha—a very dumb pulse indeed.

Sir J. You have guessed her distemper.

Greg. Ay, Sir, we great physicians know a distemper immediately: I know some of the college would call this the Boree, or the Coupee, or the Sinkie, or twenty other distempers; but I give you my word, Sir, your daughter is nothing more than dumb—so I'd have you be very easy

for there is nothing else the matter with her—— if she were not dumb, she would be as well as I am.

Sir J. But I should be glad to know, doctor, from whence her dumbness proceeds?

Greg. Nothing so easily accounted for. Her dumbness proceeds from her having lost her speech.

Sir J. But whence, if you please, proceeds her having lost her speech?

Greg. All our best authors will tell you, it is the impediment of the action of the tongue.

Sir J. But if you please, dear Sir, your sentiment upon that impediment.

Greg. Aristotle has upon that subject said very fine things; very fine things.

Sir J. I believe it, doctor.

Greg. Ah! he was a great man; he was indeed a very great man, who upon that subject was a man that—but to return to our reasoning: I hold that this impediment of the action of the tongue is caused by certain humours which our great physicians call——humours——humours——ah! you understand Latin——

Sir J. Not in the least.

Greg. What, not understand Latin?

Sir J. No indeed, doctor.

Greg. *Cabricius arci Thurum Cathalinus, Singulariter non. Hæc musa, hic, hæc, hoc, Genitivo hujus, hunc, hanc, Musæ, Bonus, bona, bonum. Estne oratio Latinus? Etiam. Quia Substantivo et Adjectivum concordat in Generi, Numerum, et Casus, sic aiunt, prædicant, clamitant, et similibus.*

Sir J. Ah! Why did I neglect my studies?

Har. What a prodigious man is this!

Greg. Besides, Sir, certain spirits passing from the left side, which is the seat of the liver, to the right, which is the seat of the heart, we find the lungs, which we call in Latin, Whiskerus, having communication with the brain, which we name in Greek, Jackboots, by means of a hollow vein, which we call in Hebrew, Periwiggus, meet in the road with the said spirits, which fill the ventricles of the Omotaplasmus, and because the said humours have—you comprehend me well, Sir? and because the said humours have a certain malignity——listen seriously, I beg you.

Sir J. I do.

Greg. Have a certain malignity that is caused——be attentive, if you please.

Sir J. I am.

Greg. That is caused, I say, by the acrimony of the humours engendered in the concavity of the diaphragm; thence it arrives, that these vapours, *Propria quæ maribus tribuuntur, mascula dicas, Ut sunt divorum.*—This, Sir, is the cause of your daughter's being dumb.

Har. O that I had but his tongue.

Sir J. It is impossible to reason better, no doubt. But, dear Sir, there is one thing—I always thought 'till now, that the heart was on the left side, and the liver on the right.

Greg. Ay, Sir, so they were formerly, but we have changed all that.—The college, at present, Sir, proceeds upon an entire new method.

Sir J. I ask your pardon, Sir.

Greg. Oh, Sir! there's no harm—you're not obliged to know so much as we do.

Sir J. Very true; but, doctor, what would you have done with my daughter?

Greg. What would I have done with her?

Why, my advice is, that you immediately put her into a bed warmed with a brass warming-pan cause her to drink one quart of spring water, mixed with one pint of brandy, six Seville oranges, and three ounces of the best double refined sugar.

Sir J. Why, this is punch, doctor.

Greg. Punch, Sir! Ay, Sir;—and what's better than punch, to make people talk?—Never tell me of your juleps, your gruels, your—your—this, and that, and t'other, which are only arts to keep a patient in hand a long time. I love to do a business all at once.

Sir J. Doctor, I ask pardon, you shall be obeyed.

[Gives money.]

Greg. I'll return in the evening, and see what effect it has on her. But hold, there's another young lady here, that I must apply some little remedies to.

Maid. Who, me? I was never better in my life, I thank you, Sir.

Greg. So much the worse, Madam, so much the worse——'tis very dangerous to be very well—for when one is very well, one has nothing else to do, but to take physic, and bleed away.

Sir J. Oh strange! What, bleed when one has no distemper?

Greg. It may be strange, perhaps, but 'tis very wholesome. Besides, Madam, it is not your case, at present, to be very well; at least, you cannot possibly be well above three days longer: and it is always best to cure a distemper before you have it—or as we say in Greek, *distemprium bestum est curare ante habestum.*—What I shall prescribe you, at present, is to take every six hours one of these boluses.

Maid. Ha, ha, ha! Why, doctor, these look exactly like lumps of loaf sugar.

Greg. Take one of these boluses, I say, every six hours, washing it down with six spoonfulls of the best Holland's Geneva.

Sir J. Sure you are in jest, doctor!—This wench does not show any symptom of a distemper.

Greg. Sir Jasper, let me tell you, it were not amiss if you yourself took a little lenitive physic: I shall prepare something for you.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha! No, no, doctor, I have escaped both doctors and distempers hitherto, and I am resolved the distemper shall pay me the first visit.

Greg. Say you so, Sir? Why then, if I can get no more patients here, I must even seek 'em elsewhere, and so humbly beggo te Domine Domitii veniam goundi foras.

Sir J. Well, this is a physician of vast capacity, but of exceeding odd humours. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The Street.

Enter LEANDER.

Lean. Ah, Charlotte! thou hast no reason to apprehend my ignorance of what thou endurest, since I can so easily guess thy torment by my own.—Oh how much more justifiable are my fears, when you have not only the command of a parent, but the temptation of fortune to allure you!

Enter GREGORY.

Greg. Upon my word, this is a good beginning, and since——

Lean. I have waited for you, doctor, a long time; I'm come to beg your assistance.

Greg. Ay, you have need of my assistance indeed! What a pulse is here! What do you do out of your bed? [*Feels his pulse.*]

Lean. Ha, ha, ha! doctor you're mistaken; I am not sick, I assure you.

Greg. How, Sir! not sick! do you think I don't know when a man is sick, better than he does himself?

Lean. Well, if I have any distemper, it is the love of that young lady your patient, from whom you just now came, and to whom, if you convey me, I swear, dear doctor, I shall be effectually cured.

Greg. Do you take me for a pimp, Sir, a physician for a pimp?

Lean. Dear Sir! make no noise.

Greg. Sir, I will make a noise; you're an impertinent fellow.

Lean. Softly, good Sir!

Greg. I shall show you, Sir, that I'm not such a sort of a person, and that you are an insolent, saucy—[*LEANDER gives a purse.*]—I'm not speaking to you, Sir; but there are certain impertinent fellows in the world, that take people for what they are not—which always puts me, Sir, into such a passion, that——

Lean. I ask pardon, Sir, for the liberty I have taken.

Greg. O dear Sir! no offence in the least. Pray, Sir, how am I to serve you?

Lean. This distemper, Sir, which you are sent for to cure, is feigned. The physicians have reasoned upon it, according to custom, and have derived it from the brain, from the bowels, from the liver, lungs, lights, and every part of the body; but the true cause of it is love; and is an invention of Charlotte's to deliver her from a match she dislikes.

Greg. Hum!—suppose you were to disguise yourself as an apothecary?

Lean. I'm not very well known to her father, therefore believe I may pass upon him securely.

Greg. Go then, disguise yourself immediately; I'll wait for you here—Ha! methinks I see a patient: I'll e'en continue a physician as long as I live. [*Exit LEAND.*]

Enter JAMES and DAVY.

Jam. [*Speaking to DAVY.*] Fear not, if he relapse into his humours, I'll quickly thrash him into the physician again. Doctor, I have brought you a patient.

Davy. My poor wife, doctor, has kept her bed these six months. [*GREG. holds out his hand.*] If your worship would find some means to cure her.—

Greg. What's the matter with her?

Davy. Why, she has had several physicians; one says 'tis the dropsy; another, 'tis what-d'ye-call-it, the tumpany; a third says 'tis a slow fever; a fourth says the rumatiz; a fifth—

Greg. What are the symptoms?

Davy. Symptoms, Sir?

Greg. Ay, ay, what does she complain of?

Davy. Why, she is always craving and craving for drink, eats nothing at all. Then her legs are swelled up as big as a good handsome post, and as cold they be as a stone.

Greg. Come, to the purpose; speak to the purpose, my friend. [*Holding out his hand.*]

Davy. The purpose is, Sir, that I am come to ask what your worship pleases to have done with her.

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Greg. Pshaw, pshaw, pshaw! I don't understand one word that you mean.

Jam. His wife is sick, doctor, and he has brought you a guinea for your advice. Give it the doctor, friend. [*DAVY gives the guinea.*]

Greg. Ay, now I understand you; here's a gentleman explains the case. You say your wife is sick of the dropsy?

Davy. Yes, an't please your worship.

Greg. Well, I have made a shift to comprehend your meaning at last; you have the strangest way of describing a distemper. You say your wife is always calling for drink; let her have as much as she desires, she can't drink too much; and d'ye hear, give her this piece of cheese!

Davy. Cheese, Sir!

Greg. Ay, cheese, Sir. The cheese of which this is a part, has cured more people of a dropsy, than ever had it.

Davy. I give your worship a thousand thanks; I'll go make her take it immediately. [*Exit.*]

Greg. Go; and, if she dies, be sure to bury her after the best manner you can.

Enter DORCAS.

Dor. I'm like to pay severely for my frolic, if I have lost my husband by it.

Greg. Oh, physic and matrimony! my wife!

Dor. For, though the rogue used me a little roughly, he was as good a workman as any in five miles of his head.

Greg. What evil stars, in the devil's name, have sent her hither? If I could but persuade her to take a pill or two that I'd give her, I should be a physician to some purpose—come hider, child, let me feel your pulsa.

Dor. What have you to do with my pulse?

Greg. I am de French physician, my dear, and I am to feel a de pulse of the pation.

Dor. Yes, but I am no pation, Sir, nor want no physician, good Dr. Ragou.

Greg. Begar, you must be put a to bed, and take a de peel; me sal give you de little peel dat sal cure you, as you have more distempren den evere were hered off.

Dor. What's the matter with the fool? If you feel my pulse any more, I shall feel your ears for you.

Greg. Begar, you must takea de peel.

Dor. Begar, I shall not takea de peel.

Greg. I'll take this opportunity to try her. [*Aside.*]—Maye dear, if you will not letta me cura you, you sal cura me, you sal be my physician, and I will give you de fee.

[*Holds out a purse.*]

Dor. Ay, my stomach does not go against those pills; and what must I do for your fee?

Greg. Oh begar! me vill show you, me vill teacha you what you sal doe; you must come kissa me now, you must come kissa me.

Dor. [*Kisses him.*] As I live, my very hang-dog! I've discovered him in good time, or he had discovered me. [*Aside.*]—Well, doctor, and are you cured now?

Greg. I shall make myself a cuckold presently. [*Aside.*]—Dis is not a propre place, dis too publique, for sud any one pass by while I taka dis physique, it vill preventa de operation.

Dor. What physic, doctor?

Greg. In your ear, dat.

Dor. And in your ear, dat, sirrah, [*Whispers.*]

[*Hitting*]

him a box.] Do you dare affront my virtue, you villain! D'ye think the world should bribe me to part with my virtue, my dear virtue? There, take your purse again.

Greg. But where's the gold?

Dor. The gold I'll keep, as an eternal monument of my virtue.

Greg. O what a happy dog am I, to find my wife so virtuous a woman, when I least expected it! Oh my injured dear! behold your Gregory, your own husband.

Dor. Ha!

Greg. Oh me, I'm so full of joy, I cannot tell thee more, than that I am as much the happiest of men, as thou art the most virtuous of women.

Dor. And art thou really my Gregory? And hast thou any more of these purses?

Greg. No, my dear, I have no more about me; but 'tis probable in a few days I may have a hundred; for the strangest accident has happened to me!

Dor. Yes, my dear, but I can tell you whom you are obliged to for that accident; had you not beaten me this morning, I had never had you beaten into a physician.

Greg. Oh, oh! then 'tis to you I owe all that drubbing.

Dor. Yes, my dear, though I little dreamt of the consequence.

Greg. How infinitely I'm obliged to thee!—But hush!

Enter HELLEBORE.

Hel. Are not you the great doctor just come to this town, famous for curing dumbness!

Greg. Sir, I am he.

Hel. Then, Sir, I should be glad of your advice.

Greg. Let me feel your pulse.

Hel. Not for myself, good doctor; I am myself, Sir, a brother of the faculty, what the world calls a mad doctor. I have at present under my care, a patient whom I can by no means prevail with to speak.

Greg. I shall make him speak, Sir.

Hel. It will add, Sir, to the great reputation you have already acquired: I am happy in finding you.

Greg. Sir, I am as happy in finding you. You see that woman there; she is possessed of a more strange sort of madness, and imagines every one she sees to be her husband. Now, Sir, if you will but admit her into your house—

Hel. Most willingly, Sir.

Greg. The first thing, Sir, you are to do, is to let out thirty ounces of her blood: then, Sir, you are to shave off all her hair, all her hair, Sir; after which you are to make a very severe use of your rod twice a day; and take a particular care that she have not the least allowance beyond bread and water.

Hel. Sir, I shall readily agree to the dictates of so great a man; nor can I help approving of your method, which is exceeding mild and wholesome.

Greg. [*To his wife.*] My dear, that gentleman will conduct you to my lodging.—Sir, I beg you will take a particular care of the lady.

Hel. You may depend on't, Sir, nothing in my power shall be wanting; you have only to inquire for Dr. Hellebore.

Dor. 'Twon't be long before I see you, husband.

Hel. Husband! this is as unaccountable a madness as any I have yet met with.

[*Exit with DORCAS.*]

Enter LEANDER.

Greg. I think I shall be revenged of you now, my dear.—So, Sir.

Lean. I think I make a pretty good apothecary now.

Greg. Yes, faith, you're almost as good an apothecary as I'm a physician, and if you please I'll convey you to the patient.

Lean. If I did but know a few physical hard words—

Greg. A few physical hard words! why, in a few hard words consists the science. Would you know as much as the whole faculty in an instant, Sir? come along, come along.—Hold, let me go first; the doctor must always go before the apothecary. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE III.—SIR JASPER'S HOUSE.

SIR JASPER, CHARLOTTE, GREGORY, LEANDER.

Sir J. Has she made no attempt to speak yet?

Jam. Not in the least, Sir; so far from it, that, as she used to make a sort of a noise before, she is now quite silent.

Sir J. [*Looking on his watch.*] 'Tis almost the time the doctor promised to return. Oh! he is here. Doctor, your servant.

Greg. Well, Sir, how does my patient?

Sir J. Rather worse, Sir, since your prescription.

Greg. So much the better, 'tis a sign that it operates.

Sir J. Who is that gentleman, pray, with you?

Greg. An apothecary, Sir. Mr. Apothecary, I desire you would immediately apply the remedy I prescribed.

Sir J. A song, doctor? prescribe a song!

Greg. Prescribe a song, Sir! yes, Sir, prescribe a song, Sir. Is there any thing so strange in that? did you never hear of pills to purge melancholy? If you understand these things better than I, why did you send for me? shud! Sir, this song would make a stone speak. But, if you please, Sir, you and I will confer at some distance during the application; for this song will do you as much harm as it will do your daughter good. Be sure, Mr. Apothecary, to pour it down her ears very closely.

Air.—LEANDER.

Thus, lovely patient, Charlotte sees

Her dying patient kneel;

Soon cured will be your feign'd disease

But what physician e'er can ease

The torments which I feel.

Think, skilful nymph, while I complain,

Ah! think what I endure!

All other remedies are vain;

The lovely cause of all my pain

Can only cause my cure.

Greg. It is, Sir, a great and subtle question among the doctors, whether the women are more easy to be cured than men. I beg that you would attend to this, Sir, if you please.—Some say, no; others say, yes; and for my part, I say both yes, and no; forasmuch as the incongruity of the opaque humours that meet in the natural temper of women, are the cause that the brutal part will always prevail over the sensible—one sees that the inequality of their opinions depends on the black movement of the circle of the moon, and as the sun that darts its rays upon the concavity of the earth, finds—

Char. No, I am not at all capable of changing my opinion.

Sir J. My daughter speaks! my daughter speaks! Oh, the great power of physic! oh the admirable physician! How can I reward thee for such a service?

Greg. This distemper has given me a most insufferable deal of trouble.

[*Traversing the stage in a great heat, the apothecary following.*]

Char. Yes, Sir, I have recovered my speech; but I have recovered it to tell you, that I never will have any husband but Leander.

[*Speaks with great eagerness, and drives Sir JASPER round the stage.*]

Sir J. But——

Char. Nothing is capable to shake the resolution I have taken.

Sir J. What!

Char. Your rhetoric is in vain; all your discourses signify nothing.

Sir J. I——

Char. I am determined, and all the fathers in the world shall never oblige me to marry contrary to my inclination.

Sir J. I have——

Char. I never will submit to this tyranny; and if I must not have the man I like, I'll die a maid.

Sir J. You shall have Mr. Dapper——

Char. No, not in any manner, not in the least, not at all; you throw away your breath, you lose your time; you may confine me, beat me, bruise me, destroy me, kill me, do what you will, but I never will consent; nor all your threats, nor all your blows, nor all your ill-usage, never shall force me to consent; so far from giving him my heart, I never will give him my hand; for he is my aversion, I hate the very sight of him, I had rather see the devil, I had rather touch a toad; you may make me miserable any other way, but with him you shan't, that I'm resolved.

Greg. There, Sir, there, I think we have brought her tongue to a pretty tolerable consistency.

Sir J. Consistency, quotha! why, there is no stopping her tongue.—Dear doctor, I desire you will make her dumb again.

Greg. That's impossible, Sir; all that I can do to serve you is, I can make you deaf if you please.

Sir J. And do you think——

Char. All your reasoning shall never conquer my resolution.

Sir J. You shall marry Mr. Dapper, this evening.

Char. I'll be buried first.

Greg. Stay, Sir, stay, let me regulate this affair; it is a distemper that possesses her, and I know what remedy to apply to it.

Sir J. Is it possible, Sir, that you can cure the distempers of the mind?

Greg. Sir, I can cure any thing. Harkye, Mr. Apothecary, you see that the love she has for Leander is entirely contrary to the will of her father, and that there is no time to lose, and that an immediate remedy is necessary: for my part, I know of but one, which is a dose of purgative running-away, mixt with two drachms of pills matrimoniac, and three large handfuls of the arbor vita; perhaps she will make some difficulty to take them; but, as you are an able apothecary, I shall trust to you for the success; go, make her

walk in the garden, be sure lose no time; to the remedy, quick, to the remedy specific.

[*Exeunt LEANDER and CHARLOTTE.*]

Sir J. What drugs, Sir, were those I heard you mention, for I don't remember I ever heard them spoken of before?

Greg. They, are some, Sir, lately discovered by the Royal Society.

Sir J. Did you ever see any thing equal to her insolence?

Greg. Daughters are indeed sometimes a little too head-strong.

Sir J. You cannot imagine, Sir, how foolishly fond she is of that Leander.

Greg. The heat of blood, Sir, causes that in young minds.

Sir J. For my part, the moment I discovered the violence of her passion, I have always kept her locked up.

Greg. You have done very wisely.

Sir J. And I have prevented them from having the least communication together; for who knows what might have been the consequence? who knows but she might have taken it into her head, to have run away with him.

Greg. Very true.

Sir J. Ay, Sir, let me alone for governing girls; I think I have some reason to be vain on that head; I think I have shown the world, that I understand a little of women, I think I have; and let me tell you, Sir, there is not a little art required; if this girl had had some fathers, they had not kept her out of the hands of so vigilant a lover as I have done.

Greg. No certainly, Sir.

Enter DORCAS.

Dor. Where is this villain, this rogue, this pretended physician?

Sir J. Heyday! What, what, what's the matter now?

Dor. Oh sirrah! sirrah! would you have destroyed your wife, you villain? would you have been guilty of murder, dog!

Greg. Hoity, toity! What mad woman is this?

Sir J. Poor wretch! for pity's sake cure her, doctor.

Greg. Sir, I shall not cure her, unless somebody gives me a fee. If you will give me a fee, Sir Jasper, you shall see me cure her this instant.

Dor. I'll fee you, you villain. Cure me!

Enter JAMES.

Jam. Oh, Sir! undone, undone! your daughter is run away with her lover, Leander, who was here disguised like an apothecary—and this is the rogue of a physician, who has contrived all the affair.

Sir J. How! am I abused in this manner? Here, who is there? Bid my clerk bring pen, ink, and paper; I'll send this fellow to jail immediately.

Jam. Indeed, my good doctor, you stand a very fair chance to be hanged for stealing an heiress.

Greg. Yes, indeed, I believe I shall take my degrees now.

Dor. And are they going to hang you, my dear husband?

Greg. You see, my dear wife.

Dor. Had you finished the faggots, it had been some consolation.

Greg. Leave me, or you'll break my heart.

Dor. No, I'll stay to encourage you at your death; nor will I budge an inch, till I've seen you hanged.

Enter LEANDER and CHARLOTTE.

Lean. Behold, Sir, that Leander, whom you had forbid your house, restores your daughter to your power, even when he had her in his. I have received letters, by which I have learnt the death of an uncle, whose estate far exceeds that of your intended son-in-law.

Sir J. Sir, your virtue is beyond all estates, and I give you my daughter with all the pleasure in the world.

Lean. Now my fortune makes me happy indeed, my dearest Charlotte. And, doctor, I'll make thy fortune too.

Greg. If you would be so kind to make me a physician in earnest, I should desire no other fortune.

Lean. Faith, doctor, I wish I could do that in return for your having made me an apothecary; but I'll do as well for thee, I warrant.

Dor. So, so, our physician, I find, has brought about fine matters. And is it not owing to me, sirrah, that you have been a physician at all?

Sir J. May I beg to know whether you are a physician or not, or what the devil you are?

Greg. I think, Sir, after the miraculous cure you have seen me perform, you have no reason to ask, whether I am a physician or no. And for you, wife, I'll henceforth have you behave with all deference to my greatness; for a faggot-maker can only thrash your jacket, but a physician, he——

Dor. Can pick your pocket. Why, thou puffed up fool! I could have made as good a physician myself; the cure was owing to the apothecary, not the doctor. *[Exeunt.]*

THE MOURNING BRIDE:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY WILLIAM CONGREVE, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MANUEL, the King of Granada,
GONSALEZ, his Favourite,
GARCIA, Son to Gonsalez.
PEREZ, Captain of the Guards.
ALONZO, an Officer, Creature to Gonsalez.
OSMYN, a noble Prisoner.
HELI, a Prisoner, his Friend.
SELIM, a Eunich.

ALMERIA, the Princess of Granada.
ZARA, a Captive Queen.
LEONORA, chief Attendant on the Princess.

Women, Eunuchs, and Mutes, attending Zara,
Guards, &c.

SCENE.—Granada.

PROLOGUE.

THE time has been when plays were not so plenty,

And a less number, new, would well content ye.

New plays did then like almanacks appear,

And one was thought sufficient for a year :

Though they are more like almanacks of late ;

For in one year, I think, they're out of date.

Nor were they, without reason, joined together ;

For just as one prognosticates the weather,

How plentiful the crop, or scarce the grain,

What peals of thunder, or what showers of rain ;

So t'other can foretell, by certain rules,

What crops of coxcombs, or what floods of fools.

In such like prophecies were poets skill'd,

Which now they find in their own tribe fulfill'd.

The dearth of wit they did so long presage,

Is fallen on us, and almost starves the stage.

Were you not griev'd, as often as you saw

Poor actors thrash such empty sheafs of straw ?

Toiling and labouring at their lungs' expense,

To start a jest, or force a little sense ?

Hard fate for us, still harder in the event :

Our authors sin, but we alone repent.

Still they proceed, and, at our charge, write worse ;

'Twere some amends, if they could reimburse ;

But there's the devil, though their cause is lost,

There's no recovering damages or cost.

Good wits, forgive this liberty we take,

Since custom gives the losers leave to speak.

But, if provok'd, your dreadful wrath remains,

Take your revenge upon the coming scenes :

60

For that damn'd poet's spar'd, who damns a brother,

As one thief 'scapes that executes another.

Thus far alone does to the wits relate ;

But from the rest we hope a better fate.

To please, and move, has been our poet's theme,

Art may direct, but nature is his aim ;

And nature miss'd, in vain he boasts his art,

For only nature can affect the heart.

Then freely judge the scenes that shall ensue ;

But as with freedom, judge with candour too.

He would not lose, through prejudice, his

cause ;

Nor would obtain, precariously, applause.

Impartial censure he requests from all,

Prepar'd by just decrees to stand or fall.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room of State.

The Curtain rising slowly to soft Music, discovers ALMERIA in Mourning, LEONORA waiting in Mourning.

After the Music, ALMERIA rises from her Chair, and comes forward.

Almeria. Music has charms to sooth a savage breast,

To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.

I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd,

And, as with living souls, have been inform'd

By magic numbers and persuasive sound.

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What then am I? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees or flint? O, force of constant wo,
'Tis not in harmony to calm my griefs.
Anselmo sleeps, and is at peace; last night
The silent tomb receiv'd the good old king;
He and his sorrows now are safely lodg'd
Within its cold, but hospitable bosom.
Why am not I at peace?

Leon. Dear Madam, cease,
Or moderate your grief; there is no cause—

Alm. No cause! Peace, peace! there is eternal
cause,

And misery eternal will succeed.

Thou canst not tell—thou hast indeed no cause.

Leon. Believe me, Madam, I lament Anselmo,
And always did compassionate his fortune;
Have often wept, to see how cruelly
Your father kept in chains his fellow-king;
And oft, at night, when all have been retir'd,
Have stolen from bed, and to his prison crept;
Where, while his gaoler slept, I through the
grate

Have softly whisper'd, and inquir'd his health;
Sent in my sighs and pray'rs for his deliverance;
For sighs and pray'rs were all that I could offer.

Alm. Indeed thou hast a soft and gentle
nature,

That thus could melt to see a stranger's wrongs.
Oh, Leonora, hadst thou known Anselmo,
How would thy heart have bled to see his suf-
ferings!

Thou hadst no cause but general compassion.

Leon. Love of my royal mistress gave me
cause,

My love of you begot my grief for him;
For I heard that when the chance of war
Had bless'd Anselmo's arms with victory,
And the rich spoil of all the field, and you,
The glory of the whole, were made the prey
Of his success; that then, in spite of hate,
Revenge, and that hereditary feud
Between Valentia's and Granada's kings,
He did endear himself to your affection,
By all the worthy and indulgent ways
His most industrious goodness could invent;
Proposing, by a match between Alphonso
His son, the brave Valentian prince, and you,
To end the long dissension, and unite
The jarring crowns.

Alm. Alphonso! O, Alphonso!

Thou too art quiet—long hast been at peace—
Both, both—father and son are now no more.
Then why am I? Oh, when shall I have rest?
Why do I live to say you are no more?
Why are all these things thus?—Is it of force?
Is there necessity I must be miserable?
Is it of moment to the peace of Heaven,
That I should be afflicted thus?—If not,
Why is it thus contriv'd? Why are things laid
By some unseen hand, so, as of sure conse-
quence,

They must to me bring curses, grief of heart,
The last distress of life, and sure despair?

Leon. Alas! you search too far, and think too
deeply.

Alm. Why was I carried to Anselmo's court?

Or there, why was I used so tenderly?

Why not ill treated like an enemy?

For so my father would have used his child.

Oh, Alphonso, Alphonso!

Devouring seas have wash'd thee from my sight.

No time shall raze thee from my memory;

No, I will live to be thy monument:

The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb:

But in my heart thou art interr'd; there, there,

Thy dear resemblance is for ever fix'd;

My love, my lord, my husband still, though lost.

Leon. Husband! Oh, Heavens!

Alm. Alas! what have I said?

My grief has hurried me beyond all thought.

I would have kept that secret; though I know

Thy love and faith to me deserve all confidence.

But 'tis the wretch's comfort still to have

Some small reserve of near and inward wo,

Some unsuspected hoard of darling grief,

Which they unseen may wail, and weep, and
mourn,

And, glutton-like, alone devour.

Leon. Indeed,

I knew not this.

Alm. Oh, no, thou know'st not half,

Know'st nothing of my sorrows—if thou didst—

If I should tell thee, wouldst thou pity me?

Tell me—I know thou wouldst; thou art com-
passionate.

Leon. Witness these tears—

Alm. I thank thee, Leonora—

Indeed I do, for pitying thy sad mistress:

For 'tis, alas! the poor prerogative

Of greatness, to be wretched, and unpitied—

But I did promise I would tell thee—What?

My miseries! Thou dost already know 'em:

And when I told thee thou didst nothing know,

It was because thou didst not know Alphonso:

For to have known my loss, thou must have
known

His worth, his truth, and tenderness of love.

Leon. The memory of that brave prince stands
fair

In all report—

And I have heard imperfectly his loss;

But, fearful to renew your troubles past,

I never did presume to ask the story.

Alm. If for my swelling heart I can, I'll tell
thee.

I was a welcome captive in Valentia,

E'en on the day when Manuel, my father,

Led on his conquering troops high as the gates

Of king Anselmo's palace; which, in rage,

And heat of war, and dire revenge, he fir'd.

The good king, flying to avoid the flames,

Started amidst his foes, and made captivity

His fatal refuge—Would that I had fallen

Amidst those flames—but 'twas not so decreed.

Alphonso, who foresaw my father's cruelty,

Had borne the queen and me on board a ship

Ready to sail; and when this news was brought

We put to sea; but being betray'd by some

Who knew our flight, we closely were pursu'd,

And almost taken, when a sudden storm

Drove us, and those that follow'd on the coast

Of Afric: there our vessel struck the shore

And bulging 'gainst a rock, was dash'd in pieces;

But Heaven spar'd me for yet much more afflic-
tion:

Conducting them who follow'd us, to shun

The shore, and save me floating on the waves,

While the good queen and my Alphonso perish'd.

Leon. Alas! were you then wedded to Al-
phonso?

Alm. That day, that fatal day, our hands were
join'd.

For when my lord beheld the ship pursuing,

And saw her rate so far exceeding ours,

He came to me, and begg'd me by my love,
I would consent the priest should make us one;
That whether death or victory ensued
I might be his, beyond the power of fate;
The queen too did assist his suit—I granted;
And in one day was wedded and a widow.

Leon. Indeed 'twas mournful—

Alm. 'Twas as I have told thee—

For which I mourn, and will for ever mourn;
Nor will I change these black and dismal robes,
Or ever dry these swoln and watery eyes;
Or ever taste content or peace of heart,
While I have life, and thought of my Alphonso.

Leon. Look down, good Heaven, with pity on
her sorrows,

And grant that time may bring her some relief.
Alm. Oh, no! time gives increase to my afflictions.

The circling hours, that gather all the woes
Which are diffus'd through the revolving year,
Come heavy laden with th' oppressive weight
To me; with me, successively, they leave
The sighs, the tears, the groans, the restless
cares,

And all the damps of grief, that did retard their
flight:

They shake their downy wings, and scatter all
The dore collected dew on my poor head:
Then fly with joy and swiftness from me.

Leon. Hark! [*Shouts at a distance.*]
The distant shouts proclaim your father's triumph.
O cease, for Heaven's sake, assuage a little
This torrent of your grief, for this, I fear,
'Twill urge his wrath, to see you drown'd in
tears,

When joy appears in every other face.

Alm. And joy he brings to every other heart,
But double, double weight of woe to mine:
For with him Garcia comes—Garcia, to whom
I must be sacrific'd, and all the vows
I gave my dear Alphonso basely broken.
No, it shall never be; for I will die
First, die ten thousand deaths—Look down, look
down,

Alphonso, hear the sacred vow I make; [*Kneels.*]
One moment, cease to gaze on perfect bliss,
And bend thy glorious eyes to earth and me.
And thou, Anselmo, if yet thou art arriv'd,
Through all impediments of purging fire,
'To that bright Heaven, where my Alphonso
reigns,

Behold thou also, and attend my vow.
If ever I do yield, or give consent,
By any action, word, or thought, to wed
Another lord; may then just Heaven shower
down

Unheard of curses on me, greater far
(If such there be in angry Heaven's vengeance)
'That any I have yet endur'd—And now

My heart has some relief; having so well
Discharg'd this debt, incumbent on my love.
Yet, one thing more I would engage from thee.
Leon. My heart, my life, and will, are only
yours.

Alm. I thank thee. 'Tis but this, anon:
when all

Are wrapp'd and busied in the general joy,
Thou wilt withdraw, and privately with me
Steal forth, to visit good Anselmo's tomb.

Leon. Alas! I fear some fatal resolution.

Alm. No, on my life, my faith, I mean no ill,

Nor violence—I feel myself more light,
And more at large, since I have made this vow.
Perhaps I would repeat it there more solemnly.
'Tis that, or some such melancholy thought,
Upon my word, no more.

Leon. I will attend you.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. The lord Gonsalez comes to tell your
highness

The king is just arriv'd.

Alm. Conduct him in.

[*Exit ALON.*]

That's his pretence; his errand is, I know,
To fill my ears with Garcia's valiant deeds;
And gild and magnify his son's exploits.
But I am arm'd with ice around my heart,
Not to be warm'd with words, or idle eloquence.

Enter GONSALEZ.

Gon. Be every day of your long life like this.
The sun, bright conquest, and your brighter eyes,
Have all conspir'd to blaze promiscuous light,
And bless this day with most unequall'd lustre.
Your royal father, my victorious lord,
Loaden with spoils, and ever-living laurel,
Is entering now, in martial pomp, the palace.
Five hundred mules precede his solemn march,
Which groan beneath the weight of Moorish
wealth.

Chariots of war, adorn'd with glittering gems,
Succeed; and next, a hundred neighing steeds,
White as the fleecy rain on Alpine hills,
That bound and foam, and champ the golden bit,
As they disdain'd the victory they grace.
Prisoners of war, in shining fetters follow:
And captains of the noblest blood of Afric
Sweat by his chariot wheel, and lick and grind,
With gnashing teeth, the dust his triumphs raise.
The swarming populace spread every wall,
And cling, as if with claws they did enforce
Their hold; through clifted stones stretching and
staring,

As if they were all eyes, and every limb
Would feed its faculty with admiration:
While you alone retire, and shun this sight;
This sight, which is indeed not seen, (though
twice

The multitude should gaze) in absence of your
eyes.

Alm. My lord, my eyes ungratefully behold
The gilded trophies of exterior honours.
Nor will my ears be charmed with sounding words,
Or pompous phrase, the pageantry of souls.
But that my father is return'd in safety,
I bend to Heaven with thanks.

Gon. Excellent princess!—
But 'tis a task unfit for my weak age
With dying words to offer at your praise.
Garcia, my son, your beauty's lowest slave,
Has better done, in proving with his sword
The force and influence of your matchless charms.

Alm. I doubt not of the worth of Garcia's
deeds,
Which had been brave though I had ne'er been
born.

Leon. Madam, the king. [*Flourish*]

Alm. My women. I would meet him.

[*Attendants to ALMERIA enter in mourning.*]

*Symphony of warlike Music. Enter the KING,
attended by GARCIA and several Officers. Files*

of Prisoners in chains, and Guards, who are ranged in order round the Stage. ALMERIA meets the KING, and kneels: afterwards GONSALEZ kneels, and kisses the KING's hand, while GARCIA does the same to the PRINCESS.

King. Almeria, rise—My best Gonzalez, rise. What, tears! my good old friend—

Gon. But tears of joy.

Believe me, Sir, to see you thus, has fill'd Mine eyes with more delight than they can hold.

King. By Heaven, thou lov'st me, and I'm pleas'd thou dost;

Take it for thanks, old man, that I rejoice To see thee weep on this occasion—Some Here are, who seem to mourn at our success! Why is 't, Almeria, that you meet our eyes, Upon this solemn day, in these sad weeds? In opposition to my brightness, you And yours are all like daughters of affliction.

Alm. Forgive me, Sir, if I in this offend. The year which I have vow'd to pay to Heaven, In mourning and strict life for my deliverance From wreck and death, wants yet to be expir'd.

King. Your zeal to Heaven is great, so is your debt:

Yet something too is due to me, who gave That life, which Heaven preserv'd. A day bestow'd

In filial duty, had aton'd and given A dispensation to your vow—No more! 'Twas weak and wilful—and a woman's error. Yet, upon thought, it doubly wounds my sight, To see that sable worn upon the day, Succeeding that, in which our deadliest foe, Hated Anselmo, was interr'd—By Heaven, It looks as thou didst mourn for him: just so Thy senseless vow appear'd to bear its date, Not from that hour wherein thou wert preserv'd, But that wherein the curs'd Alphonso perish'd. Ha! What? thou dost not weep to think of that!

Gon. Have patience, royal Sir; the princess weeps

To have offended you. If fate decreed, One pointed hour should be Alphonso's loss, And her deliverance, is she to blame?

King. I tell thee she's to blame, not to have feasted

When my first foe was laid in earth, such enmity,

Such detestation bears my blood to his; My daughter should have revel'd at his death, She should have made these palace walls to shake,

And all this high and ample roof to ring With her rejoicings. What, to mourn and weep!

'Then, then to weep, and pray, and grieve! by Heaven!

There's not a slave, a shackl'd slave of mine, But should have smil'd that hour, through all his care,

And shook his chains in transport and rude harmony.

Gon. What she has done, was in excess of goodness;

Betray'd by too much piety, to seem As if she had offended.—Sure, no more.

King. To seem is to commit, at this conjuncture.

I wot not have a seeming sorrow seen

To-day. Retire; divest yourself with speed Of that offensive black; on me be all The violation of your vow; for you, It shall be your excuse, that I command it.

Gar. [*Kneeling.*] Your pardon, Sir, if I presume so far,

As to remind you of your gracious promise.

King. Rise, Garcia.—I forgot. Yet stay, Almeria.

Alm. My boding heart!—What is your pleasure, Sir?

King. Draw near, and give your hand, and, Garcia, yours:

Receive this lord, as one whom I have found Worthy to be your husband, and my son.

Gar. Thus let me kneel to take—O, not to take—

But to devote, and yield myself for ever

The slave and creature of my royal mistress.

Gon. O, let me prostrate pay my worthless thanks—

King. No more; my promise long since pass'd, thy services,

And Garcia's well-tried valour, all oblige me:

This day we triumph; but to-morrow's sun,

Garcia, shall shine to grace thy nuptials—

Alm. Oh!

Gar. She faints! help to support her.

Gon. She recovers.

King. A fit of bridal fear. How is't, Almeria?

Alm. A sudden chillness seizes on my spirits.

Your leave, Sir, to retire.

King. Garcia, conduct her.

[*GARCIA leads ALMERIA to the door, and returns.*]

This idle vow hangs on her woman's fears.

I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,

And make it sin not to renounce that vow

Which I'd have broken. Now, what would Alonzo?

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Your beauteous captive, Zara, is arriv'd, And with a train as if she still were wife

To Albucacim, and the Moor had conquer'd.

King. It is our will she should be so attended. Bear hence these prisoners. Garcia, which is he, Of whose mute valour you relate such wonders?

[*Prisoners led off.*]

Gar. Osmyn, who led the Moorish horse; but he,

Great Sir, at her request, attends on Zara.

King. He is your prisoner; as you please dispose him.

Gar. I would oblige him, but he shuns my kindness;

And with a haughty mien and stern civility,

Dumbly declines all offers. If he speak,

'Tis scarce above a word; as he were born

Alone to do, and did disdain to talk;

At least to talk where he must not command.

King. Such sullenness, and in a man so brave,

Must have some other cause than his captivity.

Did Zara, then, request he might attend her?

Gar. My lord, she did.

King. That, join'd with his behaviour, Begets a doubt. I'd have 'em watch'd; perhaps Her chains hang heavier on him than his own.

Enter ALONZO, ZARA, and OSMYN bound, conducted by PEREZ and a guard, attended by

SELIM and several mutes and eunuchs in a train.

King. What welcome, and what honours, beautiful Zara,

A king and conqueror can give, are yours :
A conqueror indeed where you are won ;
Who with such lustre strike admiring eyes,
That had our pomp been with your presence
grac'd,
Th' expecting crowd had been deceiv'd ; and
seen

The monarch enter not triumphant, but
In pleasing triumph led ; your beauty's slave.

Zar. If I on any terms could condescend
To like captivity, or think those honours,
Which conquerors in courtesy bestow,
Of equal value with unborrow'd rule
And native right to arbitrary sway,
I might be pleased, when I behold this train
With usual homage wait : but when I feel
These bonds, I look with loathing on myself,
And scorn vile slavery, though doubly hid
Beneath mock praises, and dissembled state.

King. Those bonds ! 'Twas my command you
should be free.

How durst you, Perez, disobey ?

Perez. Great Sir,
Your order was, she should not wait your triumph,
But at some distance follow, thus attended.

King. 'Tis false ; 'twas more ; I bid she should
be free ;

If not in words, I bid it by my eyes.
Her eyes did more than bid—Free her and
hers

With speed—yet stay—my hands alone can
make

Fit restitution here—Thus I release you.

And by releasing you, enslave myself.

Zar. Such favours, so conferr'd, though when
unsought,

Deserve acknowledgment from noble minds.

Such thanks, as one hating to be oblig'd—

Yet hating more ingratitude, can pay,

I offer.

King. Born to excel, and to command !

As by transcendent beauty to attract

All eyes, so, by pre-eminence of soul,

To rule all hearts.

Garcia, what's he, who with contracted brow,
[Beholding OSMYN as they unbind him.

And sullen port, glooms downwards with his
eyes ;

At once regardless of his chains, or liberty ?

Gar. That, Sir, is he of whom I spoke ; that's
Osmyn.

King. He answers well the character you gave
him.

Whence comes it, valiant Osmyn, that a man

So great in arms as thou art said to be,

So hardly can endure captivity,

The common chance of war ?

Osm. Because captivity

Has robb'd me of a dear and just revenge.

King. I understand not that.

Osm. I would not have you.

Zar. That gallant Moor in battle lost a friend,

Whom more than life he lov'd ; and the regret

Of not revenging on his foes that loss,

Has caus'd this melancholy and despair.

King. She does excuse him ; 'tis as I suspected.

[To GONS.

Gon. That friend might be herself ; seem not
to heed

His arrogant reply : she looks concern'd.

King. I'll have inquiry made ; perhaps his
friend

Yet lives, and is a prisoner. His name ?

Zar. Heli.

King. Garcia, that search shall be your care :

It shall be mine to pay devotion here ;

At this fair shrine to lay my laurels down

And raise love's altar on the spoils of war.

Conquest and triumphs, now, are mine no more ;

Nor will I victory in camps adore :

For, lingering there, in long suspense she stands,

Shifting the prize in unresolving hands ;

Unus'd to wait, I broke through her delay,

Fix'd her by force, and snatch'd the doubtful day,

Now late I find that war is but her sport ;

In love the goddess keeps her awful court,

Fickle in fields, unsteadily she flies,

But rules with settl'd sway in Zara's eyes. [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Representing the aisle of a Temple.

GARCIA, HELI, PEREZ.

Gar. This way we're told, Osmyn was seen to
walk ;

Choosing this lonely mansion of the dead,

To mourn, brave Heli, thy mistaken fate.

Heli. Let Heaven with thunder to the centre
strike me,

If to arise in very deed from death,

And to revisit, with my long-clos'd eyes,

This living light, could to my soul or sense

Afford a thought, or show a glimpse of joy,

In least proportion to the vast delight

I feel, to hear of Osmyn's name ; to hear

That Osmyn lives, and I again shall see him.

Gar. I've heard, with admiration of your friend-
ship.

Per. Yonder, my lord, behold the noble Moor.

Heli. Where ? Where ?

Gar. I saw him not, nor any like him—

Per. I saw him when I spoke, thwarting my
view,

And striding with distemper'd haste ; his eyes

Seem'd flame, and flash'd upon me with a glance

Then forward shot their fires, which he pursu'd

As to some object frightful, yet not fear'd.

Gar. Let's haste to follow him, and know the
cause.

Heli. My lord, let me intreat you to forbear :

Leave me alone, to find and cure the cause.

I know his melancholy, and such starts

Are usual to his temper. It might raise him

To act some violence upon himself,

So to be caught in an unguarded hour,

And when his soul gives all her passion way,

Secure and loose in friendly solitude,

I know his noble heart would burst with shame,

To be surpriz'd by strangers in its frailty.

Gar. Go, generous Heli, and relieve your friend.

Far be it from me officiously to pry

Or press upon the privacies of others. [Exit HELI.

Perez, the king expects from our return

To have his jealousy confirm'd or clear'd,

Of that appearing love which Zara bears

To Osmyn ; but some other opportunity

Must make that plain.

Per. To me 'twas long since plain,

And every look from him and her confirms it.

Gar. If so, unhappiness attends their love,
And I could pity 'em. I hear some coming.
The friends, perhaps are met; let us avoid 'em.
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Alm. It was a fancied noise, for all is hush'd.

Leon. It bore the accent of a human voice.

Alm. It was thy fear, or else some transient wind

Whistling through hollows of this vaulted aisle.

We'll listen—

Leon. Hark!

Alm. No, all is hush'd, and still as death—'tis dreadful!

How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arch'd and ponderous roof,
By its own weight made steadfast and immovable,
Looking tranquillity. It strikes an awe
And terror on my aching sight; the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.
Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;
Nay, quickly speak to me, and let me hear
Thy voice—my own affrights me with its echoes.

Leon. Let us return; the horror of this place
And silence will increase your melancholy.

Alm. It may my fears, but cannot add to that.
No, I will on; show me Anselmo's tomb,
Lead me o'er bones and skulls and mouldering earth,

Of human bodies; for I'll mix with them,
Or wind me in the shroud of some pale corse
Yet green in earth, rather than be the bride
Of Garcia's more detested bed: that thought
Exerts my spirits; and my present fears
Are lost in dread of greater ill. Then show me,
Lead me, for I am bolder grown: lead on
Where I may kneel, and pay my vows again
To him, to Heaven, and my Alphonso's soul.

Leon. I go, but Heaven can tell with what regret.
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter HELI.

I wander through this maze of monuments,
Yet cannot find him—Hark! sure 'tis the voice
Of one complaining.—There it sounds—I'll follow it.
[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Opening, discovers a place of Tombs: one Monument fronting the view greater than the rest.*

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Leon. Behold the sacred vault, within whose womb

The poor remains of good Anselmo rest,
Yet fresh and unconsum'd by time or worms:
What do I see? Oh, Heaven! either my eyes
Are false, or still the marble door remains
Unclos'd; the iron gates, that lead to death
Beneath, are still wide stretch'd upon their hinge,
And staring on us with unfolded leaves.

Alm. Sure 'tis the friendly yawn of death for me;

And that dumb mouth, significant in show,
Invites me to the bed, where I alone {weary
Shall rest; shows me the grave, where nature,

And long oppress'd with woes and bending cares,
May lay the burden down, and sink in slumbers
Of peace eternal. Death, grim death, will fold
Me in his leaden arms, and press me close
To his cold, clayey breast: my father then
Will cease his tyranny; and Garcia too
Will fly my pale deformity with loathing.
My soul, enlarg'd from its vile bonds, will mount
And range the starry orbs, and milky ways,
Of that refulgent world, where I shall swim
In liquid light, and float on seas of bliss
To my Alphonso's soul. Oh, joy too great!
Oh, ecstasy of thought! Help me, Anselmo:
Help me, Alphonso; take me, reach thy hand;
To thee, to thee I call, to thee, Alphonso:
Oh, Alphonso!

OSMYN ascending from the tomb.

Osm. Who calls that wretched thing that was Alphonso?

Alm. Angels, and all the host of Heaven support me!

Osm. Whence is that voice, whose shrillness, from the grave,

And growing to his father's shroud, roots up Alphonso!

Alm. Mercy! Providence! Oh, speak,
Speak to it quickly, quickly; speak to me,
Comfort me, help me, hold me, hide me, hide me,
Leonora, in thy bosom, from the light,
And from my eyes.

Osm. Amazement and illusion!

Rivet and nail me where I stand, ye powers,

[*Coming forward.*]

That, motionless, I may be still deceiv'd.
Let me not stir, nor breathe, lest I dissolve
That tender, lovely form of painted air,
So like Almeria. Ha! it sinks, it falls;
I'll catch it ere it goes, and grasp her shade.
'Tis life! 'tis warm! 'tis she, 'tis she herself!
Nor dead, nor shade, but breathing and alive!
It is Almeria, 'tis my wife!

Enter HELI.

Leon. Alas! she stirs not yet, nor lifts her eyes;
He too is fainting—Help me, help me, stranger.
Whoe'er thou art, and lend thy hand to raise
These bodies.

Hel. Ha! 'tis he! and with Almeria!

Oh, miracle of happiness! Oh, joy
Unhop'd for! does Almeria live!

Osm. Where is she?

Let me behold, and touch her, and be sure
'Tis she; show me her face, and let me feel
Her lips with mine—'Tis she, I'm not deceiv'd;
I taste her breath, I warm'd her, and am warm'd.
Look up, Almeria, bless me with thy eyes;
Look on thy love, thy lover, and thy husband.

Alm. I've sworn I'll not wed Garcia: why d'ye force me.

Is this a father?

Osm. Look on thy Alphonso.

Thy father is not here, my love, nor Garcia:
Nor am I what I seem, but thy Alphonso.

Wilt thou not know me? Hast thou then forgot me?

Hast thou thy eyes, yet canst not see Alphonso?
Am I so alter'd, or art thou so chang'd,

That seeing my disguise thou seest not me?

Alm. It is, it is Alphonso; 'tis his face,
His voice, I know him now, I know him all.

Oh, take me to thy arms, and bear me hence,
Back to the bottom of the boundless deep,
To seas beneath, where thou so long hast dwelt.
Oh, how hast thou return'd? How hast thou
charm'd

The wildness of the waves and rocks to this?
That thus relenting they have given thee back
To earth, to light and life, to love and me.

Osm. Oh, I'll not ask, nor answer, how or why
We both have backward trod the paths of fate,
To meet again in life: to know I have thee,
Is knowing more than any circumstance,
Or means, by which I have thee—
To fold thee thus, to press thy balmy lips,
And gaze upon thy eyes, is so much joy,
I have not leisure to reflect, or know,
Or trifle time in thinking.

Alm. Stay a while—

Let me look on thee yet a little more.

Osm. What wouldst thou? thou dost put me
from thee.

Alm. Yes.

Osm. And why? What dost thou mean? Why
dost thou gaze so?

Alm. I know not; 'tis to see thy face, I think—
It is too much; too much to bear and live!
To see thee thus again is such profusion
Of joy, of bliss—I cannot bear—I must
Be mad—I cannot be transported thus.

Osm. Thou excellence, thou joy, thou heaven
of love!

Alm. Where hast thou been? and how art thou
alive?

How is all this? All-powerful Heaven, what are
we?

Oh, my strain'd heart—let me again behold thee,
For I weep to see thee—Art thou not paler?
Much, much; how thou art chang'd!

Osm. Not in my love.

Alm. No, no, thy griefs, I know, have done this
to thee.

Thou hast wept much, Alphonso; and, I fear,
Too much, too tenderly lamented me.

Osm. Wrong not my love, to say too tenderly.
No more, my life; talk not of tears or grief;
Affliction is no more, now thou art found.

Why dost thou weep, and hold thee from my arms,
My arms which ache to hold thee fast, and grow
To thee with twining? Come, come to my heart.

Alm. I will, for I should never look enough.
They would have married me; but I had sworn
To Heaven and thee, and sooner would have
died—

Osm. Perfection of all faithfulness and love!

Alm. Indeed I would—Nay, I would tell thee
all,

If I could speak; how I have mourn'd and pray'd!
For I have pray'd to thee, as to a saint;
And thou hast heard my pray'r; for thou art come
To my distress, to my despair, which Heaven
Could only, by restoring thee, have cured.

Osm. Grant me but life, good Heaven; but
length of days,

To pay some part, some little of this debt,
This countless sum of tenderness and love,
For which I stand engag'd to this all excellence:
Then bear me in a whirlwind to my fate,
Snatch me from life, and cut me short unwarn'd:
Then, then, 'twill be enough—I shall be old,
I shall have pass'd all eras then.

Of yet unmeasur'd time; when I have made
This exquisite, this most amazing goodness,

Some recompence of love and matchless truth.

Alm. 'Tis more than recompence to see thy
face.

If Heaven is greater joy, it is no happiness;
For 'tis not to be borne—What shall I say?
I have a thousand things to know and ask,
And speak—That thou art here beyond all hope,
All thought; and all at once thou art before me,
And with such suddenness hast hit my sight,
Is such surprise, such mystery, such ecstasy,
It hurries all my soul, and stuns my sense.
Sure from thy father's tomb thou didst arise?

Osm. I did; and thou, my love, didst call me;
thou.

Alm. True; but how cam'st thou there? Wert
thou alone?

Osm. I was, and lying on my father's lead,
When broken echoes of a distant voice
Disturb'd the sacred silence of the vault,
In murmurs round my head. I rose and listen'd,
And thought I heard thy spirit call Alphonso;
I thought I saw thee too; but, oh, I thought not
That I indeed should be so bless'd to see thee—

Alm. But still, how cam'st thou thither? How
thus?—Ha?

What's he, who like thyself, is started here
Ere seen?

Osm. Where? Ha! What do I see, Antonio!
I'm fortunate indeed—my friend too safe!

Heli. Most happily, in finding you thus bless'd.

Alm. More miracles! Antonio too, escap'd!

Osm. And twice escap'd; both from the rage
of seas

And war: for in the fight I saw him fall.

Heli. But fell unhurt, a pris'ner as yourself,
And as yourself made free; hither I came,
Impatiently to seek you, where I knew
Your grief would lead you to lament Anselmo.

Osm. There are no wonders, or else all is wonder.

Heli. I saw you on the ground, and rais'd you up,
When with astonishment I saw Almeria.

Osm. I saw her too, and therefore saw not thee.

Alm. Nor I; nor could I, for my eyes were yours.

Osm. What means the bounty of all-gracious
Heaven,

That persevering still, with open hand,

It scatters good, as in a waste of mercy?

Where will this end? But Heaven is infinite

In all, and can continue to bestow,

When scanty number shall be spent in telling.

Leon. Or I'm deceiv'd, or I beheld the glimpse
Of two in shining habits cross the aisle;

Who by their pointing seem to mark this place.

Alm. Sure I have dreamt, if we must part so
soon.

Osm. I wish at least our parting were a dream;
Or we could sleep 'till we again were met.

Heli. Zara with Selim, Sir, I saw and know
'em:

You must be quick, for love will lend her wings.

Alm. What love? Who is she? Why are you
alarm'd?

Osm. She's the reverse of thee; she's my un-
happiness.

Harbour no thought that may disturb thy peace

But gently take thyself away, lest she

Should come, and see the straining of my eyes

To follow thee.

Retire, my love, I'll think how we may meet

To part no more; my friend will tell thee all;

How I escap'd, how I am here; and thus;

How I'm not call'd Alphonso now, but Osmyn ;
And he Heli. All, all, he will unfold,
Ere next we meet—

Alm. Sure we shall meet again—

Osm. We shall ; we part not but to meet again.

Gladness and warmth of ever kindling love
Dwell with thee, and revive thy heart in absence.
[*Exeunt ALMERIA, LEONORA, and HELI.*
Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.
Turn your lights inward, eyes, and view my thoughts,

So shall you still behold her—'twill not be.
Oh, impotence of sight ! Mechanic sense !
Which to exterior objects ow'st thy faculty,
Not seeing of election, but necessity.
Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrors,
Successively reflect succeeding images :
Not what they would, but must ; a star, or toad ;
Just as the hand of chance administers.
Not so the mind, whose undetermin'd view
Revolves, and to the present adds the past ;
Essay'g farther to futurity ;
But that in vain. I have Almeria here
At once, as I before have seen her often—

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zar. See where he stands, folded and fix'd to earth,
Stiffening in thought, a statue among statues.
Why, cruel Osmyn, dost thou fly me thus ?
Is it well done ? Is this then the return
For fame, for honour, and for empire lost ?
But what is loss of honour, fame, and empire ?
Is this the recompence reserv'd for love ?
Why dost thou leave my eyes, and fly my arms,

To find this place of horror and obscurity ?
Am I more loathsome to thee than the grave,
That thou dost seek to shield thee there, and shun
My love ? But to the grave I'll follow thee—
He looks not, minds not, hears not ! barbarous man !

Am I neglected thus ? Am I despis'd ?
Not heard ! Ungrateful Osmyn !

Osm. Ha ! 'tis Zara !

Zar. Yes, traitor ; Zara, lost, abandon'd Zara,
Is a regardless suppliant now, to Osmyn.
The slave, the wretch that she redeem'd from death,

Disdains to listen now, or look on Zara.

Osm. Far be the guilt of such reproaches from me ;

Lost in myself, and blinded by my thoughts,
I saw you not till now.

Zar. Now then you see me—

But with such dumb and thankless eyes you look,
Better I was unseen, than seen thus coldly.

Osm. What would you from a wretch who came to mourn,

And only for his sorrows choose this solitude ?
Look round ; joy is not here, nor cheerfulness,
You have pursu'd misfortune to its dwelling,
Yet look for gaiety and gladness there.

Zar. Inhuman ! Why, why dost thou rack me thus ?

And with perverseness, from the purpose, answer ?

What is't to me, this house of misery ?

What joy do I require ? if thou dost mourn,

I come to mourn with thee, to share thy griefs,
And give thee, for 'em, in exchange, my love.

Osm. Oh, that's the greatest grief—I am so poor,

I have not wherewithal to give again.

Zar. Thou hast a heart, though 'tis a savage one ;

Give it me as it is ; I ask no more

For all I've done, and all I have endur'd :

For saving thee, when I beheld thee first,

Driven by the tide upon my country's coast,

Pale and expiring, drench'd in briny waves,

Thou and thy friend, till my compassion found thee ;

Compassion ! scarce will't own that name, so soon,

So quickly was it love ; for thou wert godlike

Even then. Kneeling on earth, I loos'd my hair,

And with it dried thy watery cheeks, then chaf'd

Thy temples, till reviving blood arose,

And, like the morn, vermilion'd o'er thy face.

Oh, Heaven ! how did my heart rejoice and ache,

When I beheld the day-break of thy eyes,

And felt the balm of thy respiring lips !

Osm. Oh, call not to my mind what you have done,

It sets a debt of that account before me,

Which shows me poor and bankrupt even in hopes.

Zar. The faithful Selim, and my women, know

The danger which I tempted to conceal you.

You know how I abus'd the credulous king ;

What arts I used to make you pass on him,

When he received you as the prince of Fez ;

And as my kinsman, honour'd and advanc'd you.

Oh, why do I relate what I have done ?

What did I not ? Was't not for you this war

Commenc'd ? not knowing who you were, nor why

You hated Manuel, I urg'd my husband

To this invasion : where he late was lost,

Where all is lost, and I am made a slave.

* *Osm.* You pierce my soul—I own it all—But while

The power is wanting to repay such benefits,

'Tis treble anguish to a generous heart.

Zar. Repay me with thy heart—What ! dost thou start ?

Make no reply ! Is this thy gratitude ?

Look on me now, from empire fallen to slavery ;

Think on my sufferings first, then look on me ;

Think on the cause of all, then view thyself :

Reflect on Osmyn, and then look on Zara,

The fallen, the lost, and now the captive Zara,

And now abandon'd—Say, what then is Osmyn ?

Osm. A fatal wretch—A huge, stupendous ruin,

That tumbling on its prop, crush'd all beneath,

And bore contiguous palaces to earth.

Zar. Yet thus, thus fallen, thus level'd with the vilest,

If I have gain'd thy love, 'tis glorious ruin ;

Ruin ! 'tis still to reign and to be more

* The lines printed in Italics are not in the original, but are now given to the reader as delivered in the representation at Drury-lane theatre.

A queen; for what are riches, empire, power,
But larger means to gratify the will?
The steps on which we tread, to rise and reach
Our wish; and that obtain'd, down with the
scaffolding

Of sceptres, crowns, and thrones: they've serv'd
their end,

And are, like lumber, to be left and scorn'd.

Osm. Why was I made the instrument to
throw

In bonds the frame of this exalted mind?

Zar. We may be free; the conqueror is
mine;

In chains unseen I hold him by the heart,
And can unwind and strain him as I please.
Give me thy love, I'll give thee liberty.

Osm. In vain you offer, and in vain require
What neither can bestow. Set free yourself,
And leave a slave the wretch that would be so.

Zar. Thou canst not mean so poorly as thou
talk'st.

Osm. Alas! you know me not.

Zar. Not who thou art:

But what this last ingratitude declares,
This grovelling baseness—Thou say'st true, I
know

Thee not; for what thou art yet wants a name;

But something so unworthy and so vile,

That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost,
Than all the malice of my other fate.

Traitor, monster, cold, and perfidious slave;

A slave not daring to be free! nor dares

To love above him; for 'tis dangerous.

'Tis that I know; for thou dost look, with eyes

Sparkling desire, and trembling to possess.

I know my charms have reach'd thy very soul,
And thrill'd thee through with darted fires; but
thou

Dost fear so much, thou dar'st not wish. The
king!

There, there's the dreadful sound, the king's thy
rival!

Sel. Madam, the king is here, and entering
now.

Zar. As I could wish: by Heaven, I'll be re-
veng'd.

Enter the KING, PEREZ, and Attendants.

King. Why does the fairest of her kind with-
draw

Her shining from the day, to gild this scene
Of death and night? Ha! what disorder 's this?
Somewhat I heard of king and rival mention'd.
What's he that dares be rival to the king,
Or lift his eyes to like where I adore?

Zar. There, he, your prisoner, and that was
my slave,

King. How! better than my hopes! Does she
accuse him? [*Aside.*]

Zar. Am I become so low by my captivity,
And do your arms so lessen what they conquer,
That Zara must be made the sport of slaves?
And shall the wretch, whom yester sun beheld
Waiting my nod, the creature of my power,
Presume to-day to plead audacious love,
And build bold hopes on my dejected fate?

King. Better for him to tempt the rage of
Heaven,

And wrench the bolt red hissing from the hand
Of him that thunders, than but to think that in-
solence.

'Tis daring for a god. Hence to the wheel
With that Ixion, who aspires to hold
Divinity embraced; to whips and prisons
Drag him with speed, and rid me of his face.

[*Guards seize OSMYN, and exeunt.*]

Zar. Compassion led me to bemoan his state,
Whose former faith had merited much more:
And through my hopes in you I undertook
He should be set at large; thence sprung his in-
solence,

And what was charity he construed love.

King. Enough; his punishment be what you
please.

But let me lead you from this place of sorrow,
To one where young delights attend, and joys
Yet new, unborn, and blooming in the bud,
Which wait to be full-blown at your approach,
And spread, like roses, in the morning sun;
Where every hour shall roll in circling joys,
And love shall wing the tedious-wasting day.
Life, without love, is load; and time stands still:
What we refuse to him, to death we give;
And then, then only, when we love, we live.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Prison.

OSMYN with a Paper.

Osm. But now, and I was closed within the tomb
That holds my father's ashes; and but now,
Where he was prisoner, I am too imprison'd.
Sure 'tis the hand of Heaven that leads me thus
And for some purpose points out these remem-
brances.

In a dark corner of my cell I found

This paper; what it is this light will show.

If my Alphonso—Ha!

[*Reading.*]

If my Alphonso live, restore him, Heaven;

Give me more weight, crush my declining years,

With bolts, with chains, imprisonment and want;

But bless my son, visit not him for me.

It is his hand; this was his prayer—yet more:

Let every hair, which sorrow dy the roots

[*Reading.*]

Tears from my hoary and devoted head,

Be doubled in thy mercies to my son:

Not for myself, but him, hear me all-gracious—

'Tis wanting what should follow—Heaven

should follow,

But 'tis torn off—Why should that word alone

Be torn from this petition? 'Twas to Heaven,

But Heaven was deaf, Heaven heard him not;
but thus,

Thus as the name of Heaven from this is torn,

So did it tear the ears of mercy from

His voice, shutting the gates of prayer against him.

If piety be thus debarr'd access

On high, and of good men the very best

Is singled out to bleed, and bear the scourge,

What is reward? Or what is punishment?

But who shall dare to tax eternal justice!

Yet I may think—I may, I must; for thought

Precedes the will to think, and error lives

Ere reason can be born. Reason, the power

To guess at right and wrong, the twinkling lamp

Of wandering life, that winks and wakes by turns,

Fooling the followers, betwixt shade and shining

What noise! Who's there? My friend? How

cam'st thou hither?

Enter HELI.

Hel. The time's too precious to be spent in telling.

The captain, influenc'd by Almeria's power,
Gave order to the guards for my admittance.

Osm. How does Almeria? But I know she is
As I am. Tell me, may I hope to see her?

Hel. You may. Anon, at midnight, when the king

Is gone to rest, and Garcia is retired,
(Who takes the privilege to visit late,
Presuming on a bridegroom's right) she'll come.

Osm. She'll come; 'tis what I wish, yet what I fear.

She'll come; but whither, and to whom? Oh, Heaven,

To a vile prison, and a captiv'd wretch;
To one, whom had she never known, she had
Been happy. Why, why was that heavenly creature

Abandon'd o'er to love what Heaven forsakes?

Why does she follow, with unwearied steps,

One, who has tired misfortune with pursuing?

One driv'n about the world, like blasted leaves,

And chaff, the sport of adverse winds; till late,

At length imprison'd in some cleft of rock,

On earth it rests, and rots to silent dust.

Hel. Have hopes, and hear the voice of better fate.

I've learn'd there are disorders ripe for mutiny
Among the troops, who thought to share the plunder,

Which Manuel to his own use and avarice

Converts. This news has reach'd Valentia's frontiers,

Where many of your subjects, long oppress'd

With tyranny, and grievous impositions,

Are risen in arms, and call for chiefs to head

And lead them to regain their rights and liberty.

Osm. By Heavens thou'ast roused me from my lethargy.

The spirit which was deaf to my own wrongs,

And the loud cries of my dead father's blood,

Deaf to revenge—nay, which refus'd to hear

The piercing sighs and murmurs of my love

Yet unenjoy'd; what not Almeria could

Revive or raise, my people's voice has waken'd.

Hel. Our posture of affairs, and scanty time,

My lord, require you should compose yourself.

Osm. Oh, my Antonio, I am all on fire;

My soul is up in arms, ready to charge

And bear amidst the foe with conquering troops.

I hear 'em call to lead 'em on to liberty,

To victory, their shouts and clamours rend

My ears, and reach the heavens. Where is the king?

Where is Alphonso? Ha! where? where indeed!

Oh, I could tear and burst the strings of life,

To break these chains. Off, off, ye stains of royalty;

Off, slavery. Oh, curse! that I alone

Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I

Would soar and stoop at victory beneath.

Hel. Abate this ardour, Sir, or we are lost.

Our posture of affairs and scanty time,

My lord, require you should compose yourself,

And think on what we may reduce to practice.

Zara, the cause of your restraint, may be

The means of liberty restor'd. That gain'd,

Occasion will not fail to point out ways

For your escape. Mean time, I've thought already

With speed and safety to convey myself,

Where not far off some malcontents hold council

Nightly, who hate this tyrant; some, who love

Anselmo's memory, and will, for certain,

When they shall know you live, assist your cause.

Osm. My friend and counsellor, as thou think'st

fit,

So do. I will, with patience, wait my fortune.

Hel. When Zara comes, abate of your aversion.

Osm. I hate her not, nor can dissemble love:

But as I may I'll do. I have a paper

Which I would show thee, friend, but that the sight

Would hold thee here, and clog thy expedition.

Within I found it; by my father's hand

'Twas writ; a prayer for me, wherein appears

Paternal love prevailing o'er his sorrows;

Such sanctity, such tenderness, so mix'd

With grief, as would draw tears from inhumanity.

Hel. The care of providence sure left it there,

To arm your mind with hope. Such piety

Was never heard in vain. Heaven has in store

For you those blessings it withheld from him.

In that assurance live; which time, I hope,

And our next meeting will confirm.

Osm. Farewell,

My friend; the good thou dost deserve, attend

thee. [*Exit HELI.*]

I've been to blame, and question'd with impiety

The care of Heaven. Not so my father bore

More anxious grief. This should have better

taught me;

This lesson, in some hour of inspiration

By him set down, when his pure thoughts were

borne,

Like fumes of sacred incense o'er the clouds,

And wafted thence on angels' wings, through

ways

Of light, to the bright Source of all. For there

He in the book of prescience saw this day;

And waking to the world and mortal sense,

Left this example of his resignation,

This his last legacy to me; which, here,

I'll treasure as more worth than diadems,

Or all extended rule of regal power.

Enter ZARA, veiled.

Osm. What brightness breaks upon me thus

through shades,

And promises a day to this dark dwelling?

Is it my love?—

Zar. Oh, that thy heart had taught

Thy tongue that saying! [*Lifting her veil*]

Osm. Zara! I am betray'd

By my surprise.

Zar. What! does my face displease thee?

That, having seen it, thou dost turn thy eyes

Away, as from deformity and horror?

If so, this sable curtain shall again

Be drawn, and I will stand before thee, seeing,

And unseen. Is it my love? Ask again

That question; speak again in that soft voice;

And look again with wishes in thy eyes.

Oh, no! thou canst not, for thou seest me now

As she whose savage breast has been the cause

Of these thy wrongs; as she whose barbarous

rage

Has loaded thee with chains and galling irons.

Well dost thou scorn me, and upbraid my false-

ness,

Could one who lov'd thus torture whom she lov'd?

No; no, it must be hatred, dire revenge,
And detestation, that could use thee thus.
So dost thou think; then do but tell me so;
Tell me, and thou shalt see how I'll revenge
Thee on this false one, how I'll stab and tear
This heart of flint, 'till it shall bleed; and thou
Shalt weep for mine, forgetting thy own miseries.

Osm. You wrong me, beauteous Zara, to believe

I bear my fortunes with so low a mind,
As still to meditate revenge on all
Whom chance, or fate, working by secret causes,
Has made, perforce, subservient to that end
The heavenly powers allot me; no, not you,
But destiny and inauspicious stars
Have cast me down to this low being. Or
Granting you had, from you I have deserved it.

Zar. Canst thou forgive me, then? wilt thou believe

So kindly of my fault, to call it madness?
Oh, give that madness yet a milder name,
And call it passion! then be still more kind,
And call that passion love.

Osm. Give it a name,

Or being, as you please, such I will think it.

Zar. Oh, thou dost wound me more with this
thy goodness,

Than e'er thou couldst with bitterest reproaches?
Thy anger could not pierce thus to my heart.

Osm. Yet I could wish—

Zar. Haste me to know it; what?

Osm. That at this time I had not been this
thing.

Zar. What thing?

Osm. This slave.

Zar. Oh Heaven! my fears interpret

This thy silence; somewhat of high concern,
Long fashioning within thy labouring mind,
And now just ripe for birth, my rage has ruin'd.
Have I done this? Tell me, am I so curs'd?

Osm. Time may have still one fated hour to
come,

Which, wing'd with liberty, might overtake
Occasion past.

Zar. Swift as occasion, I

Myself will fly; and earlier than the morn,
Wake thee to freedom. Now 'tis late; and yet
Some news, few minutes past, arriv'd, which
seem'd

To shake the temper of the king—Who knows
What racking cares disease a monarch's bed?
Or love, that late at night still lights his lamp,
And strikes his rays through dusk and folded lids,
Forbidding rest, may stretch his eyes awake,
And force their balls abroad at this dead hour.
I'll try.

Osm. I have not merited this grace;

Nor, should my secret purpose take effect,
Can I repay, as you require, such benefits.

Zar. Thou canst not owe me more, nor have
I more

To give, than I have already lost. But now,
So does the form of our engagements rest,
Thou hast the wrong till I redeem thee hence;
That done, I leave thy justice to return
My love. Adieu. *[Exit.]*

Osm. This woman has a soul
Of godlike mould, intrepid and commanding,
And challenges, in spite of me, my best
Esteem; to this, she's fair, few more can boast
Of personal charms, or with less vanity
Might hope to captivate the hearts of kings;

But she has passions which outstrip the wind,
And tear her virtues up, as tempests root
The sea. I fear, when she shall know the truth,
Some swift and dire event of her blind rage
Will make all fatal. But behold, she comes
For whom I fear, to shield me from my fears,
The cause and comfort of my boding heart.

Enter ALMERIA.

My life, my health, my liberty, my all!
How shall I welcome thee to this sad place?
How speak to thee the words of joy and transport?
How run into thy arms, withheld by fetters;
Or take thee into mine, while I'm thus manacled
And pinion'd like a thief or murderer?
Shall I not hurt and bruise thy tender body,
And stain thy bosom with the rust of these
Rude irons? Must I meet thee thus, Almeria?

Alm. Thus, thus; we parted, thus to meet
again.

Thou told'st me thou wouldst think how we might
meet

To part no more—Now we will part no more;
For these thy chains, or death, shall join us ever

Osm. Hard means to ratify that word!—Oh
cruelty!

That ever I should think beholding thee
A torture!—Yet such is the bleeding anguish
Of my heart, to see thy sufferings—Oh, Heaven!
That I could almost turn my eyes away,
Or wish thee from my sight.

Alm. Oh, say not so!

Though 'tis because thou lov'st me. Do not say,
On any terms, that thou dost wish me from thee.
No, no, 'tis better thus, that we together

Feed on each other's heart, devour our woes
With mutual appetite; and mingling in
One cup the common stream of both our eyes,
Dring bitter draughts, with never slaking thirst;
Thus better, than for any cause to part.

What dost thou think? Look not so tenderly
Upon me—speak, and take me in thy arms—
Thou canst not; thy poor arms are bound, and
strive

In vain with the remorseless chains, which gnaw
And eat into thy flesh, festering thy limbs
With rankling rust.

Osm. Oh! Oh—

Alm. Give me that sigh.

Why dost thou heave, and stifle in thy griefs?
Thy heart will burst, thy eyes look red and start;
Give thy soul way, and tell me thy dark thought.

Osm. For this world's rule, I would not wound
thy breast

With such a dagger as then struck my heart.

Alm. Why? why? To know it, cannot wound
me more

Than knowing thou hast felt it. Tell it me,
—Thou giv'st me pain with too much tenderness.

Osm. And thy excessive love distracts my
sense.

Oh, wouldst thou be less killing, soft, or kind
Grief could not double thus his arts against me.

Alm. Thou dost me wrong, and grief too robs
my heart,

If there he shoot not every other shaft;
Thy second self should feel each other wound,
And we should be in equal portions dealt.
I am thy wife—

Osm. Oh, thou hast search'd too deep:
There, there I bleed; there pull the cruel cords,

That strain my cracking nerves; engines and wheels,
That piece-meal grind, are beds of down and balm
To that soul-racking thought.

Alm. Then I am curs'd

Indeed, if that he so! if I'm thy torment,
Kill me, then, kill me, dash me with thy chains,
Tread on me: What, am I the bosom-snake
That sucks thy warm life-blood, and gnaws thy heart?

Oh, that thy words had force to break those bonds,
As they have strength to tear this heart in sunder;
So should'st thou be at large from all oppression.
Am I, am I of all thy woes the worst?

Osm. My all of bliss, my everlasting life,
Soul of my soul, and end of all my wishes,
Why dost thou thus unman me with thy words,
And melt me down to mingle with thy weepings?
Why dost thou ask? Why dost thou talk thus
piercingly?

Thy sorrows have disturb'd thy peace of mind,
And thou dost speak of miseries impossible.

Alm. Didst not thou say that racks and wheels
were balm

And beds of ease, to thinking me thy wife?

Osm. No, no; nor should the subtlest pains
that hell

Or hell-born malice can invent, extort
A wish or thought from me to have thee other.
But thou wilt know what harrows up my heart:
Thou art my wife—nay, thou art yet my
bride?—

The sacred union of connubial love
Yet unaccomplish'd: his mysterious rites
Delay'd; nor has our hymeneal torch
Yet lighted up his last most grateful sacrifice;
But dash'd with rain from eyes, and swa'd with
sighs,

Burns dim, and glimmers with expiring light.

Is this dark cell a temple for that god?

Or this vile earth an altar for such offerings?

This den for slaves, this dungeon damp'd with
woes;

Is this our marriage bed? are these our joys?

Is this to call thee mine? Oh, hold, my heart!

To call thee mine? Yes; thus, even thus to call
Thee mine, were comfort, joy, extremest ecstasy.
But, oh, thou art not mine, not e'en in misery;
And 'tis denied to me to be so bless'd,
As to be wretched with thee.

Alm. No; not that

Th' extremest malice of our fate can hinder:

That still is left us, and on that we'll feed,

As on the leavings of calamity.

There we will feast and smile on past distress,

And hug, in scorn of it, our mutual ruin.

Osm. Oh, thou dost talk, my love, as one re-
solv'd,

Because not knowing danger. But look forward;
Think of to-morrow, when thou shalt be torn
From these weak, struggling, unextended arms:
Think how my heart will heave, and eyes will
strain

To grasp and reach what is deny'd my hands:

Think how the blood will start, and tears will
gush,

To follow thee, my separating soul.

Think who I am, when thou shalt wed with
Garcia!

Then will I smear these walls with blood, disfigure
And dash my face, and rive my clotted hair,
Break on the flinty floor my throbbing breast,

And grovel with gash'd hands to scratch a grave,
Stripping my nails to tear this pavement up,
And bury me alive.

Alm. Heart-breaking horror!

Osm. Then Garcia shall lie panting on thy
bosom,

Luxurious, revelling amidst thy charms;
And thou perforce must yield, and aid his trans-
port.

Hell! Hell! have I not cause to rage and rave?

What are all racks, and wheels, and whips to this?

Are they not soothing softness, sinking ease,

And wafting air to this? Oh, my Almeria!

What do the damn'd endure, but to despair,

But knowing Heaven, to know it lost for ever?

Alm. Oh, I am struck; thy words are bolts of
ice,

Which, shot into my breast, now melt and chill me.

I chatter, shake, and faint with thrilling fears.

No, hold me not—Oh, let us not support,

But sink each other, deeper yet, down, down,

Where level'd low, no more we'll lift our eyes,

But prone, and dumb, rot the firm face of earth

With rivers of incessant scalding rain.

Enter ZARA, PEREZ, and SELIM.

Zar. Somewhat of weight to me requires his
freedom.

Dare you dispute the king's command? Behold
The royal signet.

Per. I obey; yet beg

Your majesty one moment to defer

Your entering, till the princess is return'd

From visiting the noble prisoner.

Zar. Ha!

What say'st thou?

Osm. We are lost! undone! discover'd!

Retire, my life, with speed—Alas, we're seen!

Speak of compassion, let her hear you speak

Of interceding for me with the king;

Say somewhat quickly to conceal our loves,

If possible—

Alm. —I cannot speak.

Osm. Let me

Conduct you forth, as not perceiving her,

But till she's gone; then bless me thus again.

Zar. Trembling and weeping as he leads her
forth!

Confusion in his face, and grief in hers!

'Tis plain I've been abus'd—Death and destruc-
tion!

How shall I search into this mystery?

The bluest blast of pestilential air

Strike, damp, deaden her charms, and kill his
eyes;

Perdition catch 'em both, and ruin part 'em!

Osm. This charity to one unknown, and thus

[*Aloud to ALMERIA as she goes out.*
Distress'd Heaven will repay; all thanks are poor.

[*Exit ALMERIA.*

Zar. Damn'd, damn'd dissembler! Yet I will
be calm,

Choke in my rage, and know the utmost depth
Of this deceiver—You seem much surpris'd.

Osm. At your return so soon and unexpected!

Zar. And so unwish'd, unwanted too, it seems
Confusion! Yet I will contain myself.

You're grown a favourite since last we parted;

Perhaps I'm saucy and intruding—

Osm. —Madam!

Zar. I did not know the princess' favourite.

Your pardon, Sir—Mistake me not; you think I'm angry; you're deceiv'd. I came to set You free; but shall return much better pleas'd, To find you have an interest superior.

Osm. You do not come to mock my miseries?

Zar. I do.

Osm. I could at this time spare your mirth.

Zar. I know thou couldst; but I'm not often pleas'd,

And will indulge it now. What miseries?

Who would not be thus happily confin'd,

To be the care of weeping majesty;

To have contending queens, at dead of night,

Forsake their down, to wake with watery eyes,

And watch like tapers o'er your hours of rest?

Oh, curse! I cannot hold—

Osm. Come, 'tis too much.

Zar. Villain!

Osm. How, Madam!

Zar. Thou shalt die.

Osm. I thank you.

Zar. Thou liest, for now I know for whom thou'dst live.

Osm. Then you may know for whom I'd die.

Zar. Hell! Hell!

Yet I'll be calm—Dark and unknown betrayer!

But now the dawn begins, and the slow hand

Of fate is stretch'd to draw the veil, and leave

These bare, the naked mark of public view.

Osm. You may be still deceiv'd, 'tis in my power—

Chain'd as I am, to fly from all my wrongs,

And free myself, at once, from misery,

And you of me.

Zar. Ha! say'st thou—but I'll prevent it—

Who waits there? As you will answer it, look this slave [To the guard.

Attempt no means to make himself away.

I've been deceiv'd. The public safety now

Requires he should be more confin'd, and none,

No, not the princess, suffer'd or to see

Or speak with him. I'll quit you to the king.

Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent

The base injustice thou hast done my love:

Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past distress,

And all those ills which thou so long hast mourn'd;

Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turn'd,

Nor hell a fury like a woman scorn'd. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room of State.

ZARA and SELIM.

Zar. Thou hast already rack'd me with thy stay;

Therefore require me not to ask thee twice: Reply at once to all. What is concluded?

Sel. Your accusation highly has incens'd

The king, and were alone enough to urge

The fate of Osmyn; but to that, fresh news

Is since arriv'd, of more revolted troops.

'Tis certain Heli, too, is fled, and with him (Which breeds amazement and distraction) some

Who bore high offices of weight and trust,

Both in the state and army. This confirms

The king in full belief of all you told him

Concerning Osmyn, and his correspondence

With them who first began the mutiny.

Wherefore a warrant for his death is sign'd;

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And order given for public execution.

Zar. Ha! haste thee! fly, prevent his fate and mine,

Find out the king, tell him I have of weight More than his crown t' impart ere Osmyn die.

Sel. It needs not, for the king will straight be here,

And, as to your revenge, not his own interest, Pretend to sacrifice the life of Osmyn.

Zar. What shall I say, invent, contrive, advise?

Somewhat to blind the king, and save his life,

In whom I live. Spite of my rage and pride,

I am a woman, and a lover still.

Oh! 'tis more grief but to suppose his death,

Than still to meet the rigour of his scorn.

From my despair my anger had its source;

When he is dead I must despair for ever.

For ever! That's despair—it was distrust

Before; distrust will ever be in love,

And anger in distrust; both short-lived pains.

But in despair, and ever-during death,

No term, no bound, but infinite of woe.

Oh, torment, but to think! what then to bear?

Not to be borne—Devise the means to shun it,

Quick: or by Heaven this dagger drinks thy blood.

Sel. My life is yours, nor wish I to preserve it,

But to serve you. I have already thought.

Zar. Forgive my rage; I know thy love and truth.

But say what's to be done, or when, or how

Shall I prevent or stop th' approaching danger?

Sel. You must still seem more resolute and fix'd

On Osmyn's death: too quick a change of mercy

Might breed suspicion of the cause. Advise

That execution may be done in private.

Zar. On what pretence?

Sel. Your own request's enough.

However, for a colour, tell him, you

Have cause to fear his guards may be corrupted,

And some of them bought off to Osmyn's interest,

Who at the place of execution will

Attempt to force his way for an escape;

The state of things will countenance all suspicions.

Then offer to the king to have him strangled

In secret by your mutes; and get an order,

That none but mutes may have admittance to him.

I can no more, the king is here. Obtain

This grant, and I'll acquaint you with the rest.

Enter KING, GONSALEZ, and PEREZ.

King. Bear to the dungeon those rebellious slaves,

Th' ignoble curs that yelp to fill the cry,

And spend their mouths in barking tyranny.

But for their leaders, Sancho and Ramirez,

Let them be led away to present death.

Perez, see it perform'd.

Gon. Might I presume,

Their execution better were deferr'd

Till Osmyn die. Meantime we may learn more

Of this conspiracy.

King. Then be it so.

Stay, soldier; they shall suffer with the Moor.

Are none return'd of those who follow'd Heli?

Gon. None, Sir. Some papers have been since

discover'd

In Roderigo's house, who fled with him,

Which seem'd to intimate, as if Alphonso
Were still alive, and arming in Valentia,
Which wears indeed the colour of a truth:
They who are fled have that way bent their course.
Of the same nature divers notes have been
Dispers'd t' amuse the people; whereupon
Some, ready of belief, have rais'd this rumour:
That, being sav'd upon the coast of Afric,
He there disclos'd himself to Albucacim,
And, by a secret compact made with him,
Open'd and urg'd the way to this invasion;
While he himself, returning to Valentia
In private, undertook to raise this tumult.

Zar. Ha! hear'st thou that? Is Osmyn then
Alphonso?

Oh, Heaven! a thousand things occur at once
To my remembrance now, that make it plain.
Oh, certain death for him as sure despair
For me, if it be known—If not, what hope
Have I? Yet 'twere the lowest baseness now,
To yield him up—No, I will conceal him,
And try the force of yet more obligations.

Gon. 'Tis not impossible. Yet it may be,
That some impostor has usurp'd his name.
Your beauteous captive, Zara, can inform,
If such a one, so 'scaping, was receiv'd
At any time in Albucacim's court.

King. Pardon, fair excellence, this long neglect:
An unforeseen, unwelcome hour of business,
Has thrust between us and our while of love;
But wearing now apace with ebbing sand,
Will quickly waste and give again the day.

Zar. You're too secure; the danger is more
imminent

Than your high courage suffers you to see;
While Osmyn lives you are not safe.

King. His doom

Is pass'd; if you revoke it not, he dies.

Zar. 'Tis well. By what I heard upon your
entrance

I find I can unfold what yet concerns
You more. One, who did call himself Alphonso,
Was cast upon my coast, as 'tis reported,
And oft had private conference with the king;
To what effect I knew not then: but he,
Alphonso, secretly departed, just
About the time our arms embark'd for Spain.
What I know more is, that a triple league
Of strictest friendship was profess'd between
Alphonso, Heli, and the traitor Osmyn.

King. Public report is ratified in this.

Zar. And Osmyn's death requir'd of strong
necessity.

King. Give orders straight, that all the prison-
ers die.

Zar. Forbear a moment, somewhat more I have
Worthy your private ear, and this your minister.

King. Let all, except Gonsalez, leave the room.
[*Exit PEREZ, &c.*]

Zar. I am your captive, and you've used me
nobly;

And in return of that, though otherwise
your enemy, I have discover'd Osmyn,
His private practice and conspiracy
Against your state; and fully to discharge
myself of what I've undertaken, now
I think it fit to tell you, that your guards
Are tainted: some among 'em have resolv'd
To rescue Osmyn at the place of death.

King. Is treason then so near us as our guards?

Zar. Most certain; though my knowledge is
not yet

So ripe, to point at the particular men.

King. What's to be done?

Zar. That too I will advise.

I have remaining in my train some mutes,
A present once from the sultana queen,
In the grand signior's court. These from their
infancy

Are practis'd in the trade of death; and shall
(As there the custom is) in private strangle
Osmyn.

Gon. My lord, the queen advises well.

King. What offering, or what recompence re-
mains

In me that can be worthy so great services?

To cast beneath your feet the crown you've sav'd,
Though on the head that wears it, were too little.

Zar. Of that hereafter: but, mean time, 'tis fit
You give strict charge that none may be ad-
mitted

To see the prisoner, but such mutes as I
Shall send.

King. Who waits there?

Enter PEREZ.

King. On your life, take heed
That only Zara's mutes, or such who bring
Her warrant, have admittance to the Moor.

Zar. They, and no other, not the princess'
self.

Per. Your majesty shall be obey'd.

King. Retire. [*Exit PEREZ.*]

Gon. That interdiction so particular
Pronounced with vehemence against the princess,
Should have more meaning than appears bare-
fac'd.

This king is blinded by his love, and heeds

It not. [*Aside.*]—Your majesty might sure have
spar'd

The last restraint: you hardly can suspect
The princess is confederate with the Moor.

Zar. I've heard her charity did once extend

So far, to visit him at his request.

Gon. Ha!

King. How! She visit Osmyn! What, my
daughter?

Sel. Madam, take heed; or you have ruin'd all.
[*Aside.*]

Zar. And after did solicit you on his
Behalf.—

King. Never. You have been misinform'd.

Zar. Indeed! Then 'twas a whisper spread by
some

Who wish'd it so; a common art in courts.

I will retire, and instantly prepare

Instruction for my ministers of death.

[*Exit ZARA and SELIM.*]

Gon. There's somewhat yet of mystery in this;
Her words and actions are obscure and double,
Sometimes concur, and sometimes disagree:
I like it not.

[*Aside.*]

King. What dost thou think, Gonsalez?

Are we not much indebted to this fair one?

Gon. I am a little slow of credit, Sir,

In the sincerity of women's actions.

Methinks this lady's hatred to the Moor

Disquiets her too much; which makes it seem

As if she'd rather that she did not hate him.

I wish her mutes are meant to be employ'd

As she pretends—I doubt it now—Your guards
Corrupted! How? By whom? Who told her so?

I th' evening Osmyn was to die; at midnight

She begg'd the royal signet to release him;
 I' th' morning he must die again; ere noon
 Her mutes alone must strangle him, or he'll
 Escape. This, put together, suits not well.

King. Yet that there's truth in what she has
 discover'd

Is manifest from every circumstance.

This tumult, and the lords who fled with Heli,
 Are confirmation;—that Alphonso lives,
 Agrees expressly too, with her report.

Gon. I grant it, Sir; and doubt not, but in rage
 Of jealousy, she has discover'd what
 She now repents. It may be I'm deceiv'd.

But why that needless caution of the princess?
 What if she had seen Osmyn? Though 'twere
 strange;

But if she had, what was't to her? Unless
 She fear'd her stronger charms might cause the
 Moor's

Affection to revolt.

King. I thank thee, friend.

There's reason in thy doubt, and I am warn'd—
 But think'st thou that my daughter saw this
 Moor?

Gon. If Osmyn be, as Zara has related,
 Alphonso's friend, 'tis not impossible
 But she might wish, on his account, to see him.

King. Say'st thou? By Heaven, thou hast
 rous'd a thought,
 That like a sudden earthquake shakes my frame.
 Confusion! then my daughter's an accomplice,
 And plots in private with this hellish Moor.

Gon. That were too hard a thought—but see,
 she comes—

'Twere not amiss to question her a little,
 And try howe'er, if I've divin'd aright.
 If what I fear be true, she'll be concern'd
 For Osmyn's death, as he's Alphonso's friend:
 Urge that, to try if she'll solicit for him.

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

King. Your coming has prevented me, Almeria;
 I had determin'd to have sent for you.
 Let your attendant be dismiss'd; I have

[*LEON. retires.*

To talk with you. Come near; why dost thou
 shake?

What mean those swoln and red-fleck'd eyes; that
 look

As they had wept in blood, and worn the night
 In waking anguish? Why this on the day
 Which was design'd to celebrate thy nuptials;
 But that the beams of light are to be stain'd
 With reeking gore, from traitors on the rack?
 Wherefore I have deferr'd the marriage-rites;
 Nor shall the guilty horrors of this day
 Profane that jubilee.

Alm. All days to me
 Henceforth are equal: this, the day of death,
 To-morrow, and the next, and each that follows,
 Will undistinguish'd roll, and but prolong
 One hated line of more extended woe.

King. Whence is thy grief? Give me to know
 the cause;

And look thou answer me with truth; for know,
 I am not unacquainted with thy falsehood.

Why art thou mute? Base and degenerate maid!
Gon. Dear Madam, speak, or you'll incense
 the king.

Alm. What is't to speak? Or wherefore should
 I speak?

What means these tears but grief unutterable?

King. They are the dumb confessions of thy
 mind;

They mean thy guilt, and say thou wert confe-
 derate

With damn'd conspirators to take my life.

Oh, impious parricide! Now canst thou speak!

Alm. O earth, behold, I kneel upon thy bosom,
 And bend my flowing eyes to stream upon
 Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield;

Open thy bowels of compassion, take
 Into thy womb the last and most forlorn
 Of all thy race. Hear me, thou common parent

—I have no parent else—be thou a mother,
 And step between me and the curse of him
 Who was—who was, but is no more a father

But brands my innocence with horrid crimes;
 And, for the tender names of child and daughter,
 Now calls me murderer and parricide.

King. Rise, I command thee, rise,—and if
 thou wouldst

Acquit thyself of these detested names,
 Swear thou hast never seen that foreign dog;
 Now doom'd to die, that most accurs'd Osmyn.

Alm. Never, but as with innocence I might,
 And free of all bad purposes. So Heaven's
 My witness.

King. Vile, equivocating wretch! [it!
 With innocence! Oh, patience! hear—she owns
 Confesses it! By Heaven, I'll have him rack'd,
 Torn, mangled, flay'd, impal'd—all pains and
 tortures

That wit of man, or dire revenge can think,
 Shall he, accumulated, underbear.

Alm. Oh, I am lost.—There fate begins to
 wound.

King. Hear me, then: if thou canst reply;
 know, traitress,

I'm not to learn that curs'd Alphonso lives;
 Nor am I ignorant what Osmyn is—

Alm. Then all is ended, and we both must die.
 Since thou'rt reveal'd, alone thou shalt not die.
 And yet alone would I have died, Heaven knows,
 Repeated deaths, rather than have reveal'd thee.
 Yes, all my father's wounding wrath, though each
 Reproach cuts deeper than the keenest sword,
 And cleaves my heart, I would have borne it all,
 Nay all the pains that are prepar'd for thee;
 To the remorseless rack I would have given
 This weak and tender flesh, to have been bruise'd
 And torn, rather than have reveal'd thy being.

King. Hell, hell! Do I hear this, and yet
 endure!

What! dar'st thou to my face avow thy guilt?
 Hence, ere I curse—fly my just rage with speed;
 Lest I forget us both, and spurn thee from me.

Alm. And yet a father! Think, I am your
 child!

Turn not your eyes away—look on me kneeling
 Now curse me if you can, now spurn me off.

Did ever father curse his kneeling child?
 Never: for always blessings crown that posture,

Nature inclines, and half way meets that duty,
 Stooping to raise from earth the filial reverence;

For bended knees returning folding arms,
 With prayers and blessings, and paternal love.

Oh, hear me then; thus crawling on the earth—
King. Be thou advis'd, and let me go, while yet
 The light impression thou hast made remains.

Alm. No, never will I rise, nor lose this
 hold,

'Till you are mov'd and grant that he may live

King. Ha! who may live? Take heed! no more of that;
For on my soul he dies, though thou and I,
And all should follow to partake his doom.
Away, off, let me go—Call her attendants.

[*LEONORA and women return.*]

Alm. Drag me; and harrow the earth with my bare bosom;
I will not go till you have spar'd my husband.

King. Ha! What say'st thou? Husband!
Husband! damnation!
What husband! Which? Who?

Alm. He, he is my husband.

King. Poison and daggers! Who?

Alm. Oh—

[*Faints.*]

Gon. Help, support her.

Alm. Let me go, let me fall, sink deep—I'll dig,

I'll dig a grave and tear up death; I will;
I'll scrape, till I collect his rotten bones,
And clothe their nakedness with my own flesh;
Yes, I will strip off life, and we will change:
I will be death! then, though you kill my husband,

He shall be mine still, and for ever mine.

King. What husband? Whom dost thou mean?

Gon. She raves!

Alm. Oh, that I did. Osmyn, he is my husband.

King. Osmyn!

Alm. Not Osmyn, but Alphonso, is my dear
And wedded husband—Heaven, and air, and seas,
Ye winds and waves, I call ye all to witness.

King. Wilder than winds or waves thyself
dost rave.

Should I hear more, I too should catch thy madness.

Yet somewhat she must mean of dire import,
Which I'll not hear, till I am more at peace.
Watch her returning sense, and bring me word;
And look that she attempt not on her life. [*Exit.*]

Alm. Oh, stay, yet stay; hear me, I am not mad,

I would to Heaven I were—He's gone.

Gon. Have comfort.

Alm. Curs'd be that tongue that bids me be of comfort;

Curs'd my own tongue, that could not move his pity;

Curs'd these weak hands that could not hold him here;

For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

Gon. Your too excessive grief works on your fancy,

And deludes your sense. Alphonso, if living,
Is far from hence, beyond your father's power.

Alm. Hence, thou detested, ill-timed flatterer!
Source of my woes: thou and thy race be curs'd;
But doubly thou, who couldst alone have policy
And fraud to find the fatal secret out,
And know that Osmyn was Alphonso.

Gon. Ha!

Alm. Why dost thou start? What dost thou see or hear?

Was it the doleful bell, tolling for death?
Or dying groans from my Alphonso's breast?
See, see, look yonder! where a grizzl'd, pale,
And ghastly head glares by, all smear'd with blood,

Gasping as it would speak; and after, see,
Behold, a damp, dead hand has dropp'd a dagger:

I'll catch it—Hark! a voice cries murder! ah,
My father's voice! hollow it sounds, and calls
Me from the tomb—I'll follow it; for there
I shall again behold my dear Alphonso.

[*Exeunt ALMERIA and LEONORA.*]

Gon. She's greatly griev'd; nor am I less surpris'd.

Osmyn, Alphonso! No; she over-rates
My policy; I ne'er suspected it;
Nor now had known it, but from her mistake.
Her husband too! Ha! where is Garcia then?
And where the crown that should descend on him,
To grace the line of my posterity?
Hold, let me think—If I should tell the king—
Things come to this extremity: his daughter
Wedded already—What if he should yield
Knowing no remedy for what is past,
And urg'd by nature pleading for his child,
With which he seems to be already shaken.
And though I know he hates beyond the grave
Anselmo's race; yet if—that if concludes me.
To doubt, when I may be assur'd, is folly.
But how prevent the captive queen, who means
To set him free? Ay, now 'tis plain. O well
Invented tale! He was Alphonso's friend.
This subtle woman will amuse the king.
If I delay—'twill do—or better so.
One to my wish. Alonzo, thou art welcome.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. The king expects your lordship.

Gon. 'Tis no matter.

I'm not i'the way at present, good Alonzo.

Alon. If't please your lordship, I'll return and say

I have not seen you.

Gon. Do, my best Alonzo.

Yet stay, I would—but go; anon will serve—

Yet I have that requires thy speedy help.

I think thou wouldst not stop to do me service.

Alon. I am your creature.

Gon. Say, thou art my friend.

I've seen thy sword do noble execution.

Alon. All that it can your lordship shall command.

Gon. Thanks; and I take thee at thy word.
Thou'st seen,

Amongst the followers of the captive queen,
Dumb men, who make their meaning known by signs.

Alon. I have, my lord.

Gon. Couldst thou procure, with speed
And privacy, the wearing garb of one
Of those, though purchas'd by his death, I'd give
Thee such reward, as should exceed thy wish.

Alon. Conclude it done. Where shall I wait
your lordship?

Gon. At my apartment. Use thy utmost diligence;
And say I've not been seen—Haste, good Alonzo.
[*Exit ALONZO.*]

So, this can hardly fail. Alphonso slain,
The greatest obstacle is then remov'd.
Almeria widow'd, yet again may wed;
And I yet fix the crown on Garcia's head. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room of State.

Enter KING, PEREZ, and ALONZO.

King. Not to be found! In an ill hour he's absent.

None, say you? none! What, not the favourite eunuch?

Nor she herself, nor any of her mutes, Have yet requir'd admittance?

Per. None, my lord.

King. Is Osmyn so dispos'd as I commanded?

Per. Fast bound in double chains, and at full length

He lies supine on earth: with as much ease She might remove the centre of this earth, As loose the rivets of his bonds.

King. 'Tis well.

[*A Mute appears, and seeing the KING, retires.*]

Ha! stop, and seize that mute; Alonzo, follow him.

Entering he met my eyes, and starting back, Frighted, and fumbling one hand in his bosom, As to conceal th' importance of his errand.

[*ALONZO follows him, and returns with a paper.*]

Alon. A bloody proof of obstinate fidelity?

King. What dost thou mean?

Alon. Soon as I seiz'd the man,

He snatch'd from out his bosom this—and strove, With rash and greedy haste, at once, to cram The morsel down his throat. I caught his arm, And hardly wrench'd his hand to wring it from him:

Which done, he drew a poignard from his side, And on the instant plung'd it in his breast.

King. Remove the body thence, ere Zara see it.

Alon. I'll be so bold to borrow his attire.

'Twill quit me of my promise to Gonsalez.

[*Aside. Exit.*]

Per. Whate'er it is, the king's complexion turns.

King. How's this? My mortal foe beneath my roof!

[*Having read the letter.*]

Oh, give me patience, all ye powers! No, rather

Give me new rage, implacable revenge, And trebled fury—Ha! who's there?

Per. My lord.

King. Hence, slave! how dar'st thou 'bide to watch and pry

Into how poor a thing a king descends, How like thyself, when passion treads him down?

Ha! stir not on thy life; for thou wert fix'd, And planted here, to see me gorge this bait, And lash against the hook—By Heaven, you're all

Rank traitors! thou art with the rest combin'd; Thou knew'st that Osmyn was Alphonso; knew'st

My daughter privately with him conferr'd; And wert the spy and pander to their meeting.

Per. By all that's holy, I'm amaz'd—

King. Thou liest.

Thou art accomplice too with Zara; here Where she sets down—*Still will I set thee free.*

[*Reads.*]

That somewhere is repeated—I have power O'er them that are thy guards—Mark that, thou traitor.

Per. It was your majesty's command I should Obey her order.—

King. [Reading.]—*And still will I set thee free, Alphonso.*—Hell! curs'd, curs'd Alphonso!

False and perfidious Zara! Strumpet daughter! Away, begone, thou feeble boy, fond love;

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All nature, softness, pity, and compassion.

This hour I throw ye off, and entertain

Fell hate within my breast, revenge, and gall.

By Heaven, I'll meet and counterwork this treachery.

Hark thee, villain, traitor—answer me, slave.

Per. My service has not merited those titles.

King. Dar'st thou reply? Take that—thy service! thine! [*Strikes him.*]

What's thy whole life, thy soul, thy all, to my One moment's ease? Hear my command: and look

That thou obey, or horror on thy head: Drench me thy dagger in Alphonso's heart.

Why dost thou start? Resolve, or—

Per. Sir, I will.

King. 'Tis well—that when she comes to set him free,

His teeth may grin, and mock at her remorse.

[*PER. going.*]

—Stay thee—I've farther thought—I'll add to this,

And give her eyes yet greater disappointment:

When thou hast ended him, bring me his robe

And let the cell where she'll expect to see him

Be darken'd, so as to amuse the sight.

I'll be conducted thither—mark me well—

There with his turban, and his robe array'd,

And laid along, as he now lies, supine,

I shall convict her, to her face, of falsehood.

When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand,

And breathe her sighs upon my lips for his;

Sudden I'll start, and dash her with her guilt.

But see, she comes. I'll shun th' encounter; thou

Follow me, and give heed to my direction.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zar. The mute not yet return'd! ha! 'twas the king,

The king that parted hence! frowning he went; His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darting down Their red and angry beams; as if his sight Would, like the raging dog-star, scorch the earth,

And kindle ruin in its course. Dost think He saw me?

Sel. Yes; but then, as if he thought His eyes had err'd, he hastily recall'd Th' imperfect look, and sternly turn'd away.

Zar. Shun me, when seen! I fear thou hast undone me.

Thy shallow artifice begets suspicion, And, like a cobweb veil, but thinly shades The face of thy design; alone disguising What should have ne'er been seen. Imperfect mischief!

Thou, like the adder, venomous and deaf, Hast stung the traveller, and after hear'st Not his pursuing voice; even when thou think'st To hide, the rustling leaves and bended grass Confess and point the path which thou hast crept. Oh, fate of fools! officious in contriving; In executing, puzzled, lame, and lost.

Sel. Avert it, Heaven, that you should ever suffer

For my defect; or that the means which I

Devis'd to serve, should ruin your design.

Prescience is Heaven's alone, not given to man,

If I have fail'd, in what, as being man

I needs must fail; impute not as a crime
My nature's want, but punish nature in me;
I plead not for a pardon and to live,
But to be punish'd and forgiven. Here, strike;
I bare my breast to meet your just revenge.

Zar. I have not leisure now to take so poor
A forfeit as thy life; somewhat of high
And more important fate requires my thought.
When I've concluded on myself, if I
Think fit, I'll leave thee my command to die.
Regard me well, and dare not to reply
To what I give in charge; for I'm resolv'd.
Give order that the two remaining mutes
Attend me instantly, with each a bowl
Of such ingredients mix'd, as will with speed
Benumb the living faculties, and give
Most easy and inevitable death.
Yes, Osmyn, yes; be Osmyn or Alphonso,
I'll give thee freedom, if thou dar'st be free:
Such liberty as I embrace myself
Thou shalt partake. Since fates no more afford;
I can but die with thee, to keep my word. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Opening, shows the Prison.

Enter GONSALEZ, disguised like a Mute, with a Dagger.

Gon. Nor centinel nor guard! the doors un-
barr'd!
And all as still as at the noon of night!
Sure death already has been busy here.
There lies my way; that door too is unlock'd.
[*Looking in.*
Ha! sure he sleeps—all's dark within, save what
A lamp, that feebly lifts a sickly flame,
By fits reveals—his face seems turn'd, to favour
Th' attempt; I'll steal and do it unperceiv'd.
What noise! Somebody coming? is't Alonzo?
Nobody. Sure he'll wait without—I would
'Twere done—I'll crawl and sting him to the
heart,
Then cast my skin, and leave it there to answer it.
[*Goes in.*]

Enter GARCIA and ALONZO.

Gar. Where, where, Alonzo, where's my fa-
ther? where
The king? Confusion! all is on the rout!
All's lost, all ruin'd by surprise and treachery.
Where, where is he? Why dost thou mislead
me?
Alon. My lord, he entered but a moment since,
And could not pass me unperceiv'd—What, ho!
My lord! my lord! What, ho! my lord Gon-
salez!

Enter GONSALEZ, bloody.

Gon. Perdition choke your clamours—whence
this rudeness?
Garcia!
Gar. Perdition, slavery, and death,
Are entering now our doors. Where is the king?
What means this blood, and why this face of
horror?
Gon. No matter—give me first to know the
cause
Of these your rash and ill-timed exclamations.
Gar. The eastern gate is to the foe betray'd,
Who, but for heaps of slain that choke the passage,

Had enter'd long ere now, and borne down all
Before 'em, to the palace-walls. Unless
The king in person animate our men,
Granada's lost; and to confirm this fear,
The traitor Perez, and the captive Moor,
Are through a postern fled, and join'd the foe.

Gon. Would all were false as that; for whom
you call

The Moor, is dead. That Osmyn was Alphonso;
In whose heart's blood this poignard yet is warm.

Gar. Impossible! for Osmyn was, while flying,
Pronounc'd aloud by Perez for Alphonso.

Gon. Enter that chamber, and convince your
eyes,
How much report has wrong'd your easy faith.

[*GARCIA goes in.*
Alon. My lord, for certain truth, Perez is fled;
And has declar'd the cause of his revolt
Was to revenge a blow the king had given him.

Gar. [*Returning.*] Ruin and horror! Oh,
heart-wounding sight!

Gon. What says my son? What ruin? Ha!
what horror?

Gar. Blasted my eyes, and speechless be my
tongue,

Rather than or to see, or to relate
This deed—Oh, dire mistake! Oh, fatal blow!
The King!—

Gon. *Alon.* The king!
Gar. Dead, weltering, drown'd in blood.
See, see, attir'd like Osmyn, where he lies.

[*They look in.*
Oh, whence, or how, or wherefore was this done?
But what imports the manner or the cause
Nothing remains to do, or to require,
But that we all should turn our swords against
Ourselves, and expiate with our own, his blood.

Gon. Oh, wretch! Oh, cursed, rash, deluded
fool!

On me, on me turn your avenging swords.

I, who have spilt my royal master's blood,
Should make atonement by a death as horrid,
And fall beneath the hand of my own son.

Gar. Ha! what! atone this murder with a
greater!

The horror of that thought has damp'd my rage.
The earth already groans to bear this deed;
Oppress her not, nor think to stain her face
With more unnatural blood. Murder my fa-
ther!

Better with this to rip up my own bowels,
And bathe it to the hilt in far less damnable
Self-murder.

Gon. Oh, my son! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondness these ills arose.

For thee I've been ambitious, base, and bloody:
For thee I've plung'd into this sea of sin;

Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,
While t'other bore the crown (to wreathe thy
brow)

Whose weight has sunk me, ere I reach'd the
shore.

Gar. Fatal ambition! Hark! the foe is enter'd:
[*Shout.*]

The shrillness of that shout speaks them at
hand.

We have no time to search into the cause
Of this surprising and most fatal error.

What's to be done? the king's death known,
would strike

The few remaining soldiers with despair,
And make them yield to mercy of the conqueror,

Alon. My lord, I've thought how to conceal the body.

Require me not to tell the means, till done,
Lest you forbid what you may then approve.

[*Goes in. Shout.*]

Gon. They shout again! Whate'er he means to do,

'Twere fit the soldiers were amus'd with hopes;
And in the mean time fed with expectation
To see the king in person at their head.

Gar. Were it a truth, I fear 'tis now too late.
But I'll omit no care, nor haste; and try,
Or to repel their force, or bravely die. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter ALONZO.

Gon. What hast thou done, Alonzo?

Alon. Such a deed
As but an hour ago I'd not have done,
Though for the crown of universal empire.
But what are kings reduc'd to common clay?
Or what can wound the dead?—I've from the body

Sever'd the head, and in an obscure corner
Dispos'd it, muffled in the mute's attire,
Leaving to view of them who enter next,
Alone the undistinguishable trunk:
Which may be still mistaken by the guards
For Osmyn, if in seeking for the king,
They chance to find it.

Gon. 'Twas an act of horror:
And of a piece with this day's dire misdeeds.
But 'tis no time to ponder or repent.
Haste thee, Alonzo, haste thee hence with speed,
To aid my son. I'll follow with the last
Reserve to reinforce his arms: at least,
I shall make good and shelter his retreat.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter ZARA, followed by SELIM and two Mutes, bearing the Bowls.

Zar. Silence and solitude are every where.
Through all the gloomy ways and iron doors
That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
Is seen or heard. A dreadful din was wont
To grate the sense, when enter'd here, from groans
And howls of slaves, condemn'd; from clink of chains,

And crash of rusty bars and creaking hinges:
And ever and anon the sight was dash'd
With frightful faces, and the meagre looks
Of grim and ghastly executioners.
Yet more this stillness terrifies my soul,
Than did that scene of complicated horrors.
It may be that the cause of this my errand
And purpose, being chang'd from life to death,
Has also wrought this chilling change of temper.
Or does my heart bode more? What can it more
Than death?

Let 'em set down the bowls, and warn Alphonso
That I am here—so. You return and find

[*Mutes go in.*]

The king; tell him what he requir'd, I've done,
And wait his coming to approve the deed.

[*Exit SELIM.*]

Enter Mutes.

Zar. What have you seen? Ha! wherefore
stare you thus,
[*The Mutes return and look affrighted.*]

With haggard eyes? Why are your arms across?
Your heavy and desponding heads hung down?
Why is't you more than speak in these sad
signs?

Give me more ample knowledge of this mourning
[*They open the scene, she perceives the body.*]
Ha! prostrate! bloody! headless! Oh—I'm lost.
Oh, Osmyn! Oh, Alphonso! Cruel fate!
Cruel, cruel, oh, more than killing object!
I came prepar'd to die, and see thee die—
Nay, came prepar'd myself to give thee death—
But cannot bear to find thee thus, my Osmyn—
Oh, this accurs'd, this base, this treacherous
king!

Enter SELIM.

Sel. I've sought in vain, for no where can the
king

Be found—

Zar. Get thee to hell, and seek him there.

[*Stabs him.*]

His hellish rage had wanted means to act,
But for thy fatal and pernicious counsel.

Sel. You thought it better then—but I'm re-
warded.

The mute you sent, by some mischance was seen,
And forc'd to yield your letter with his life;
I found the dead and bloody body strip'd—
My tongue falters, and my voice fails—I sink—
Drink not the poison—for Alphonso is— [Dies.]

Zar. As thou art now—and I shall quickly be.
'Tis not that he is dead: for 'twas decreed
We both should die. Nor is't that I survive;
I have a certain remedy for that.
But, oh, he died, unknowing in my heart.
He knew I lov'd, but knew not to what height,
Nor that I meant to fall before his eyes,
A martyr and a victim to my vows.

Insensible of this last proof he's gone;
Yet fate alone can rob his mortal part
Of sense; his soul still sees and knows each pur-
pose

And fix'd event of my persisting faith.
Then wherefore do I pause? give me the bowl.

[*A Mute kneels, and gives one of the bowls.*]

Hover a moment, yet, thou gentle spirit,
Soul of my love, and I will wait thy flight.
This to our mutual bliss, when join'd above.

[*Drinks.*]

Oh, friendly draught, already in my heart,
Cold, cold; my veins are icicles and frost.
I'll creep into his bosom, lay me there;
Cover us close—or I shall chill his breast,
And fright him from my arms—See, see, he slides
Still farther from me; look he hides his face,
I cannot feel it—quite beyond my reach,—
Oh, now he's gone, and all is dark— [Dies.]

[*The Mutes kneel, and mourn over her.*]

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Alm. Oh, let me seek him in this horrid cell:
For in the tomb, or prison I alone
Must hope to find him.

Leon. Heavens! what dismal scene
Of death is this! The eunuch Selim slain!

Alm. Show me; for I am come in search at
death,

But want a guide, for tears have dimm'd my sight.

Leon. Alas! a little farther, and behold
Zara all pale and dead! two frightful men,

Who seem the murderers, kneel weeping by;
Feeling remorse too late for what they've done.
But, oh, forbear—lift up your eyes no more;
But haste away, fly from this fatal place,
Where miseries are multiplied; return,
Return, and look not on; for there's a dagger
Ready to stab the sight, and make your eyes
Rain blood——

Alm. Oh, I foreknow, foresee that object.
Is it at last then so? Is he then dead?
What, dead at last? quite, quite, for ever dead?
There, there, I see him; there he lies, the blood
Yet bubbling from his wounds—Oh, more than
savage!

Had they or hearts or eyes that did this deed?
Could eyes endure to guide such cruel hands?
Are not my eyes guilty alike with theirs,
That thus can gaze, and yet not turn to stone?
—I do not weep! The springs of tears are
dried;

And of a sudden I am calm, as if
All things were well; and yet my husband's
murder'd!

Yes, yes, I know to mourn! I'll sluice this heart,
The source of wo, and let the torrent loose.
—Those men have left to weep! they look on
me!

I hope they murder all on whom they look.
Behold me well: your bloody hands have err'd,
And wrongfully have slain those innocents:
I am the sacrifice design'd to bleed,
And come prepar'd to yield my throat——They
shake

Their heads in sign of grief and innocence!
[*They point at the bowl on the ground.*]
And point! What mean they? Ha! a cup!
Oh, well,

I understand what medicine has been here.
Oh, noble thirst! yet greedy, to drink all——
—Oh, for another draught of death——What
mean they?

[*They point at the other cup.*]
Ha! point again! 'tis there, and full, I hope.
Thanks to the liberal hand that fill'd thee thus;
I'll drink my glad acknowledgment——

Leon. Oh, hold,
For mercy's sake, upon my knee I beg——

Alm. With thee the kneeling world should beg
in vain.

Seest thou not there? Behold who prostrate
lies,

And pleads against thee; who shall then prevail?
Yet I will take a cold and parting leave
From his pale lips; I'll kiss him ere I drink,
Lest the rank juice should blister on my mouth,
And stain the colour of my last adieu.

Horror! a headless trunk! nor lips, nor face,
[*Coming near the body, starts, and lets
fall the cup.*]

But spouting veins, and mangled flesh! Oh, oh!

*Enter ALPHONSO, HELI, PEREZ, with GARCIA
Prisoner. Guards and Attendants.*

Alph. Away, stand off, where is she? let me
fly,
Save her from death, and snatch her to my heart.

Alm. Oh!

Alph. Forbear! my arms alone shall hold
her up,
Warm her to life, and wake her into gladness.
Oh, let me talk to thy reviving sense

The words of joy and peace; warm thy cold
beauties

With the new flushing ardour of my cheek;
Into thy lips pour the soft trickling balm
Of cordial sighs, and re-inspire thy bosom
With the breath of love. Shine, awake, *Al-*
meria,

Give a new birth to thy long-shaded eyes,
Then double on the day reflected light.

Alm. Where am I? Heaven! what does this
dream intend?

Alph. Oh, may'st thou never dream of less
delight,
Nor ever wake to less substantial joys.

Alm. Given me again from death! Oh, all ye
powers,

Confirm this miracle! Can I believe
My sight against my sight? and shall I trust
That sense, which in one instant shows him
dead

And living?—Yes, I will; I've been abus'd
With apparitions and affrighting phantoms:
This is my lord, my life, my only husband,
I have him now, and we no more will part.

My father, too, shall have compassion——

Alph. Oh, my heart's comfort, 'tis not given to
this

Frail life to be entirely bless'd. E'en now,
In this extremest joy my soul can taste,
Yet I am dash'd to think that thou must weep;
Thy father fell where he design'd my death.
Gonsalez and Alonzo, both of wounds
Expiring, have, with their last breath, confess'd
The just decrees of Heaven, which on them-
selves

Has turn'd their own most bloody purposes,
Nay, I must grant, 'tis fit you should be thus——

[*She weeps.*]
Let 'em remove the body from her sight.

Ill-fated Zara! Ha! a cup! Alas!

Thy error then is plain! but I were flint
Not to o'erflow in tribute to thy memory
Oh, Garcia!——

Whose virtue has renounc'd thy father's crimes,
Seest thou how just the hand of Heaven has
been?

Let us, who through our innocence survive,
Still in the paths of honour persevere,
And not from past or present ills despair;
For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds;
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ÉPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY ALMERIA.

THE tragedy thus done, I am, you know,
No more a princess, but in *statu quo*;
And now as unconcern'd this mourning wear,
As if indeed a widow or an heir.

I've leisure, now, to mark your several faces,
And know each critic by his sour grimaces,
To poison plays, I see them where they sit,
Scatter'd like ratsbane up and down the pit;
While others watch, like parish searchers hir'd,
To tell of what disease the play expir'd.

Oh, with what joy they run to spread the news
Of a damn'd poet and departed muse!

<p>But if he 'scape, with what regret they're seiz'd ! And how they're disappointed, when they're Critics to plays for the same end resort, [pleas'd ! That surgeons wait on trials in a court : For innocence condemn'd they've no respect, Provided they've a body to dissect. As Sussex men, that dwell upon the shore, Look out when storms arise, and billows roar, Devoutly praying, with uplifted hands, That some well-laden ship may strike the sands,</p>	<p>To whose rich cargo they may make pretence, And fatten on the spoils of Providence : So critics throng to see a new play split, And thrive and prosper on the wrecks of wit. Small hope our poet from these prospects draws ; And therefore to the fair commends his cause. Your tender hearts to mercy are inclin'd, With whom he hopes this play will favour find, Which was an offering to the sex design'd.</p>
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THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GARRICK AND COLMAN.

REMARKS.

THIS comedy was produced at Drury-lane Theatre early in 1766, being the joint production of Garrick and the elder Colman. It is recorded by Davies, that no dramatic piece, since the days of Beaumont and Fletcher, had been written by two authors, in which wit, fancy, and humour, were so happily blended. The part of Lord Ogleby, principally written by Mr. Garrick, was intended for himself; but in consequence of his increasing infirmities, it devolved on Mr. King, who gave it that marked and brilliant originality which distinguished his acting. From the traits of character throughout this play, may be derived much useful reflection.—The mercenary maxims and views of Sterling, the vulgar consequence of Mrs. Heidelberg, and the meanness of Miss Sterling; are well set off by the solitudes of the amiable Fanny and her husband; the eccentricities of Lord Ogleby and his Swiss non-descript; and the agreeable variety of the subordinate characters.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY LANE.

COVENT GARDEN, 1818.

LORD OGLEBY,.....	Mr. Lovegrove.....	Mr. W. Farren.
SIR JOHN MELVIL,.....	Mr. Penley.....	Mr. Abbott.
STERLING,.....	Mr. Downton.....	Mr. Fawcett.
LOVEWELL,.....	Mr. Wallack.....	Mr. C. Kemble.
SERGEANT FLOWER,.....	Mr. Carr.....	Mr. Claremont.
TRAVERSE,.....	Mr. Maddocks.....	Mr. Brook.
TRUEMAN,.....	Mr. Fisher.....	Mr. Atkins.
CANTON,.....	Mr. Wewitzer.....	Mr. Farley.
BRUSH,.....	Mr. Harley.....	Mr. Jones.
MRS. HEIDELBERG,.....	Mrs. Sparks.....	Mrs. Davenport,
MISS STERLING,.....	Mrs. Mardyn.....	Mrs. C. Kemble.
FANNY,.....	Mrs. Edwin.....	Miss Brunton.
BETTY,.....	Mrs. Davison.....	Mrs. Sterling.
CHAMBERMAID,.....	Mrs. Scott.....	Miss Green.
TRUSTY,.....	Mrs. Maddocks.....	Mrs. Coates.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in STERLING's House.

Enter MISS FANNY, and BETTY, meeting.

Bet. [*Running in.*] Ma'am! Miss Fanny! Ma'am!

Fan. What's the matter, Betty?

Bet. Oh la! Ma'am! as sure as I am alive, here is your husband—I saw him crossing the court-yard in his boots.

Fan. I'm glad to hear it.—But pray now, my dear Betty, be cautious. Don't mention that word again on any account. You know we have agreed never to drop any expressions of that sort, for fear of an accident.

Bet. Dear Ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth than I am. Though I say it, I am as secret as the grave—and if it is never told till I tell it, it may remain untold till doomsday for Betty.

Fan. I know you are faithful—but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

Bet. Very true, Ma'am! and yet I vow and protest there's more plague than pleasure with a secret; especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

Fan. Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then I hope you may mention it to any body.—Mr. Lovewell will acquaint the family with the nature of our situation as soon as possible.

Bet. The sooner the better, I believe; for if he does not tell it, there's a little tell-tale, I know of, will come and tell it for him.

Fan. Fy, Betty!

[*Blushes.*]

Bet. Ah! you may well blush. But you're not so sick, and so pale, and so wan, and so many qualms—

Fan. Have done! I shall be quite angry with you.

Bet. Angry—Bless the dear puppet! I am sure I shall love it as much as if it was my own.—I meant no harm, Heaven knows.

Fan. Well, say no more of this—it makes me uneasy.—All I have to ask of you is, to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter till we disclose it to the family ourselves.

Bet. Me reveal it!—If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world—and as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother.—But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evening.—For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as—

Fan. See there now again! Pray be careful.

Bet. Well, well—nobody hears me.—Man and wife—I'll say no more.—What I tell you is very true, for all that—

Love. [*Within.*] William!

Bet. Hark! I hear your husband—

Fan. What!

Bet. I say here comes Mr. Lovewell.—Mind the caution I give you—I'll be whipped now if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. However, if you choose it, it's nothing at all to me—as you sow, so you must reap—as you brew, so you must bake.—I'll e'en slip down the back stairs, and leave you together. [*Exit.*]

Fan. I see, I see, I shall never have a moment's ease till our marriage is made public. New distresses crowd in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health, and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. My love!—How's this?—In tears?—Indeed this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own, be comforted! Why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity?

Fan. Oh, Mr. Lovewell, the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me. I walk about the house like a guilty wretch: I imagine myself the object of the suspicion of the whole family, and am under the perpetual terrors of a shameful detection.

Love. Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy.—To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling, is the continual employment of my thoughts. Every thing now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a discovery; and I have no doubt of its concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

Fan. End how it will, I am resolved it shall end soon—very soon. I would not live another week in this agony of mind, to be mistress of the universe.

Love. Do not be too violent neither. Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion!—I have brought letters from Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil to Mr. Sterling. They will be here this evening—and I dare say within this hour.

Fan. I am sorry for it.

Love. Why so?

Fan. No matter—only let us disclose our marriage immediately!

Love. As soon as possible.

Fan. But directly.

Love. In a few days, you may depend on it.

Fan. To-night—or to-morrow morning.

Love. That, I fear, will be impracticable.

Fan. Nay, but you must.

Love. Must! why?

Fan. Indeed you must—I have the most alarming reasons for it.

Love. Alarming, indeed! for they alarm me, even before I am acquainted with them—What are they?

Fan. I cannot tell you.

Love. Not tell me?

Fan. Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with every thing.

Love. Sorry they are coming!—Must be discovered!—What can this mean? Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

Fan. Do not disturb yourself with conjectures—but rest assured, that though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery, be it what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

Love. You put me upon the rack—I would do any thing to make you easy.—But you know your father's temper—Money (you will excuse my frankness) is the spring of all his actions, which nothing but the idea of acquiring nobility or magnificence, can ever make him forego—and these he thinks his money will purchase.—You know too, your aunt's, Mrs. Heidelberg's, notions of the splendour of high life; her contempt for every thing that does not relish of what she calls quality; and that from the vast fortune in her hands, by her late husband, she absolutely governs Mr. Sterling and the whole family. Now if they should come to the knowledge of this affair too abruptly, they might perhaps be incensed beyond all hopes of reconciliation.

Fan. Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

Love. But in the mean time make yourself easy.

Fan. As easy as I can, I will.—We had better not remain together any longer at present.—

Enter STERLING, as she is going.

Ster. Hey-day! who have we got here?

Fan. [*Confused.*] Mr. Lovewell, Sir.

Ster. And where are you going, hussy?

Fan. To my sister's chamber, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Ster. Ah, Lovewell! What! always getting my foolish girl yonder into a corner?—Well—well—let us but once see her eldest sister fast married to Sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

Love. Would to Heaven, Sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation!

Ster. Yourself! eh, Lovewell?

Love. With your pleasure, Sir.

Ster. Mighty well!

Love. And I flatter myself, that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to Miss Fanny.

Ster. Better and better!

Love. And if I could but obtain your consent, Sir—

Ster. What! you marry Fanny!—no—no—that will never do, Lovewell—You're a good boy, to be sure—I have a great value for you—but can't think of you for a son-in-law.—There's no stuff in the case; no money, Lovewell!

Love. My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are but moderate; but though not equal to splendour, sufficient to keep us above distress.—Add to which, that I hope by diligence to increase it—and have love, honour—

Ster. But not the stuff, Lovewell!—Add one little round 0 to the sum total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me.—You know I've a regard for you—would do any thing to serve you—any thing on the footing of friendship—but—

Love. If you think me worthy of your friendship, Sir, be assured that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

Ster. Pshaw! pshaw! that's another thing, you know.—Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

Love. But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

Ster. Inclinations! why you would not persuade me that the girl is in love with you—eh, Lovewell?

Love. I cannot absolutely answer for Miss Fanny, Sir; but am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life depends entirely upon her.

Ster. Why, indeed, now if your kinsman, Lord Ogleby, would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible—No, no,—'twill never do—I must hear no more of this—Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

Love. [*Hesitating.*] I am afraid, Sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you, if I did promise you.

Ster. Why, you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

Love. Marry her, Sir! [*Confused.*]

Ster. Ay, marry her, Sir!—I know very well, that a warm speech or two from such a dangerous young spark as you are, would go much further towards persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers, or mothers, or uncles, or aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's affections, and destroy the peace of my family in that manner.—I must insist on it, that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

Love. Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—beg, Sir—Pray, Sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

Ster. Promise then, that you will carry this matter no further without my approbation.

Love. You may depend on it, Sir, that it shall go no further.

Ster. Well—well—that's enough—I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you.—Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense!—What's doing in town?—Any news upon 'Change?

Love. Nothing material.

Ster. Have you seen the currants, the soap, and madeira, safe in the warehouse? Have you compared the goods with the invoice and bills of lading, and are they all right?

Love. They are, Sir.

Ster. And how are stocks?

Love. Fell one and a half this morning.

Ster. Well, well—some good news from America, and they'll be up again.—But how are Lord Ogleby, and Sir John Melvil?—when are we to expect them?

Love. Very soon, Sir. I came on purpose to bring you their commands. Here are letters from both of them. [*Giving letters.*]

Ster. Let me see—let me see—'Slife, how his lordship's letter is perfumed!—It takes my breath away. [*Opening it.*] And French paper too!—with a slippery gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes.

—*My dear Mr. Sterling.*—[*Reading.*]—Mercy on me! his lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercise.—But how's this?—Eh!—*With you to-night—Lawyers to-morrow morning*—To-night!—that's sudden, indeed—Where's my sister Heidelberg? She should know of this immediately.—Here, John! Harry! Thomas! [*Calling the Servants.*] Harkye, Lovewell!

Love. Sir.

Ster. Mind now, how I'll entertain his lordship and Sir John.—We'll show your fellows at the other end of the town how we live in the city—They shall eat gold—and drink gold—and lie in gold.—Here, cook! butler! [*Calling.*] What signifies your birth, and education, and titles!—Money, money!—that's the stuff that makes the great man in this country.

Love. Very true, Sir.

Ster. True, Sir!—Why then have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business.—Where are these fellows? John! Thomas!—[*Calling.*] Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course—Ah! Lovewell! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe.—'Slife, man, a rich English merchant may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob.—Where are all my rascals?—Here, William!—[*Exit, calling.*]

Love. So—as I suspected.—Quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with great displeasure.—What's best to be done?—Let me see—Suppose I get Sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to Lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. I can open my mind also more freely to Sir John. He told me, when I left him in town, that he had something of consequence to communicate, and that I could be of use to him. I am glad of it: for the confidence he reposes in me, and the service I may do him, will ensure me his good offices.—Poor Fanny! it hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause adds to my anxiety.—Something must be done upon her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—MISS STERLING'S Dressing Room.

MISS STERLING and FANNY, discovered.

Miss S. O, my dear sister, say no more!—This is downright hypocrisy.—You shall never convince me that you don't envy me beyond measure.

—Well, after all, it is extremely natural—It is impossible to be angry with you.

Fan. Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

Miss S. And so you really pretend not to envy me?

Fan. Not in the least.

Miss S. And you don't in the least wish that you was just in my situation?

Fan. No, indeed, I don't. Why should I?

Miss S. Why should you? What! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title—But I had forgot—There's that dear, sweet creature, Mr. Lovewell, in the case.—You would not break your faith with your true-love now for the world, I warrant you.

Fan. Mr. Lovewell!—always Mr. Lovewell!—Lord, what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

Miss S. Pretty peevish soul!—O, my dear, grave, romantic sister!—a perfect philosopher in petticoats! Love and a cottage!—eh, Fanny—Ah, give me indifference and a coach and six!

Fan. And why not a coach and six without the indifference?—But pray when is this happy marriage of yours to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

Miss S. In a day or two—I cannot tell exactly—Oh, my dear sister!—I must mortify her a little: [*Aside.*] I know you have a pretty taste. Pray give me your opinion of my jewels. How do you like the style of this *esclavage*? [*Showing jewels.*]

Fan. Extremely handsome indeed, and well fancied.

Miss S. What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father set round with diamonds to one, and Sir John's to the other.—And this pair of ear-rings, set transparent!—Here, the tops, you see, will take off, to wear in a morning, or in an undress—how d'ye like them? [*Shows jewels.*]

Fan. Very much, I assure you.—Bless me, sister, you have a prodigious quantity of jewels—you'll be the very queen of diamonds.

Miss S. Ha, ha, ha! very well, my dear!—I shall be as fine as a little queen indeed.—I have a bouquet to come home to-morrow—made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts—jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixed—the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life!—The jeweller says I shall set out with as many diamonds as any body in town, except Lady Brilliant, and Polly What-d'ye-call-it, Lord Squander's kept mistress.

Fan. But what are your wedding-clothes, sister?

Miss S. O, white and silver, to be sure, you know.—I bought them at Sir Joseph Lutestring's, and sat above an hour in the parlour behind the shop, consulting Lady Lutestring about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

Fan. Fy, sister! how could you be so abominably provoking?

Miss S. Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knight's ladies.—Did you ever observe the airs of Lady Lutestring, dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown-whist at Haberdasher's hall—whilst the civil, smirking Sir Joseph, with a snug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new cut yew hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?

Fan. Indeed, indeed, sister, this is too much—If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a

bye-word in the city—You must never venture on the inside of Temple-bar again.

Miss S. Never do I desire it—never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor-square—far—far—from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candle-wick, and Farringdon Without and Within!—my heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at court!—gilt chariot!—piebald horses!—laced liveries!—and then the whispers buzzing round the circle—“Who is that young lady? Who is she?” “Lady Melvil, Ma'am!”—Lady Melvil!—My ears tingle at the sound.—And then at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking—“Any news upon 'Change?”—to cry, “Well, Sir John! anything new from Arthur's?”—or to say to some other woman of quality, “Was your ladyship at the Duchess of Rubber's last night?—Did you call in at Lady Thunder's?—In the immensity of crowd, I swear I did not see you—Scarce a soul at the opera last Saturday—Shall I see you at Carlisle-house next Thursday?”—Oh, the *beau monde*! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world.

Fan. And so, in the midst of all this happiness, you have no compassion for me—no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

Miss S. [*Affectedly.*] You?—You're above pity.—You would not change conditions with me.—You're over head and ears in love, you know;—Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortably, I dare say.—He will mind his business—you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family—and once in a season, perhaps, you'll sit together in a front box at a benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing master's, you know—and perhaps I may meet you in the summer, with some other citizens, at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations.—You sha'n't want my countenance, I assure you.

Fan. Oh, you're too kind, sister!

Enter MRS. HEIDELBERG.

Mrs. H. [*At entering.*] Here this evening!—I vow and perstew we shall scarce have time to provide for them—Oh, my dear! [*To Miss Sterling.*] I am glad to see you are not quite in a *dish-abbille*. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil will be hear to-night.

Miss S. To-night, Ma'am?

Mrs. H. Yes, my dear, to-night.—Oh, put on a smarter cap, and change these ordinary ruffles!—Lord, I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian lutestring.—Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper?

Enter TRUSTY.

Oh, here, Trusty! do you know that people of quality are expected this evening?

Trus. Yes, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—Do you be sure now that every thing is done in the most genteel manner—and to the honour of the family.

Trus. Yes, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—but mind what I say to you.

Trus. Yes, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. His lordship is to lie in the chintz bed-chamber—d'ye hear?—and Sir John in the blue damask room—his lordship's valet-de-chamb in the opposite—

Trus. But Mr. Lovewell is come down—and you know that's his room, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—well—Mr. Lovewell may make shift—or get a bed at the George.—But harkye, Trusty!

Trus. Ma'am!

Mrs. H. Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. Unpaper the curtains, take the kivers off the couch and the chairs, and, do you hear—take the china dolls out of my closet, and put them on the mantle-piece immediately—

Trus. Yes, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. And mind, as soon as his lordship comes in, be sure you set all their heads a nodding.

Trus. Yes, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Begone, then! fly, this instant!—Where's my brother Sterling?

Trus. Talking to the butler, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Very well. [*Exit TRUSTY.*] Miss Fanny, I pertest I did not see you before—Lord, child, what's the matter with you?

Fan. With me! nothing, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Bless me! Why your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colours, I vow and pertest.—And then you have drest yourself as loose and as big—I declare there is not such a thing to be seen now, as a young woman with a fine waist—You all make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child! You know the quality will be here by and by. Go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. [*Exit FANNY.*] She is gone away in tears—absolutely crying, I vow and pertest.—This ridiculous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect natural of the girl.

Miss S. Poor soul! she can't help it.

Mrs. H. Well, my dear! Now I shall have an opportunity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me concerning Sir John Melvil's behaviour to you.

Miss S. Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness.—But indeed, Ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that Sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks, and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family! I have heard of flames and darts, but Sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

Mrs. H. Oh fy, my dear! I am perfectly ashamed of you. That's so like the notions of your poor sister! What you complain of as coldness and indifference, is nothing but the extreme gentility of his address, an exact picture of the manners of quality.

Miss S. O, he is the very mirror of complaisance; full of formal bows and set speeches! I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him.

Mrs. H. Jealous! I say, jealous indeed—Jealous of who, pray?

Miss S. My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favourite than I am; and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

Mrs. H. Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, cannot distinguish between the genteel and the vulgar part of the family? Between you and your sister, for instance—or me and my brother? Be advised by me, child; it is all politeness and good breeding. Nobody knows the quality better than I do.

Miss S. In my mind, the old lord, his uncle, was ten times more gallantry about him than Sir

John. He is full of attentions to the ladies, and smiles, and grins, and leers, and ogles, and fills every wrinkle of his old wizened face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweetheart.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. No fish? Why the pond was dragged but yesterday morning.—There's carp and tench in the boat.—Plague on't, if that dog Lovewell had any thought, he would have brought down a turbot, or some of the land-carriage mackarel.

Mrs. H. Lord, brother, I am afraid his lordship and Sir John will not arrive while it is light.

Ster. I warrant you.—But pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dressed to-morrow, and some venison—and let the gardener cut some pine-apples—and get out some ice.—I'll answer for wine, I warrant you—I'll give them such a glass of champagne as they never drank in their lives—no, not at a duke's table.

Mrs. H. Pray, now, brother, mind how you behave. I am always in a fright about you with people of quality. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff: and that will keep you awake—And don't burst out with your horrible loud horse-laugh. It is monstrous vulgar.

Ster. Never fear, sister!—Who have we here?

Mrs. H. It is Mounseer Cantoan, the Swish gentleman that lives with his lordship, I vow and pertest.

Enter CANTON.

Ster. Ah, Mounseer! your servant.—I am very glad to see you, Mounseer.

Can. Mosh oblige to Mons. Sterling.—Ma'am, I am yours—Matemoiselle, I am your.

[*Bowing round.*]

Mrs. H. Your humble servant, Mr. Cantoan!

Can. Kiss your hand, Matam!

Ster. Well, Motnseer!—and what news of your good family?—when are we to see his lordship and Sir John?

Can. Mons. Sterling! milor Ogleby and Sir Jean Melvil will be here in one quarter hour.

Ster. I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. H. O, I am perdigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afraid of some accident.—Will you please to have any thing, Mr. Cantoan, after your journey?

Can. No, tank you, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Shall I go and show you the apartments, Sir?

Can. You do me great honour, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Come then! come, my dear.

[*To Miss S. Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Anti-Room to LORD OGLEBY'S Bedchamber.*

BRUSH and CHAMBERMAID discovered.

Brush. You shall stay, my dear, I insist upon it. *Cham.* Nay pray, Sir, don't be so positive; I cannot stay, indeed.

Brush. You shall drink one cup to our better acquaintance.

Cham. I seldom drinks chocolate; and, if I did, one has no satisfaction with such apprehensions about one—if my lord should wake, or the Swish gentleman should see one, or Madam Heidelberg

should know of it, I should be frightened to death—besides, I have had my tea already this morning—I'm sure I hear my lord. [*In a fright.*]

Brush. No, no, Madam, don't flutter yourself—the moment my lord wakes he rings his bell, which I answer sooner or later, as it suits my convenience.

Cham. But should he come upon us without ringing—

Brush. I'll forgive him if he does—this key—[*Takes a vial out of the case.*] locks him up till I please to let him out.

Cham. Law! Sir, that's potecary's stuff.

Brush. It is so—but without this he can no more get out of bed—than he can read without spectacles—[*Sips.*] What with qualms, age, rheumatism, and a few surfeits in his youth, he must have a great deal of brushing, oiling, screwing, and winding-up to set him a-going for the day.

Cham. [*Sips.*] That's prodigious indeed—[*Sips.*] My lord seems quite in a decay.

Brush. Yes, he's quite a spectacle. [*Sips.*] A mere corpse till he is revived and refreshed from our little magazine here—When the restorative pills and cordial waters warm his stomach, and get into his head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he sets up for the lover, the rake, and the fine gentleman.

Cham. [*Sips.*] Poor gentleman! but should the Swiss gentleman come upon us! [*Frightened.*]

Brush. Why then the English gentleman would be very angry.—No foreigner must break in upon my privacy. [*Sips.*] But I can assure you Monsieur Canton is otherwise employed—He is obliged to skim the cream of half a score newspapers for my lord's breakfast—ha, ha, ha! Pray, Madam, drink your cup peaceably—My lord's chocolate is remarkably good; he won't touch a drop but what comes from Italy.

Cham. [*Sipping.*] 'Tis very fine indeed! [*Sips.*] and charmingly perfumed—it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

Brush. You have an excellent taste, Madam; and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking; [*Takes them out of a drawer in the table.*] and in return I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. [*Kisses her.*]—A small return of favours, Madam, will make, I hope, this country and retirement agreeable to us both. [*He bows, she courtesies.*]—Come, pray sit down—Your young ladies are fine girls, faith; [*Sips.*] though, upon my soul, I am quite of my old lord's mind about them; and were I inclined to matrimony, I should take the youngest. [*Sips.*]

Cham. Miss Fanny! The most affablest, and the most best-natured creter!—

Brush. And the eldest a little haughty or so—

Cham. More haughtier and prouder than Saturn himself—but this I say quite confidential to you; for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know. [*Sips.*]

Brush. By no means; but you cannot hurt it with us—we don't consider tempers—we want money, Mrs. Nancy. Give us plenty of that, we'll abate you a great deal in other particulars, ha, ha, ha!

Cham. Bless me, here's somebody! [*Bell rings.*]—Oh, 'tis my lord!—Well, your servant, Mr. Brush—I'll clean the cups in the next room.

Brush. Do so—but never mind the bell—I sha'n't go this half hour.—Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

Cham. Not for the world, Mr. Brush—I'll be here to set all things to rights—But I must not drink tea indeed—and so your servant.

[*Exit with tea-board. Bell rings again.*]

Brush. Yes, yes, I hear you.—It is impossible to stupyify one's self in the country for a week, without some little flirting with the abigails;—this is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan for her.—[*Bell rings.*] O, my lord—[*Going.*]

Enter CANTON with newspapers in his hand.

Can. Monsieur Brush!—Maitre Brush! my lor stirra yet?

Brush. He has just rung his bell—I am going to him. [*Exit.*]

Can. *Depechez-vous donc.* [*Puts on his spectacles.*]—I wish de deveil had all dese papiers—I forget as fast as I read—de Advertise put out of my head de Gazette, de Chronique, and so dey all go *l'un apres l'autre*—I must get some nouvelle for my lor, or he'll be enrage contre moi.—*Voyons!* [*Reads the paper.*] Here is nothing but Anti-Sejanus and advertise—

Enter MAID with chocolate things.

Vat you want, chil?

Maid. Only the chocolate things, Sir.

Can. O, ver well—dat is good girl—and ver prit too. [*Exit MAID.*]

Lord O. [*Within.*] Canton! he, he!—[*Coughs.*] Canton!—

Can. I come, my!—vat shall I do?—I have no news—he will make great tintamarre!—

Lord O. [*Within.*] Canton! I say, Canton! Where are you?

Enter LORD OGLEBY, leaning on BRUSH.

Can. Here, my lor!—I ask pardon, my lor, I have not finish de papiers.—

Lord O. Damn your pardon and your papiers—I want you here, Canton.

Can. Den I run, dat is all.

[*Shuffles along. LORD OGLEBY leans upon CANTON too, and comes forward.*]

Lord O. You Swiss are the most unaccountable mixture—you have the language and the impertinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutchmen.

Can. 'Tis very true, my lor—I can't help—

Lord O. [*Cries out.*] O Diavolo!

Can. You are not in pain, I hope, my lor?

Lord O. Indeed but I am, my lor.—That vulgar fellow, Sterling, with his city politeness, would force me down his slope last night to see a clay-coloured ditch, which he calls a canal; and what with the dew and the east wind, my hips and shoulders are absolutely screwed to my body.

Can. A littel veritable eau d'arquisade vil set all to right—

[*LORD OGLEBY sits down, and BRUSH gives chocolate.*]

Lord O. Where are the palsy drops, Brush?

Brush. Here, my lord. [*Pours out.*]

Lord O. Quelle nouvelle avez-vous, Canton?

Can. A great deal of papier, but no news at all.

Lord O. What! nothing at all, you stupid fellow!

Can. *Oui*, my lor, I have little advertise, here, vil give you more plaisir den all de lies about nothing at all. *La voila!* [*Puts on his spectacles.*]

Lord O. Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis, and good discretion.

Can. I vil, my lor. [*Reads.*] *Dere is no question but that the cosmetique royale vill utterly take away all heats, pimps, frecks, oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de wrinkle of old age, &c. &c.*—A great deal more, my lor.—Be sure to ask for *de cosmetique royale*, signed by the docteur own hand—*Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vil tink.*—*Eh, bien*, my lor

Lord O. *Eh bien*, Canton! Will you purchase any?

Can. For you, my lor?

Lord O. For me, you old puppy? for what?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Do I want cosmetics?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Look in my face—come, be sincere.—Does it want the assistance of art?

Can. [*With his spectacles.*] *En verite non.*—'Tis very smoose and brillian—But tote dat you might take a little by way of prevention.

Lord O. You thought like an old fool, Monsieur, as you generally do. Try it upon your own face, Canton, and if it has any effect, the doctor cannot have a better proof of the efficacy of his nostrum. The surfeit water, Brush! [*Brush pours out.*]—What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with?—*Eh!*

Brush. Very well to marry in, my lord; but it would never do to live with.

Lord O. You are right, Brush—There is no washing the blackmoor white—Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Blackfriars—always taste of the Borachio—and the poor woman, his sister, is so busy, and so notable, to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over the fatigue of her first reception; it almost amounted to suffocation!—I think the daughters are tolerable—Where's my cephalic snuff?

[*Brush gives him a box.*]

Can. Dey tink so of you, my lor, for dey look at noting else, *ma foi*.

Lord O. Did they? Why I think they did a little—Where's my glass?—[*Brush puts one on the table.*] The youngest is delectable.

[*Takes snuff.*]

Can. O *oui*, my lor, very delect inteed; she made *doux yeux* at you, my lor.

Lord O. She was particular. The eldest, my nephew's lady, will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt, happily blended with the ternagant qualities of her deceased mother.—Some peppermint water, Brush—How happy is it, Canton, for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook every thing in a marriage contract but their fortune.

Can. *C'est bien heureux, et commode aussi.*

Lord O. Brush, give me that pamphlet by my bed-side. [*Brush goes for it.*] Canton, do you wait in the anti-chamber, and let nobody interrupt me till I call you.

Can. Mush good may do your lordship. [*Exit.*]

Lord O. [*To BRUSH, who brings the pamphlet.*] And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies. [*Exit BRUSH.*]—What can I possibly do among these women here, with this confounded rheumatism? it is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. [*Gets off his chair.*] He! courage! courage, my lor! by heavens, I'm another creature. [*Hums and dances a little.*] It will do, faith—Bravo, my lor! these girls nave absolutely inspired me—If they are for a game of romps—*Me viola*

pret! [*Sings and dances.*]—Oh! that's an ugly twinge—but it's gone. I have rather too much of the lily this morning in my complexion; a faint tincture of the rose will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day.—[*Unlocks a drawer at the bottom of the glass, and takes out rouge; while he is painting himself, a knocking at the door.*] Who's there? I wont be disturbed.

Can. [*Within.*] My lor! my lor! here is Monsieur Sterling, to pay his *devoir* to you this morn in your *chambre*.

Lord O. What a fellow! [*Softly.*]—I am extremely honoured by Mr. Sterling.—Why don't you see him in, Monsieur? [*Aloud.*]—I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal. [*Softly—door opens.*] Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honour.

Enter STERLING and LOVEWELL.

Ster. I hope, my lord, that your lordship slept well last night—I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have—I spare no pains to get them, nor money to buy them.—His Majesty, God bless him, don't sleep upon a better out of his palace; and if I had said in too, I hope no treason, my lord.

Lord O. Your beds are like every thing else about you—incomparable!—They not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. What say you then, my lord, to another walk in the garden? You must see my water by day-light, and my walks, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flowering trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips.—Matters looked but dim, last night, my lord. I feel the dew in my great toe—but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about—I may be laid up to-morrow.

Lord O. I pray Heaven you may! [*Aside.*]

Ster. What say you, my lord?

Lord O. I was saying, Sir, that I was in hopes of seeing the young ladies at breakfast: Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world, he, he, he, he!

Can. *Bravissimo*, my lor! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Ster. They shall meet your lordship in the garden—we wont lose our walk for them; I'll take you a little round before breakfast; and a larger before dinner, and in the evening you shall go the grand tour, as I call it, ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Not a foot, I hope, Mr. Sterling; consider your gout, my good friend—you'll certainly be laid by the heels for your politeness, he, he, he!

Can. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis admirable, *en verite!*

[*Laughs very heartily.*]

Ster. If my young man [*To LOVEWELL.*] here would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as Mounseer does at yours, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

Lord O. What say you, Canton, will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the most companionable laugh I ever met with, and never out of tune.

Can. But when your lordship is out of spirits.

Lord O. Well said, Canton! But here comes my nephew, to play his part.

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

Well, Sir John, what news from the island of love? Have you been sighing and serenading this morning?

Sir J. I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

Lord O. I'm sorry to see you so dull, Sir—What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! They make love with faces as if they were burying the dead—though indeed a marriage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living—eh, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Not if they have enough to live upon, my lord—Ha, ha, ha!

Can. Dat is all Monsieur Sterling tink of.

Sir J. Prythee, Lovewell, come with me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you, and I must communicate it directly.

[*Apart to LOVEWELL.*]

Love. We'll go together. [*Apart.*] If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden.

[*Exeunt SIR JOHN MELVIL and LOVEWELL.*]

Ster. My girls are always ready; I make them rise soon, and to bed early; their husbands shall have them with good constitutions and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

Lord O. Fine things, Mr. Sterling!

Ster. Fine things, indeed, my lord!—Ah, my lord, had you not run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

Lord O. Very pleasant, he, he, he!

[*Half laughing.*]

Ster. Here's Mounseer now, I suppose, is pretty near your lordship's standing; but, having little to eat, and little to spend in his own country, he'll wear three of your lordship out—eating and drinking kills us all.

Lord O. Very pleasant, I protest—What a vulgar dog!

[*Aside.*]

Can. My lor so old as me!—He is chicken to me—and look like a boy to *pauvre* me.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! Well said, Mounseer—keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world—Ha, ha, ha!—But, my lord, I will wait upon you in the garden: we have but a little time to breakfast—I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a little walk with you, my lord, and then for the rolls and butter!

[*Exit.*]

Lord O. I shall attend you with pleasure—hot rolls and butter in July! I sweat with the thoughts of it—

Can. *C'est un barbare.*

Lord O. He is a vulgar dog; and if there was not so much money in the family, which I can't do without, I would leave him and his hot rolls and butter directly—Come along, Monsieur.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—The Garden.

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL and LOVEWELL.

Love. In my room this morning? Impossible.

Sir J. Before five this morning, I promise you.

Love. On what occasion?

Sir J. I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you, that I could not sleep in my bed—but I found that you could not sleep neither—The bird was flown, and the nest long since cold—Where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Pooh! prythee! ridiculous!

Sir J. Come now, which was it; Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue! or Miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul too—or—

Love. Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your business.

Sir J. Well, but where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Walking—writing—what signifies where I was?

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Sir J. Walking! yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet refreshing showers to walk in! No, no, Lovewell. Now would I give twenty pounds to know which of the maids—

Love. But your business! your business, Sir John!

Sir J. Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

Love. Pshaw!

Sir J. Poor Lovewell! he can't bear it, I see.

[*Aside.*] She charged you not to kiss and tell, eh, Lovewell! However, though you will not honour me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine.—What do you think of Miss Sterling?

Love. What do I think of Miss Sterling?

Sir J. Ay, what do you think of her?

Love. An odd question!—but I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

Sir J. All mischief and malice, I doubt.

Love. How?

Sir J. But her person—what d'ye think of that?

Love. Pretty and agreeable.

Sir J. A little grisette thing.

Love. What is the meaning of all this?

Sir J. I'll tell you. You must know, Lovewell, that notwithstanding all appearances—[*A loud laugh without.*] We are interrupted—When they are gone, I'll explain.

Enter LORD OGLEY, STERLING, CANTON, Mrs. HEIDELBERG, MISS STERLING, and FANNY.

Lord O. Great improvements indeed, Mr. Sterling! wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the bason with Neptune in the middle, are in the very extreme of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde-park corner.

Ster. The chief pleasure of a country house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expense, not I.—This is quite another guess sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees. I cut down about fifty to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and the sun—smack smooth—as you see.—Then I made a green-house out of the old laundry, and turned the brewhouse into a pinery. The high octagon summer-house, you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East-India captain, who has turned many a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road. All the coaches, and chariots, and chaises, pass and repass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord.

Lord O. No, I thank you, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle, and so you shall say, my lord.

Lord O. Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling; for it looks like a cabin in the air.—If flying chairs were in use, the captain might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair wind.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. H. My brother's a little comical in his ideas, my lord!—But you'll excuse him.—I have a little Gothic dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste.—In the evening, I shall hope for the honour of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a sullabub warm from the cow.

Lord O. I have every moment a fresh opportunity of admiring the elegance of Mrs. Heidel-

berg—the very flower of delicacy and cream of politeness.

Mrs. H. O, my lord!—[*Leers at LORD OGLEY.*

Lord O. O, Madam!—

[*Leers at MRS. HEIDELBERG.*

Ster. How d'ye like these close walks, my lord?

Lord O. A most excellent serpentine!—It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a true-lover's knot.

Ster. Ay, here's none of your straight lines here—but all taste—zig-zag—crinkum-crankum—in and out—right and left—to and again—twisting and turning like a worm, my lord.

Lord O. Admirably laid out indeed, Mr. Sterling! one can hardly see an inch before one's nose any where in these walks. You are a most excellent economist of your land, and make a little go a great way.—It lies together in as small parcels as if it were placed in pots out of your window in Gracechurch-street.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. What d'ye laugh at, Canton?

Can. Ah! *que cette similitude est drole!* so clever what you say, my lord!—

Lord O. You seem mightily engaged, Madam. What are those pretty hands so busily employed about?

[*To FANNY.*

Fan. Only making up a nosegay, my lord!—Will your lordship do me the honour of accepting it?

[*Presents it.*

Lord O. I'll wear it next my heart, Madam;—I see the young creature dotes on me. [*Aside.*

Miss S. Lord, sister! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook, or the nurse, carries to town, on a Monday morning, for a beau-pot.—Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose and a sprig of sweet-briar?

Lord O. The truest emblems of yourself, Madam! all sweetness and poignancy.—A little jealous, poor soul!

[*Aside.*

Ster. Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

Mrs. H. You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with over walking, brother!

Lord O. Not at all, Madam! We're in the garden of Eden, you know; in the region of perpetual spring, youth, and beauty.

[*Leers at the women.*

Mrs. H. Quite the man of qualaty, I vow and perdest.

[*Aside.*

Can. Take a my arm, mi lor!

[*LORD OGLEY leans on him.*

Ster. I'll only show his lordship my ruins, and the cascade, and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

Lord O. Ruins, did you say, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay, ruins, my lord! and they are reckoned very fine ones, too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases.

Lord O. [*Going, stops.*] What steeple's that we see yonder!—the parish church, I suppose.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord! it is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something, to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord!

Lord O. Very ingenious indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than this I see before me.

[*Leers at the women.*] Simple, yet varied; bound ed, yet extensive.—Get away, Canton! [*Pushes CANTON away.*] I want no assistance—I'll walk with the ladies.

Ster. This way, my lord!

Lord O. Lead on, Sir!—We young folks here, will follow you.—Madam!—Miss Sterling!—Miss Fanny! I attend you.

[*Exit after STERLING, gallanting the ladies.*

Can. [*Following.*] He is cock o'de game, *ma foi!* [*Exit.*

Sir J. Hark ye, Lovewell, you must not go—at length, thank Heaven! I have an opportunity to unbosom.—I know you are faithful, Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me.

Love. Be assured, you may depend upon me.

Sir J. You must know then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between Miss Sterling and me, will come to nothing.

Love. How?

Sir J. It will be no match, Lovewell.

Love. No match?

Sir J. No.

Love. You amaze me. What should prevent it?

Sir J. I.

Love. You! Wherefore?

Sir J. I don't like her.

Love. Very plain, indeed! I never supposed that you were extremely devoted to her from inclination, but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience rather than affection.

Sir J. Very true. I came into the family without any impressions on my mind—with an unimpassioned indifference, ready to receive one woman as soon as another. I looked upon love, serious, sober love, as a chimera, and marriage as a thing of course, as you know most people do. But I, who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries.—In short, my defection from Miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

Love. Another! So, so! here will be fine work. And pray who is she?

Sir J. Who is she! who can she be but Fanny—the tender, amiable, engaging, Fanny?

Love. Fanny! what Fanny?

Sir J. Fanny Sterling. Her sister—Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

Love. Her sister? Confusion!—You must not think of it, Sir John.

Sir J. Not think of it? I can think of nothing else. Nay, tell me, Lovewell, was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction towards her?—You seem confounded—Why don't you answer me?

Love. Indeed, Sir John, this event gives me infinite concern. Why did not you break this affair to the family before?

Sir J. Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been, can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? Nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now; and yet I think I know Mr. Sterling so well, that strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.

Love. But even suppose he should, which I very much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addresses.

Sir J. You are deceived a little in that particular.

Love. You'll find I'm in the right.

Sir J. I have some little reason to think otherwise.

Love. You have not declared your passion to her already?

Sir J. Yes, I have.

Love. Indeed!—And—and—and how did she receive it?

Sir J. I think it is not very easy for me to make my addresses to any woman, without receiving some little encouragement.

Love. Encouragement!—did she give you any encouragement?

Sir J. I don't know what you call encouragement—but she blushed—and cried—and desired me not to think of it any more;—upon which I pressed her hand—kissed it—swore she was an angel—and I could see it tickled her to the very soul.

Love. And did she express no surprise at your declaration?

Sir J. Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprised—and she got away from me too before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter for me.

Love. I!—a letter!—I had rather have nothing—

Sir J. Nay, you promised me your assistance—and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion.—You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

Love. As to that, I—your commands, you know—that is, if she—Indeed, Sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

Sir J. Well—well—that's my concern—Ha! there she goes, by Heaven! along that walk yonder, d'ye see?—I'll go to her immediately!

Love. You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing.

Sir J. I would not lose this opportunity for the universe.

Love. Nay, pray don't go! Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits.—The shock will be too much for her. [*Detains him.*]

Sir J. Nothing shall prevent me—Ha! now she turns into another walk—Let me go!—[*Breaks from him.*] I shall lose her. [*Going, turns back.*] Be sure now, to keep out of the way! If you interrupt us I shall never forgive you. [*Exit hastily.*]

Love. 'Sdeath, I can't bear this. In love with my wife! acquaint me with his passion for her! make his addresses before my face!—I shall break out before my time.—This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness. She could not encourage him—I am sure she could not—Ha! they are turning into the walk, and coming this way. Shall I leave the place?—Leave him to solicit my wife? I can't submit to it.—They come nearer and nearer.—If I stay, it will look suspicious—It may betray us, and incense him.—They are here—I must go—I am the most unfortunate fellow in the world!

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter SIR JOHN MELVIL and FANNY.

Fan. Leave me, Sir John—I beseech you, leave me! Nay, why will you persist to follow me with idle solicitations, which are an affront to my character, and an injury to your own honour?

Sir J. I know your delicacy, and tremble to offend it: but let the urgency of the occasion be my excuse! Consider, Madam, that the future happiness of my life depends on my present application to you! Consider, that this day must determine my fate; and these are perhaps the only moments left me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to entreat you not to oppose the proposals I mean to open to your father.

Fan. For shame, for shame, Sir John! Think of your previous engagements! Think of your own situation, and think of mine! What have you discovered in my conduct that might encourage you to so bold a declaration? I am shocked that you should venture to say so much, and blush that I should even dare to give it a hearing.—Let me be gone.

Sir J. Nay, stay, Madam, but one moment:—your sensibility is too great.—Engagements! what engagements have been pretended on either side, more than those of family convenience? I went on in the trammels of a matrimonial negotiation, with a blind submission to your father and Lord Ogleby; but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in yours.

Fan. Have a care, Sir John! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretences of the heart half our sex are made fools, and a greater part of yours despise them for it.

Sir J. Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix—but when it is once inviolably attached, inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection.—When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

Fan. You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit, nay if I did not even express the quickest resentment at your behaviour, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you in honour to my sister; and be assured, Sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph that must result from the blackest treachery to her. [*Going.*]

Sir J. One word, and I have done. [*Stops her.*]—Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me, or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclined to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united. Now as they cannot, shall not, be connected otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false delicacy, oppose a union so conducive to my happiness, and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you,—and hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling:—If then you don't absolutely loath, abhor, and scorn me—If there is no other happier man—

Fan. Hear me, Sir; hear my final determination.—Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them; were my heart for ever to remain disengaged to any other, I could not listen to your proposals.—What! on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I, living under the same roof with her, bound, not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness; and not to conspire against her peace, the peace of a whole family, and that of my own too!—Away

away, Sir John!—At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror.—Nay, you must detain me no longer—I will go.

Sir J. Do not leave me in absolute despair!—Give me a glimpse of hope! [*Falls on his knees.*]

Fan. I cannot.—Pray, Sir John!—

[*Struggles to go.*]

Sir J. Shall this hand be given to another!—[*Kisses her hand.*] No, I cannot endure it.—My whole soul is yours, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

Re-enter MISS STERLING.

Fan. Ha! my sister is here. Rise, for shame, Sir John.

Sir J. Miss Sterling!

[*Rises.*]

Miss S. I beg pardon, Sir! You'll excuse me, Madam!—I have broke in upon you a little unopportunately, I believe—but I did not mean to interrupt you—I only came, Sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotion.

Sir J. I am very sensible, Miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but—

Miss S. O dear, Sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology—the thing explains itself.

Sir J. It will soon, Madam. In the mean time, I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honour and integrity of my intentions—And—and—your humble servant, Madam!

[*Exit in confusion.*]

Miss S. Respect! Insolence! Esteem!—Very fine, truly. And you, Madam! my sweet, delicate, innocent, sentimental sister! will you convince my papa too of the integrity of your intentions?

Fan. Do not upbraid me, my dear sister! Indeed, I don't deserve it. Believe me, you can't be more offended at his behaviour than I am, and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

Miss S. Make me miserable! You are mightily deceived, Madam; it gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you. A base fellow! As for you, Miss, the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good nature, never imposed upon me. I always knew you to be sly, envious, and deceitful.

Fan. Indeed, you wrong me.

Miss S. Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure! Did not I find him on his knees before you? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand? Did not I hear his protestations? Was not I a witness of your dissembled modesty? No, no, my dear! don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

Fan. Sir John, I own, is to blame; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

Miss S. We shall try that, Madam. I hope, Miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my papa and my aunt, for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you.

[*Exit.*]

Fan. How unhappy I am! my distresses multiply upon me. Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with Sir John's behaviour to me, and in a manner that may add to my uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgressions, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcilably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace. Yet, at all events, I

am determined on a discovery. I dread it, and am resolved to hasten it. It is surrounded with more horrors every instant, as it appears every instant more necessary.

[*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

Enter a SERVANT conducting in SERGEANT FLOWER, and COUNSELLORS TRAVERSE and TRUEMAN, all booted.

Ser. This way if you please, gentlemen; my master is at breakfast with the family at present, but I'll let him know, and he will wait on you immediately.

Flow. Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

Ser. Please to favour me with your names, gentlemen.

Flow. Let Mr. Sterling know, that Mr. Sergeant Flower, and two other gentlemen of the bar, are come to wait on him according to his appointment.

Ser. I will, Sir.

[*Going*]

Flow. And harkye, young man. [*Servant returns.*] Desire my servant, Mr. Sergeant Flower's servant, to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall, with my portmanteau.

Ser. I will, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Flow. Well, gentlemen; the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough, almost just on the eve of the circuits. Let me see—the Home, the Midland, and Western; ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations: Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

Tra. The day after to-morrow.

Flow. That is commission-day with us at Warwick too; but my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there next morning. Besides, I have half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again; so I'll take the evening before me, and then *currente calamo*, as I say, eh, Traverse?

Tra. True; and pray, Mr. Sergeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas, at Lincoln?

Flow. I am—for the plaintiff.

Tra. And what do you think on't?

Flow. A nonsuit.

Tra. I thought so.

Flow. Oh, no manner of doubt on't—*luce clarius*—we have no right in us. We have but one chance.

Tra. What's that?

Flow. Why, my lord chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

True. Ay, that may do indeed, if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendant's counsel.

Flow. True, Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for Lord Ogleby in this affair?

True. I am, Sir. I have the honour to be related to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire; go to the Western circuit, and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interests and property lie in that part of the kingdom.

Flow. Ha!—and pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

True. About nine years and three quarters.

Flow. Ha! I don't know that I ever had the pleasure of seeing you before. I wish you success, young gentleman.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. Oh, Mr. Sergeant Flower, I am glad to see you—your servant, Mr. Sergeant! gentlemen, your servant! Well, are all matters concluded? Has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret of Gray's-inn, settled the articles at last? Do you approve of what he has done? Will his tackle hold, tight, and strong? Eh, master Sergeant?

Flow. My friend Ferret's slow and sure, Sir. But then, *serius aut citius*, as we say, sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do. My clerk has brought the writings, and all other instruments, along with him; and the settlement is I believe as good a settlement as any settlement on the face of the earth!

Ster. But that damned mortgage of sixty thousand pounds. There don't appear to be any other incumbrances, I hope?

Tra. I can answer for that, Sir—and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of Miss Sterling's portion. You agree, on your part, to come down with eighty thousand pounds.

Ster. Down on the nail. Ay, ay, my money is ready to-morrow if he pleases; he shall have it in India bonds, or notes, or how he chooses. Your lords, and your dukes, and your people at the court end of the town, stick at payments sometimes—debts unpaid, no credit lost with them; but no fear of us substantial fellows—Eh, Mr. Sergeant?

Flow. Sir John having, last term, according to agreement, levied a fine and suffered a recovery, has hitherto cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate, for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate, a jointure of two thousand pounds per annum is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster, and the whole estate after the death of the aforesaid earl, descends to the heirs male of Sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforesaid Elizabeth Sterling, lawfully to be begotten.

Tra. Very true; and Sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate, as lies in the manors of Hogmore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand pounds per annum; and at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand—

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

Ster. Ah, Sir John! Here we are, hard at it, paving the road to matrimony. First the lawyers, then comes the doctor. Let us but despatch the long-robe, we shall soon get pudding-sleeves to work, I warrant you.

Sir J. I am sorry to interrupt you, Sir—but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me. Having something very particular for your private ear, I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately. [To STERLING.]

Ster. Ay, with all my heart! Gentlemen, Mr. Sergeant, you'll excuse it; business must be done, you know. The writings will keep cold till to-morrow morning.

Flow. I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the day after.

Ster. Nay, nay, I sha'n't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you. My house is very full, but I have beds for you all, beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses. Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? Or will you amuse yourselves on the green, with a game at bowls and a cool tankard? My servants shall attend you. Do you choose any other refreshment? Call for what you please; do as you please; make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you. Here, Thomas! Harry! William! wait on these gentlemen!—[Follows the Lawyers out, bawling and talking, and then returns to Sir John.] And now, Sir, I am entirely at your service. What are your commands with me, Sir John?

Sir J. After having carried the negotiation between our families to so great a length; after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part; I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

Ster. Uneasiness! what uneasiness?—Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions, to receive my daughter for a wife; on the same conditions I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

Sir J. Pardon me, Sir, more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; Miss Sterling, I know, is extremely discontented too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

Ster. What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

Sir J. In one word, then—it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfil my engagements in regard to Miss Sterling.

Ster. How, Sir John? Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What! refuse to—

Sir J. Be assured, Sir, that I neither mean to affront nor forsake your family. My only fear is, that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family, by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

Ster. Why, did not you tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

Sir J. True—but you have another daughter, Sir—

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart. I have already declared my passion to her; nay, Miss Sterling herself is also apprised of it; and if you will but give a sanction to my present addresses, the uncommon merit of Miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal, if not superior rank, to myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with Miss Fanny.

Ster. Mighty fine, truly! Why, what the plague do you make of us, Sir John? Do you

come to market for my daughters, like servants at a statute-fair? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the grand seignior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as ~~he~~ pleases? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave-trade with them, and—

Sir J. A moment's patience, Sir! Nothing but the excess of my passion for Miss Fanny should have induced me to take any step that had the least appearance of disrespect to any part of your family; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

Ster. Compensation! what compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, Sir John?

Sir J. Come, come, Mr. Sterling, I know you to be man of sense, a man of business, a man of the world. I'll deal frankly with you; and you shall see that I don't desire a change of measures for my own gratification, without endeavouring to make it advantageous to you.

Ster. What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, Sir John?

Sir J. I'll tell you, Sir. You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with Miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of eighty thousand pounds.

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Now if you will but consent to my wavering that marriage—

Ster. I agree to your wavering that marriage? Impossible, Sir John!

Sir J. I hope not, Sir; as, on my part, I will agree to wave my right to thirty thousand pounds of the fortune I was to receive with her.

Ster. Thirty thousand, d'y say?

Sir J. Yes, Sir; and accept of Miss Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of fourscore.

Ster. Fifty thousand—

Sir J. Instead of fourscore. [Pausing.]

Ster. Why—why—there may be something in that.—Let me see—Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsy with fourscore. But how can this be, Sir John? for you know I am to pay this money into the hands of my Lord Ogleby; who, I believe, between you and me, Sir John, is not overstocked with ready money at present; and threescore thousand of it, you know, is to go to pay off the present encumbrances on the estate, Sir John.

Sir J. That objection is easily obviated.—Ten of the twenty thousand, which would remain as a surplus of the fourscore, after paying off the mortgage, was intended by his lordship for my use, that we might set off with some little eclat on our marriage; and the other ten for his own. Ten thousand pounds therefore I shall be able to pay you immediately; and for the remaining twenty thousand, you shall have a mortgage on that part of the estate which is to be made over to me, with whatever security you shall require for the regular payment of the interest, till the principal is duly discharged.

• *Ster.* Why—to do you justice, Sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family—

Sir J. Nothing was ever further from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling. And, after all, the whole affair is nothing extraordinary—such things hap-

pen every day; and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

Ster. True, true; and since you only transfer from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

Sir J. The very thing!

Ster. Odso! I had quite forgot.—We are reckoning without our host here—there is another difficulty—

Sir J. You alarm me. What can that be?

Ster. I can't stir a step in this business without consulting my sister Heidelberg.—The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offence.

Sir J. But if you come into this measure, surely she will be so kind as to consent—

Ster. I don't know that, Betsy is her darling, and I can't tell how far she may resent any slight that seems to be offered to her favourite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you. You shall go and break the matter to her first, and by that time I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to reinforce your arguments.

Sir J. I'll fly to her immediately—you promise me your assistance?

Ster. I do.

Sir J. Ten thousand thanks for it! And now, success attend me! [Going.]

Ster. Harkye, Sir John! [SIR JOHN returns.] Not a word of the thirty thousand to my sister, Sir John.

Sir J. O, I am dumb, I am dumb, Sir. [Going.]

Ster. You'll remember it is thirty thousand?

Sir J. To be sure I do.

Ster. But, Sir John! one thing more. [SIR JOHN returns.] My lord must know nothing of this stroke of friendship between us.

Sir J. Not for the world. Let me alone! let me alone! [Offering to go.]

Ster. [Holding him.] And when every thing is agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held fast to the bargain.

Sir J. To be sure. A bond, by all means! a bond, or whatever you please. [Exit, hastily.]

Ster. I should have thought of more conditions—he's in a humour to give me every thing—Why, what mere children are your fellows of quality, that cry for a plaything one minute and throw it by the next!—as changeable as the weather, and as uncertain as the stocks.—Special fellows to drive a bargain! and yet they are to take care of the interest of the nation, truly! Here does this whirligig man of fashion offer to give up thirty thousand pounds in hard money, with as much indifference as if it was a china orange. By this mortgage I shall have a hold on his *terra firma*; and if he wants more money, as he certainly will, let him have children by my daughter or no, I shall have his whole estate in a net for the benefit of my family.—Well, thus it is; that the children of citizens who have acquired fortunes, prove persons of fashion; and thus it is, that persons of fashion who have ruined their fortunes, reduce the next generation to cits. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—Another Apartment.

Enter MRS. HEIDELBERG and MISS STERLING

Miss S. This is your gentle-looking, soft-

speaking, sweet-smiling, affable, Miss Fanny, for you!

Mrs. H. My Miss Fanny! I disclaim her.—With all her arts, she never could insinuate herself into my good graces; and yet she has a way with her, that deceives man, woman, and child, except you and me, niece.

Miss S. O ay—she wants nothing but a crook in her hand, and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

Mrs. H. Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations.

Miss S. And then she's so mighty good to servants—"Pray, John, do this—pray, Thomas, do that—thank you, Jenny"—and then so humble to her relations—"To be sure, papa—as my aunt pleases—my sister knows best." But with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be Lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

Mrs. H. She lady Melvil! compose yourself, niece! I'll ladyship her, indeed;—a little creppin, cantin—She sha'n't be the better for a farden of my money. But tell me, child, how does this intriguing with Sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatenation here.

Miss S. There I was deceived, Madam. I took all their whisperings and stealings into corners, to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but, behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me. I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

Mrs. H. My spurit to a T.—My dear child! [*Kisses her.*]—Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of parliament, because I would not demean myself to be slobbered about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheese-mongers, and tallow-chandlers. However, niece, I can't help diffusing a little in opinion from you in this matter. My experience and sagacity makes me still suspect that there is something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of Sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns too; but Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another guess sort of a figur! and were as perfect a picture of two distressed lovers as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to Sir John and Fanny, I want a matter of fact.

Miss S. Matter of fact, Madam! Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? Was not Sir John kneeling at her feet, and kissing her hand? Did not he look all love, and she all confusion? Is not that matter of fact? and did not Sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyer-men, get up from breakfast, and follow him immediately? And I warrant you that by this time he has made proposals to him to marry my sister—Oh, that some other person, an earl or a duke, would make his addresses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster!

Mrs. H. Be cool, child! you shall be Lady Melvil, in spite of all their caballins, if it costs me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother, indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this fammaly.

Miss S. As I live, Madam, yonder comes Sir John. A base man! I can't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. [*Disordered*

Mrs. H. Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child! I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by and by I'll come and let you know all that has past between us.

Miss S. Pray do, Madam.—[*Looking back.*]—A vile wretch! [*Exit, in a rage.*]

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

Sir J. Your most obedient, humble servant, Madam. [*Bowing very respectfully.*]

Mrs. H. Your servant, Sir John.

[*Dropping a half courtesy, and pouting.*]

Sir J. Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coolness of your behaviour to me, Madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what passed this morning.

Mrs. H. I am very sorry, Sir John, to be made acquainted with any thing that should induce me to change the opinion which I would always wish to entertain of a person of quality. [*Pouting.*]

Sir J. It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh circumstances, I flatter myself—

Mrs. H. You do flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behaviour to my niece, Sir John.—And give me leave to tell you, Sir John, that you have been drawn into an action much beneath you, Sir John; and that I look upon every injury offered to Miss Betty Sterling, as an affront to myself, Sir John. [*Warmly.*]

Sir J. I would not offend you for the world, Madam; but when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a point of honour to renounce engagements which I could not fulfil so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honour of being your niece, Madam.

Mrs. H. I disclaim her as a niece, Sir John; Miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister; and the whole fammaly must disclaim her, for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

Sir J. Indeed she has been guilty of none, Madam. Her hand and her heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself and Mr. Sterling. And if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, Madam.

Mrs. H. Indeed?

Sir J. Quite certain, Madam.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. [*Behind.*] So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance.

Mrs. H. To marry Fanny?

[*STERLING advances.*]

Sir J. Yes, Madam.

Mrs. H. My brother has given his consent, you say?

Sir J. In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, Madam. [*Sees STERLING.*]—Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

Mrs. H. What! have you consented to give up your eldest daughter in this manner, brother?

Ster. Give her up, Heaven forbid! no, not give

her up, sister; only in the case that you—Zounds, I am afraid you have said too much, Sir John.

[*Apart to Sir John.*]

Mrs. H. Yes, yes; I see now that it is true enough what my niece told me. You are all plottin and caballin against her. Pray, does Lord Ogleby know of this affair?

Sir J. I have not yet made him acquainted with it, Madam.

Mrs. H. No, I warrant you. I thought so. And so his lordship and myself, truly, are not to be consulted till the last.

Ster. What! did not you consult my lord? oh, fy for shame, Sir John!

Sir J. Nay, but Mr. Sterling—

Mrs. H. We, who are the persons of most consequence and experuence in the two fammalies, are to know nothing of the matter, till the whole is as good as concluded upon. But his lordship I am sure, will have more generosaty than to countenance such a perceding. And I could not have expected such behaviour from a person of your qualaty, Sir John. And as for you, brother—

Ster. Nay, nay, but hear me, sister.

Mrs. H. I am perfectly ashamed of you—Have you no spurrit? No more concern for the honour of our fammaly than to consent.—

Ster. Consent! I consent! As I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent—Did I consent, Sir John?

Sir J. Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's concurrence. But in case of her approbation—

Ster. Ay, in case I grant you, that is, if my sister approved—But that's quite another thing, you know— [To *Mrs. Heidelberg.*]

Mrs. H. Your sister approve, indeed!—I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling!—What! approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands, and exchanged for the younger? I am surprised how you could listen to such a scandalous proposal.

Ster. I tell you, I never did listen to it.—Did not I say, that I would be entirely governed by my sister, Sir John?—And unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny—

Mrs. H. I agree to his marrying Fanny!—abominable!—The man is absolutely out of his senses.—Can't that wise head of yours foresee the consequence of all this, brother Sterling? Will Sir John take Fanny without a fortune?—No!—After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest?—No!—Does not this overturn the whole system of the fammaly?—Yes, yes, yes!

Ster. Do you see now what you've done?—Don't betray me, Sir John. [*Apart to Sir John.*]

Mrs. H. You know, I was always for my niece Betsy's marrying a person of the very first qualaty. That was by maxum—;and, therefore, much the largest settlement was of course to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common council-man, for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

Sir J. But if a better match should offer itself, why should it not be accepted, Madam?

Mrs. H. What! at the expense of her elder sister?—O fy, Sir John!—How could you bear to hear such an indignaty, brother Sterling?

Ster. I! Nay, I sha'n't hear of it, I promise you.—I can't hear of it indeed, Sir John.

Mrs. H. But you have heard of it, brother Sterling—You know you have, and sent Sir John to propose it to me. But if you can give up your daughter, I sha'n't forsake my niece, I assure you.—Ah, if my poor dear Mr. Heidelberg and our sweet babes had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

Ster. Did I, Sir John?—Nay, speak!—Bring me off, or we are ruined. [*Apart to Sir John.*]

Sir J. Why to be sure, to speak the truth—

Mrs. H. To speak the truth!—To speak the truth, I'm ashamed of you both.—But have a care what you are about, brother! have a care, I say. The counsellors are in the house, I hear; and if every thing is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these hundred years—I'll go over to Holland, and settle with Mr. Vanderspracken, my poor husband's first cousin, and my own fammaly shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you. [*Exit.*]

Ster. I thought so. I knew she would never agree to it.

Sir J. 'Sdeath, how unfortunate! What can we do, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Nothing.

Sir J. What, must our agreement break off the moment it is made, then?

Ster. It can't be helped, Sir John.—The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself that she threatens to leave us.—My brother Heidelberg was a warm man—a very warm man, and died worth a plum at least:—a plum! ay, I warrant you, he died worth a plum and a half.

Sir J. Well; but if I—

Ster. And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three per cents, and old South Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to our family.

Sir J. I can only say, Sir—

Ster. Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand was very fair and handsome, to be sure, Sir John.

Sir J. Nay, but I am willing to—

Ster. Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose above a hundred thousand; so you see the balance is against you, Sir John.

Sir J. Suppose I was to prevail on Lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her?

Ster. I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it than any other person in the family. She has a great respect for Lord Ogleby. She loves a lord.

Sir J. I'll apply to him this very day.—And if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay, ay, I shall be glad to oblige you, when it is in my power, but as the account stands now, you see it is not upon the figures. And so your servant, Sir John? [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room.

Enter MR. STERLING, MRS. HEIDELBERG, and MISS STERLING.

Ster. What! will you send Fanny to town sister?

Mrs. H. To-morrow morning. I've given orders about it already.

Ster. Indeed!

Mrs. H. Positively.

Ster. But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

Mrs. H. Not half so odd as her behaviour, brother.—This time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

Ster. I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsy?

Miss S. No indeed, papa. My aunt knows that it is not.—For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do or say any thing to hurt her with you or my aunt, for the world.

Mrs. H. Hold your tongue, Betsy; I will have my way. When she is packed off, every thing will go on as it should do. Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can act with vigour on our part; and the sending her out of the way, shall be the perliminary step to all the rest of my proceedings.

Ster. Well, but, sister—

Mrs. H. It does not signify talking, brother Sterling, for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will.—Come along, child. [*To Miss Sterling.*] The post-shay shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if Miss Fanny does not get into it, why I will—and so there's an end of the matter. [*Bounces out with Miss Sterling, then returns.*] One word more, brother Sterling—I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to Lord Ogleby of Sir John Melvil's behaviour.—Do this, brother; show a proper regard for the honour of your fammaly yourself, and I shall throw in my mite to the raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind. So act as you please, and take the consequences. [*Exit.*]

Ster. The devil's in the women for tyranny!—Mothers, wives, mistresses, or sisters, they always will govern us. As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it.—“I will do this,” and “you shall do that,” and “you shall do t'other—or else the fammaly sha'n't have a farden of” [*Mimicking.*] So absolute with her money!—But, to say the truth, nothing but money can make us absolute, and so we must e'en make the best of her. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Garden.

Enter LORD OGLEBY and CANTON.

Lord O. What! Mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away?—Why?—Wherefore?—What's the meaning of all this?

Can. *Je ne sçais pas*—I know nothing of it.

Lord O. It can't be—it sha'n't be: I protest against the measure. She's a fine girl, and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated, than that she should leave us.—Her vulgar father, that's the very abstract of 'Change-alley—the aunt, that's always endeavouring to be a fine lady—and the pert sister, for ever showing that she is one, are horrid company indeed, and without her would be intolerable. Ah *la petite Fan-
chon!* she's the thing; isn't she, Canton?

Can. Dere is very good sympathie *entre vous* and dat young lady, mi lor.

Lord O. I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals; your Sterlings, your Heidelbergs, and Devilbergs—if she goes, I'll positively go too.

Can. In de same post-chay, my lor? You have

no objection to dat, I believe, nor Mademoiselle neither too—ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Pr'ythee hold thy foolish tongue, Cant. Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine, that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires?—My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects—I fly as naturally to a fine girl.—

Can. As de fine girl to you, mi lor, ha, ha, ha! you always fly together like un pair de pigeons—

Lord O. Like un pair de pigeons—[*Mocks him.*]

Vous etes un sot, Monsieur Canton.—Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues, and never see'st me *badiner*, but you suspect mischief, you old fool you.

Can. I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, mi lor, he, he, he!

Lord O. He, he, he!—Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse one. Thou art like my rappee here, [*Takes out his box.*] a most ridiculous superfluity; but a pinch of thee now and then is a more delicious treat.

Can. You do me great *honneur*, mi lor.

Lord O. 'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art properly my cephalic snuff, and art no bad medicine against megrims, vertiges, and profound thinking—ha, ha, ha!

Can. Your flatterie, mi lor, vil make me too prode.

Lord O. The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure: but pr'ythee, Cant. is not that Miss Fanny yonder?

Can. [*Looks with a glass.*] Ah!—*la voila! En verite*, 'tis she, mi lor—'tis one of de pigeons—de pigeons d'amour.

Lord O. Don't be ridiculous, you old monkey.

[*Smiles.*]

Can. I am monkee, I am ole; but I have eye, I have ear, and a little understand, now and den.

Lord O. *Taisez-vous, bete!*

Can. *Elle vous attend*, mi lor. She vil make a love to you.

Lord O. Will she? Have at her then! A fine girl can't oblige me more—Egad, I find myself a little enjoeu—Come along, Cant. she is but in the next walk—but there is such a deal of this damned crinkum-crankum, as Sterling calls it, that one sees people for half an hour before one can get to them—*Allons, Monsieur Canton, allons, donc!* [*Exeunt, singing.*]

SCENE III.—Another part of the Garden.

Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY.

Love. My dear Fanny, I cannot bear your distress; it overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery.

Fan. But how can it be effected before my departure?

Love. I'll tell you.—Lord Ogleby seems to entertain a visible partiality for you; and notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behaviour, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess; but withal extremely good-natured, and would do any thing to recommend himself to a lady.—Do you open the whole affair of our marriage to him immediately. It will come with more irresistible persuasion from you than from myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and authority will put an end to Sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and the whole family to our marriage.

Fan. Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

Love. I have heard him and Canton, since dinner, singing French songs under the great walnut-tree by the parlour door. If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately. To-morrow morning is fixed for your departure, and if we lose this opportunity, we may wish in vain for another.—He approaches—I must retire.—Speak, my dear Fanny, speak, and make us happy! *[Exit.]*

Fan. What shall I do? What shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

Enter LORD OGLEBY and CANTON.

Lord O. To see so much beauty so solitary, Madam, is a satire upon mankind, and 'tis fortunate that one man has broke in upon your reverie, for the credit of our sex. I say one, Madam; for poor Canton here, from age and infirmities, stands for nothing.

Can. Noting at all, indeed.

Fan. Your lordship does me great honour.—I had a favour to request, my lord?

Lord O. A favour, Madam?—To be honoured with your commands is an inexpressible favour done to me, Madam.

Fan. If your lordship could indulge me with the honour of a moment's—What's the matter with me? *[Aside.]*

Lord O. The girl's confused—Hey!—here's something in the wind, faith—I'll have a *tete-a-tete* with her. *[Aside.]—Allez-vous en!*

[To CANTON.]

Can. I go—*Ah, pauvre Mademoiselle!* My lor, have pitié upon the poor pigeon!

[Apart to LORD O.]

Lord O. I'll knock you down, Cant. *[Smiles.]*

Can. Den I go—*[Shuffles along.]*—You are mosh please, for all dat. *[Aside. Exit.]*

Fan. I shall sink with apprehension. *[Aside.]*

Lord O. What a sweet girl!—she's a civilized being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of the family. *[Aside.]*

Fan. My lord! I—*[Courtesies and blushes.]*

Lord O. I look upon it, Madam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my life, that I have at this moment the honour of receiving your commands, and the satisfaction of confirming with my tongue what my eyes perhaps have but too weakly expressed—that I am literally the humblest of your servants.

Fan. I think myself greatly honoured by your lordship's partiality to me; but it distresses me that I am obliged, in my present situation, to apply to it for protection.

Lord O. I am happy in your distress, Madam, because it gives me an opportunity to show my zeal.—Beauty to me is a religion in which I was born and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr.—I'm in tolerable spirits, faith! *[Aside.]*

Fan. There is not, perhaps, at this moment, a more distressed creature than myself. Affection, duty, hope, despair, and a thousand different sentiments, are struggling in my bosom; and even the presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for protection, adds to my perplexity.

Lord O. Does it, Madam?—Venus forbid!—My old fault; the devil's in me, I think, for perplexing young women. *[Aside, and smiling.]* Take courage, Madam! dear Miss Fanny, explain.—You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you—my heart, Madam:—I am attached

to you by all the laws of sympathy and delicacy.—By my honour, I am.

Fan. Then I will venture to unburden my mind—Sir John Melvil, my lord, by the most misplaced and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

Lord O. How, Madam? Has Sir John made his addresses to you?

Fan. He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say that my duty to my father, love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great respect I entertain for your lordship, *[Courtesies.]* made me shudder at his addresses.

Lord O. Charming girl!—Proceed, my dear Miss Fanny, proceed!

Fan. In a moment—give me leave, my lord!—But if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure—

Lord O. Impossible, by all the tender powers!—Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

Fan. Then, my lord, Sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time—as—as— *[Hesitates.]*

Lord O. As what, Madam?

Fan. As—pardon my confusion—I am entirely devoted to another.

Lord O. If this is not plain, the devil's in it. *[Aside.]* But tell me, my dear Miss Fanny, for I must know; tell me the how, the when, and the where—Tell me—

Re-enter CANTON, hastily.

Can. My lor, my lor, my lor!

Lord O. Damn your Swiss impertinence! how durst you interrupt me in the most critical, melting moment that ever love and beauty honoured me with?

Can. I demande pardonne, my lor! Sir John Melvil, my lor, sent me to beg you do him de *honneur* to speak a little to you, my lor.

Lord O. I'm not at leisure—I am busy—Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swiss rascal, or I'll—

Can. *Fort bien*, my lor. *[Goes out on tiptoe.]*

Lord O. By the laws of gallantry, Madam, this interruption should be death; but as no punishment ought to disturb the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, Madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty.

Fan. The entrance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it; and yet I must open my heart with a discovery, or it will break with its burden. *[Aside.]*

Lord O. What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation. *[Aside.]* I presume, Madam, (and as you have flattered me, by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption,) that—

Fan. Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord, and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend—

Lord O. Upon me, Madam?

Fan. Upon you, my lord. *[Sighs.]*

Lord O. There's no standing this: I have caught the infection—her tenderness dissolves me. *[Sighs.]*

Fan. And should you too severely judge of a rash action, which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed—

Lord O. [*Takes her hand.*] Thou amiable creature, command my heart, for it is vanquished. Speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them.

Fan. I cannot, my lord; indeed, I cannot. Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses; and when you know them, pity and protect me. [*Exit in tears.*]

Lord O. How the devil could I bring her to this? It is too much—too much—I can't bear it—I must give way to this amiable weakness. [*Wipes his eyes.*] My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired. [*Stifles a tear.*] Can I be a man and withstand it? No—I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her. But here comes the father, quite *a-propos*. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby-house to-morrow morning. But what the devil! Miss Sterling too! What mischief's in the wind now! No conquest there—no, no, that would be too much desolation to the family.

Enter STERLING and MISS STERLING.

Ster. My lord, your servant! I am attending my daughter here upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsy.

Lord O. Your eyes, Miss Sterling, for I always read the eyes of a young lady, betray some little emotion. What are your commands, Madam?

Miss S. I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord!

Lord O. I cannot commend my kinsman's behaviour, Madam. He has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostacy. Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

Miss S. Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of Sir John's inconstancy.

Lord O. Nay now, my dear Miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for Miss Fanny, but believe me, my dear Miss Sterling, believe me, Miss Fanny has no passion for Sir John. She has a passion, indeed, a most tender passion. She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed. [*Conceitedly.*]

Miss S. Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord.

Lord O. Lovewell! no, poor lad! she does not think of him. [*Smiles.*] I know better: however, a little time will solve all mysteries.

Miss S. Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of Sir John's artifice, and my sister's dissimulation! You don't know her; indeed, my lord, you don't know her; a base, insinuating, perfidious!—It is too much—She has been beforehand with me, I perceive, endeavouring to prejudice your lordship in her favour; and I am to be laughed at by every body. Such unnatural behaviour to me! But since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved that some way or other I will have revenge. [*Exit.*]

Ster. This is foolish work, my lord!

Lord O. I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty.

Ster. It is touching, indeed, my lord; and very moving for a father.

Lord O. To be sure, Sir! You, with your exquisite feelings, must be distressed beyond measure! Wherefore, to divert your too exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject, and proceed to business.

Ster. With all my heart, my lord.

Lord O. You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families by the proposed marriage.

Ster. And I am very sorry to see it, my lord.

Lord O. Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. 'Tis my only wish at present, my omnium, as I may call it.

Lord O. Your wishes shall be fulfilled.

Ster. Shall they, my lord? but how—how?

Lord O. I'll marry in your family.

Ster. What! my sister Heidelberg?

Lord O. You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No, not your sister, but your daughter.

Ster. My daughter?

Lord O. Fanny!—now the murder's out!

Ster. What you, my lord!

Lord O. Yes, I, I, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. No, no, my Lord; that's too much.

[*Smiles.*]

Lord O. Too much! I don't comprehend you.

Ster. What you, my lord, marry my Fanny? Bless me! what will the folks say?

Lord O. Why, what will they say?

Ster. That you are a bold man, my lord; that's all.

Lord O. Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit, for aught I know. Do you court my alliance?

Ster. To be sure, my lord.

Lord O. Then I'll explain—My nephew wont marry your eldest daughter, nor I neither.—Your youngest daughter wont marry him; I will marry your youngest daughter.

Ster. What! with a youngest daughter's fortune, my lord?

Lord O. With any fortune, or no fortune at all, Sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the demon interest sinks before him. So, Sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter; your youngest daughter will marry me.

Ster. Who told you so, my lord?

Lord O. Her own sweet self, Sir

Ster. Indeed!

Lord O. Yes, Sir; our affection is mutual; your advantage double and treble; your daughter will be a countess directly—I shall be the happiest of beings, and you'll be a father to an earl instead of a baronet.

Ster. But what will my sister say? and my daughter?

Lord O. I'll manage that matter; nay, if they wont consent, I'll run away with your daughter in spite of you.

Ster. Well said, my lord! your spirit's good; I wish you had my constitution; but if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

Lord O. I'll answer for your sister, Sir.—*A-propos*, the lawyers are in the house. I'll have articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

Ster. Very well! and I'll despatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want; you must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match.—He, he, he! what will the folks say? [*Exit.*]

Lord O. What a fellow am I going to make a father of! He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse—But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family.

Re-enter LOVEWELL, hastily.

Love. I beg your lordship's pardon; are you alone, my lord?

Lord O. No, my lord, I am not alone; I am in company, the best company.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I never was in such exquisite, enchanting company since my heart first conceived, or my senses tasted, pleasure.

Love. Where are they, my lord?—

[*Looks about.*]

Lord O. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Love. What company have you there, my lord?

[*Smiles.*]

Lord O. My own ideas, Sir, which so crowd upon my imagination, and kindle in it such a delirium of ecstasy, that wit, wine, music, poetry, all combined, and each in perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity.

Love. I see that your lordship is happy, and I rejoice at it.

Lord O. You shall rejoice at it, Sir; my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

Love. Shall I, my lord?—then I understand you; you have heard. Miss Fanny has informed you—

Lord O. She has; I have heard, and she shall be happy; 'tis determined.

Love. Then I have reached the summit of my wishes. And will your lordship pardon the folly?

Lord O. O yes, poor creature, how could she help it? 'Twas unavoidable—fate and necessity.

Love. It was indeed, my lord. Your kindness distracts me.

Lord O. And so it did the poor girl, faith.

Love. She trembled to disclose the secret, and declare her affections.

Lord O. The world, I believe, will not think her affections ill placed.

Love. [*Bows.*] You are too good, my lord.—And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

Lord O. From my very soul, Lovewell.

Love. [*Bows.*] I was afraid of her meeting with a cold reception.

Lord O. More fool you then—

Who pleads her cause with never failing beauty, Here finds a full redress. [*Strikes his breast.*]
She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

Love. Her beauty, my lord, is her least merit. She has an understanding—

Lord O. Her choice convinces me of that.

Love. [*Bows.*] That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

Lord O. No, no, not altogether; it began with interest, and ended in passion.

Love. Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart, and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person—

Lord O. I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and so totally of your mind, touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that were it not for the cold, unfeeling impediments of the law, I would marry her to-morrow morning.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I would, by all that's honourable in man, and amiable in woman.

Love. Marry her!—Who do you mean my lord?

Lord O. Miss Fanny Sterling that is; the countess of Ogleby that shall be.

Love. I am astonished!

Lord O. Why, could you expect less from me?

Love. I did not expect this, my lord.

Lord O. Trade and accounts have destroyed your feeling.

Love. No indeed, my lord.

[*Sighs.*]

Lord O. The moment that love and pity entered my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony, and shorten the girl's tortures—I never do any thing by halves, do I, Lovewell?

Love. No indeed, my lord. [*Sighs.*] What an accident!

[*Aside.*]

Lord O. What's the matter, Lovewell? thou seem'st to have lost thy faculties. Why don't you wish me joy, man?

Love. O, I do, my lord.

[*Sighs.*]

Lord O. She said that you would explain what she had not power to utter; but I wanted no interpreter for the language of love.

Love. But has your lordship considered the consequences of your resolution?

Lord O. No, Sir, I am above consideration, when my desires are kindled.

Love. But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew, Sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr. Lovewell.

Love. Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to Sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter.

Love. But what will become of Miss Sterling, my lord?

Lord O. What's that to you? You may have her, if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city philosophy to be reconciled to Lord Ogleby's being his son-in-law, instead of Sir John Melvil, baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought to that, without having recourse to his calculations, eh, Lovewell?

Love. But, my lord, that is not the question.

Lord O. Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer. I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

What news with you, Sir John? You look all hurry and impatience—like a messenger after a battle.

Sir J. After a battle indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement; and wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered up resolution to declare what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

Lord O. To the business then, and be as concise as possible, for I am upon the wing—eh, Lovewell!

[*Smiles, and LOVEWELL bows.*]

Sir J. I find 'tis in vain my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

Lord O. Very true, nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion—sha'n't I, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and LOVEWELL bows.*]

Sir J. Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you that I cannot marry Miss Sterling.

Lord O. I am not at all surprised at it—she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but as you were to swallow it, and not I, it was your business, and not mine. Any thing more?

Sir J. But this, my lord; that I may be

permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

Lord O. O yes, by all means—have you any hopes there, nephew? Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell? [*Smiles and thinks at LOVEWELL.*]

Love. I think not, my lord. [*Gravely.*]

Lord O. I think so too; but let the fool try.

Sir J. Will your lordship favour me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match, the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

Lord O. Mrs. Heidelberg? Had not you better begin with the young lady first? It will save you a great deal of trouble, wont it, Lovewell? [*Smiles.*] But do what you please, it will be the same thing to me: wont it, Lovewell? [*Conceitedly.*] Why don't you laugh at him?

Love. I do, my lord. [*Forces a smile.*]

Sir J. And your lordship will endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with Miss Fanny?

Lord O. I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg about the adorable Fanny as soon as possible.

Sir J. Your generosity transports me.

Lord O. Poor fellow, what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town. [*Aside.*]

Sir J. And your lordship is not in the least offended at this seeming inconstancy?

Lord O. Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity. I look upon women as the *fera natura*—Lawful game—and every man who is qualified, has a natural right to pursue them;—Lovewell as well as you, and you as well as he, and I as well as either of you. Every man shall do his best, without offence to any—what say you; kinsmen?

Sir J. You have made me happy, my lord.

Love. And me, I assure you, my lord.

Lord O. And I am superlatively so—allons donc! To horse and away, boys! you to your affairs, and I to mine—*suivons l'amour.* [*Sings. Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—FANNY'S Apartment.

Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY, followed by BETTY.

Fan. Why did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed, and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber-door.

Bet. My mistress is right, Sir! evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure you are both too good, not to expect mischief from them.

Love. But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

Bet. I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, Sir, to expect the worse.

Fan. I do expect the worst. Pr'ythee, Betty, return to the outward door, and listen if you hear any body in the gallery; and let us know directly.

Bet. I warrant you, Madam—the Lord bless you both. [*Exit.*]

Fan. What did my father want with you this evening?

Love. He gave me the key of his closet, with orders to bring from London some papers relating to Lord Ogleby.

Fan. And why did you not obey him?

Love. Because I am certain that his lordship has opened his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account—But as we shall discover all to-morrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.

Fan. Hark!—hark! bless me, how I tremble!—I feel the terrors of guilt. Indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me—this situation may have very unhappy consequences. [*Weeps.*]

Love. But it sha'n't. I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risk of maintaining you by the hardest labour, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity. What! shall I sacrifice all my best hopes and affections, in your dear health and safety, for the mean (and in such case the meanest) consideration—of our fortune? Were we to be abandoned by all our relations, we have that in our hearts and minds will weigh against the most affluent circumstances. I should not have proposed the secrecy of our marriage, but for your sake; and with hopes that the most generous sacrifice you have made to love and me, might be less injurious to you, by waiting a lucky moment of reconciliation.

Fan. Hush! hush! for Heaven's sake, my dear Lovewell; don't be so warm! your generosity gets the better of your prudence; you will be heard, and we shall be discovered. I am satisfied—indeed I am. Excuse this weakness, this delicacy, this what you will. My mind's at peace—indeed, it is—think no more of it, if you love me!

Love. That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience: it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you a moment. [*Kisses her.*]

Re-enter BETTY.

Bet. [*In a low voice.*] I'm sorry to disturb you.

Fan. Ha! what's the matter?

Love. Have you heard any body?

Bet. Yes, yes, I have; and they have heard you too, or I'm mistaken—if they had seen you too, we should have been in a fine quandary.

Fan. Pr'ythee, don't prate now, Betty!

Love. What did you hear?

Bet. I was preparing myself, as usual, to take me a little nap—

Love. A nap!

Bet. Yes, Sir, a nap; for I watch much better so than wide awake; and when I had wrapped this handkerchief round my head, for fear of the ear-ache from the key-hole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of a buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so with my hand.

Fan. Well—well—and so—

Bet. And so, Madam, when I heard Mr. Lovewell a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder too—and pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise.

[*Makes an indistinct sort of noise, like speaking.*]

Fan. Well, and what did they say?

Bet. O! I could not understand a word of what was said.

Love. The outward door is locked?

Bet. Yes; and I bolted it too, for fear of the worst.

Fan. Why did you? they must have heard you, if they were near.

Bet. And I did it on purpose, Madam, and coughed a little too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice—when I was silent, they were silent, and so I came to tell you.

Fan. What shall we do?

Love. Fear nothing; we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon but Betty might fancy this noise—she's in

the conspiracy, and can make a man a mouse at any time.

Bet. I can distinguish a man from a mouse as well as my betters—I'm sorry you think so ill of me, Sir.

Fan. He compliments you, don't be a fool! Now you have set her tongue a running, she'll mutter for an hour. [*To LOVEWELL.*] I'll go and hearken myself. [*Exit.*]

Bet. I'll turn my back upon no girl for sincerity and service. [*Half aside, muttering.*]

Love. Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, Betty, for one and the other.

Bet. I am not mercenary neither—I can live on a little, with a good carter.

Re-enter FANNY.

Fan. All seems quiet. Suppose, my dear, you go to your own room—I shall be much easier then—and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

Bet. You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret.

[*Half aside, and muttering.*]
Love. Should I leave you now, if they still are upon the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult upon to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the outward door after her; we can fasten this; and when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

Bet. Shall I, Madam?

Fan. Do let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after.

Love. I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be gone this moment. [*Going.*]

Fan. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of her—

Bet. They'll have the wrong sow by the ear, I can tell them that. [*Going hastily.*]

Fan. Softly—softly—Betty! don't venture out, if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you! See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

Love. But love, Fanny, makes amends for all.

[*Exeunt softly.*]

SCENE II.—A Gallery leading to several Bed-chambers.

Enter MISS STERLING, leading MRS. HEIDELBERG, in a night-cap.

Miss S. This way, dear Madam, and then I'll tell you all.

Mrs. H. Nay, but niece—consider a little—don't drag me out this figure; let me put on my fly-cap!—If any of my lord's fammaly, or the counsellors at law should be stirring, I should be prodigiously disconcerted.

Miss S. But, my dear Madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber!—O! she's all craft and wickedness.

Mrs. H. Well, but softly, Betsy!—you are all in emotion—your mind is too much frustrated—you can neither eat, nor drink, nor take your natural rest—compose yourself, child; for if we are not as warisome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole fammaly.

Miss S. We are disgraced already, Madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself; or if any body, it is my sister: my father, for the sake of a better bargain,

would marry me to a 'Change broker; so that, if you, Madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy—the fruits of her treachery—trample, with scorn, upon the rights of her elder sister—the will of the best of aunts—and the weakness of a too interested father.

[*Pretends to be bursting in tears.*]

Mrs. H. Don't Betsy—keep your spirit—I hate whimpering—I am your friend—depend upon me in every particular. But be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discovered.

Miss S. I had no desire to sleep, and would not undress myself, knowing that my Machiavel sister would not rest till she had broke my heart:—I was so uneasy that I could not stay in my room, but when I thought that all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward; she immediately came back and told me, that they were in high consultation; that she had heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conducting Sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

Mrs. H. And how did you conduct yourself in this dilemma?

Miss S. I returned with her, and could hear a man's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly; and you may depend upon it, that Sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before the morning, if we don't prevent them.

Mrs. H. Why, the brazen slut! she has got her sister's husband (that is to be) locked up in her chamber! at night too—I tremble at the thoughts!

Miss S. Hush, Madam! I hear something?

Mrs. H. You frighten me—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this figur for the world.

Miss S. 'Tis dark, Madam; you can't be seen.

Mrs. H. I protest there's a candle coming, and a man too!

Miss S. Nothing but servants; let us retire a moment! [*They retire.*]

Enter BRUSH, half drunk, laying hold of the CHAMBERMAID, who has a candle in her hand.

Cham. Be quiet, Mr. Brush; I shall drop down with terror!

Brush. But my sweet and most amiable chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason; that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

Cham. But you may do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm too; pray let me go: I am ruined if they hear you; I tremble like an asp.

Brush. But they sha'n't hear us; and if you have a mind to be ruined, it shall be the making of your fortune, you little slut, you! therefore, I say it again, if you have no love, hear a little reason!

Cham. I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town-rake, I see; and now you are a little in liquor, you fear nothing.

Brush. Nothing, by Heavens! but your frowns, most amiable chambermaid; I am a little electrified, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink port, and your master's is so heady, that a pint of

it oversets a claret drinker. Come now, my dear little spider-brusher!

Cham. Don't be rude! bless me! I shall be ruined—what will become of me?

Brush. I'll take care of you, by all that's honourable.

Cham. You are a base man to use me so—I'll cry out, if you don't let me go. This is Miss Sterling's chamber, that Miss Fanny's, and that Madam Heidelberg's.

Brush. We know all that. And that Lord Ogleby's, and that my lady What-d'ye-call-em's: I don't mind such folks when I'm sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that, too.

Cham. More shame for you, Mr. Brush! you terrify me—you have no modesty.

Brush. O, but I have, my sweet spider-brusher—for instance, I reverence Miss Fanny—she's a most delicious morsel, and fit for a prince. With all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself—but for her sister—

Miss S. [*Within.*] There, there, Madam, all in a story!

Cham. Bless me, Mr. Brush! I heard something!

Brush. Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon—if it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two damn'd things at once.

Cham. Law! law! how you blaspheme! we shall have the house upon our heads for it.

Brush. No, no, it will last our time; but, as I was saying, the eldest sister—Miss Jezebel—

Cham. Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

Brush. No—we have smoked her already; and unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us. Na no, she wont do—we are a little too nice.

Cham. You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

Brush. Why, for that matter, my dear, I am a little inclined to mischief; and if you don't have pity upon me, I will break open that door, and ravish Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. H. [*Coming forward.*] There's no bearing this—you profligate monster!

Cham. Ha! I am undone!

Brush. Zounds! here she is, by all that's monstrous. [*Runs off.*]

Miss S. A fine discourse you have had with that fellow.

Mrs. H. And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster.

Miss S. What have you to say for yourself?

Cham. I can say nothing—I'm so frightened, and so ashamed. But indeed I am virtuous—I am virtuous, indeed.

Mrs. H. Well, well—don't tremble so; but tell us what you know of this horrible plot here.

Miss S. We'll forgive you, if you'll discover all.

Cham. Why, Madam, don't let me betray my fellow-servants—I sha'n't sleep in my bed, if I do.

Mrs. H. Then you shall sleep somewhere else to-morrow night.

Cham. O dear! what shall I do?

Mrs. H. Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

Cham. Why, our butler has been treating us below in his pantry—Mr. Brush forced us to make a kind of a holiday night of it.

Miss S. Holiday! for what?

Cham. Nay, I only made one.

Miss S. Well, well; but upon what account?

Cham. Because, as how, Madam, there was a change in the family, they said—that his honour, Sir John, was to marry Miss Fanny instead of your ladyship.

Miss S. And so you make a holiday for that—Very fine!

Cham. I did not make it, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. But do you know nothing of Sir John's being to run away with Miss Fanny to-night?

Cham. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Miss S. Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

Cham. No, as I hope for mercy, Ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, I'll put an end to all this directly—do you run to my brother Sterling—

Cham. Now, Ma'am? 'Tis so very late, Ma'am—

Mrs. H. I don't care how late it is. Tell him there are thieves in the house—that the house is on fire—tell him to come here immediately—Go, I say.

Cham. I will, I will, though I'm frightened out of my wits. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. H. Do you watch here, my dear; and I'll put myself in order to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counterplot 'em too. [*Exit into her chamber.*]

Miss S. I have as much pleasure in this revenge, as in being made a countess. Ha! they are unlocking the door. Now for it! [*Retires.*]

FANNY'S door is unlocked, and BETTY comes out. MISS STERLING approaches her.

Bet. [*Calling within.*] Sir, sir! now's your time—all's clear. [*Seeing MISS STERLING.*] stay, stay—not yet—we are watched.

Miss S. And so you are, Madam Betty.

[*MISS STERLING lays hold of her, while BETTY locks the door, and puts the key into her pocket.*]

Bet. [*Turning round.*] What's the matter, Madam?

Miss S. Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, Madam.

Bet. I am no tell-tale, Madam, and no thief; they'll get nothing from me. [*Aside.*]

Miss S. You have a great deal of courage, Betty, and, considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

Bet. My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, Ma'am.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. What's all this? What's the matter? Why am I disturbed in this manner?

Miss S. This creature, and my mistresses, Sir, will explain the matter.

Re-enter MRS. HEIDELBERG, with another head-dress.

Mrs. H. Now I'm prepared for the rancounter—Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness?

Ster. Not I—but what is it? speak. I was got into my little closet, all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my senses in the confusion of Lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak; and whether it's fire, or thieves, or a rape, I'm quite in the dark.

Mrs. H. No, no, there's no rape, brother!—all parties are willing, I believe.

Miss S. Who's in that chamber?

[*Detaining BETTY, who seems to be stealing away.*]

Bet. My mistress.

Miss S. And who's with your mistress?

Bet. Why, who should there be?

Miss S. Open the door then, and let us see.

Bet. The door is open, Madam. [*MISS STERLING goes to the door.*] I'll sooner die than peach.

[*Exit, hastily.*]

Miss S. The door is locked; and she has got the key in her pocket.

Mrs. H. There's impudence, brother! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school!

Ster. But zounds! what is all this about? You tell me of a sum total, and you don't produce the particulars.

Mrs. H. Sir John Melvil is locked up in your daughter's bed-chamber. There is the particular.

Ster. The devil he is!—That's bad.

Miss S. And he has been there some time, too.

Ster. Ditto!

Mrs. H. Ditto! worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the house, and expose him to my lord, and the whole fammaly.

Ster. By no means! we shall expose ourselves, sister!—The best way is to insure privately—let me alone! I'll make him marry her to-morrow morning.

Miss S. Make him marry her! this is beyond all patience!—You have thrown away all your affection, and I shall do as much by my obedience; unnatural fathers make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it. Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world; but the deriders shall be rid; and so—Help, help, there! Thieves, thieves!

Mrs. H. Tit-for-tat, Betsy! you are right, my girl.

Ster. Zounds! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family!—The devil's in the girl.

Mrs. H. No, no, the devil's in you, brother; I am ashamed of your principles.—What! would you connive at your daughter's being locked up with her sister's husband? Help! Thieves! thieves, I say!

[*Cries out.*]

Ster. Sister, I beg of you!—daughter, I beg of you!—If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves!—we shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood, and getting above twenty per cent. for our money.

Miss S. What, by my disgrace and my sister's triumph? I have a spirit above such mean considerations: and to show you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar, 'Change-alley spirit—Help, help! Thieves, thieves, I say!

Ster. Ay, ay, you may save your lungs: the house is in an uproar.

Enter CANTON in a night-gown and slippers.

Can. Eh, *diable!* vat is de raison of dis great noise, dis *tintamarre*?

Ster. Ask those ladies, Sir; 'tis of their making.

Lord O. [*Calls within.*] Brush! Brush! Canton! Where are you? What's the matter?—*[Rings a bell.]* Where are you?

Ster. 'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

Can. I com, mi lor!

[*Exit.*]

Flow. [*Calls within.*] A light! a light here!—

where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

Ster. Lights here! lights for the gentlemen!

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. H. My brother feels, I see: your sister's turn will come next.

Miss S. Ay, ay, let it go round, Madam, it is the only comfort I have left.

Re-enter STERLING, with lights, before SERGEANT FLOWER, with one boot and a slipper, and TRAVERSE.

Ster. This way, Sir! this way, gentlemen!

Flow. Well but, Mr. Sterling, no danger, I hope? Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarmed about thieves, at circuit time. They would be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

Trav. No danger, Mr. Sterling—no trespass, I hope?

Ster. None, gentlemen, but of those ladies' making.

Mrs. H. You'll be ashamed to know, gentlemen, that all your labours and studies about this young lady are thrown away—Sir John Melvil is at this moment locked up with this lady's younger sister.

Flow. The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure; but why were we to be frightened out of our beds for this? Could not we have tried this cause to-morrow morning?

Miss S. But, Sir, by to-morrow morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service; the birds now in that cage would have flown away.

Enter LORD OGLEBY in his robe-de-chambre, night-cap, &c. leaning on CANTON.

Lord O. I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest. What's the matter with you all?

Ster. Ay, ay, 'tis all over! Here's my lord, too.

Lord O. What's all this shrieking and screaming! Where's my angelic Fanny? She's safe, I hope?

Mrs. H. Your angelic Fanny, my lord, is locked up with your angelic nephew, in that chamber.

Lord O. My nephew! Then will I be excommunicated.

Mrs. H. Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with Miss Fanny, and Miss Fanny has been plotting to run away with your nephew; and if we had not watched them and called up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

Lord O. Look ye, ladies! I know that Sir John has conceived a violent passion for Miss Fanny; and I know, too, that Miss Fanny has conceived a violent passion for another person; and I am so well convinced of the rectitude of her affections, that I will support them with my fortune, my honour, and my life.—Eh, sha'n't I, Mr. Sterling?

[*Smiling.*] What say you?

Ster. [*Sulkily.*] To be sure, my lord. These bawling women have been the ruin of every thing.

[*Aside.*]

Lord O. But come, I'll end this business in a trice. If you, ladies, will compose yourselves, and Mr. Sterling will ensure Miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow with a whisper through the key-hole.

Mrs. H. The horrid creatures! I say, my lord, break the door open.

Lord O. Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate! Now to our experiment!

[*Advancing towards the door.*]

Miss S. Now, what will they do? My heart will beat through my bosom.

Re-enter BETTY, with the key.

Bet. There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be ashamed of, and my mistress shall face her enemies. [*Going to unlock the door.*]

Mrs. H. There's impudence!

Lord O. The mystery thickens. Lady of the bedchamber, [*To BETTY.*] open the door, and entreat Sir John Melvil (for the ladies will have it that he is there,) to appear, and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors. Call Sir John Melvil into court!

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

Sir J. I am here, my lord.

Mrs. H. Hey-day!

Sir J. What's all this alarm and confusion? There is nothing but hurry in this house! What is the reason of it?

Lord O. Because you have been in that chamber; have been! nay, you are there at this moment, as these ladies have protested, so don't deny it—

Trav. This is the clearest *alibi* I ever knew, Mr. Sergeant.

Flow. *Luce clarius.*

Lord O. Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolics, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But come, [*To BETTY.*] open the door, and entreat your amiable mistress to come forth, and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

Bet. [*Opening the door.*] Madam, you are wanted in this room. [*Pertly.*]

Enter FANNY, in great confusion.

Miss S. You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in.

Mrs. H. Ready to pack off, bag and baggage! Her guilt confounds her!

Flow. Silence in the court, ladies!

Fan. I am confounded, indeed, Madam!

Lord O. Don't droop, my beauteous lily! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind. Pour conviction into their ears, and rapture into mine. [*Smiling.*]

Fan. I am at this moment the most unhappy—most distressed—the tumult is too much for my heart—and I want the power to reveal a secret, which to conceal has been the misfortune and misery of my— [*Faints away.*]

LOVEWELL rushes out of the chamber.

Love. My Fanny in danger! I can contain no longer! Prudence were now a crime; all other cares were lost in this! Speak, speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny! let me but hear thy voice: open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life!

[*During this speech, they are all in amazement.*]

Miss S. Lovewell!—I am easy.

Mrs. H. I am thunderstruck!

Lord O. I am petrified!

Sir J. And I undone.

Fan. [*Recovering.*] O, Lovewell!—even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face.

Ster. What now? Did not I send you to London, Sir?

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Lord O. Eh!—What! How's this? By what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bed-chamber?

Love. By that right which makes me the happiest of men; and by a title which I would not forego for any the best of kings could give.

Bet. I could cry my eyes out, to hear his magnanimity.

Lord O. I am annihilated!

Ster. I have been choked with rage and wonder;—but now I can speak. Lovewell, you are a villain;—you have broken your word with me.

Fan. Indeed, Sir, he has not; you forbade him to think of me, when it was out of his power to obey you; we have been married these four months.

Ster. And he sha'n't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery! As for you, you shall repeat this step as long as you live, Madam!

Fan. Indeed, Sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable for ever without your forgiveness.

Ster. Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly! and you shall follow him, Madam!

Lord O. And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Lookye, Mr. Sterling, there have been some mistakes, which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget them, is to forgive the cause of them; which I do, from my soul. Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune; 'tis a debt of honour, and must be paid. You swore as much too, Mr. Sterling; but your laws in the city will excuse you, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without—errors excepted.

Ster. I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of other fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls, like herself, to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

Love. I hope there will be no danger of that, Sir. Young ladies, with minds like my Fanny's, would startle at the very shadow of vice; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

Mrs. H. Indiscretion, quotha? a mighty pretty delicate word to express disobedience!

Lord O. For my part, I indulge my own passions too much to tyrannize over those of other people. Poor souls! I pity them. And you must forgive them too. Come, come, melt a little of your flint, Mr. Sterling!

Ster. Why, why, as to that, my lord—to be sure, he is a relation of yours, my lord—What say you, sister Heidelberg?

Mrs. H. The girl's ruined, and I forgive her.

Ster. Well, so do I then. Nay, no thanks, there's an end of the matter.

Lord O. But, Lovewell, what makes you dumbo all this while?

Love. Your kindness, my lord: I can scarce believe my own senses; they are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation, and gratitude! I ever was, and am now more, bound in duty to your lordship. For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will in some measure compensate the want of fortune, you perhaps will not repent your goodness to me. And you, ladies, I flatter myself

will not for the future suspect me of artifice and intrigue. I shall be happy to oblige and serve you. As for you, Sir John—

Sir J. No apologies to me, Lovewell; I do not deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened, is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, yourself, and that lady (who I hope will pardon my behaviour,) a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you, that, light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honour enough to rejoice at your happiness.

Love. And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are seemingly the happiest of beings, yet all our joys will be damped, if his lordship's generosity and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness should not be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation, and consent of these our best benefactors.

[To the audience.

EPILOGUE. BY MR. GARRICK.

SCENE.—An Assembly.

Several Persons at cards, at different tables; among the rest, COLONEL TRILL, LORD MINUM, MRS. QUAYER, and SIR PATRICK MAHONY.

At the Quadrille Table.

Col. T. Ladies, with leave—

2 Lady. Pass!

3 Lady. Pass!

Mrs. Q. You must do more.

Col. T. Indeed I can't.

Mrs. Q. I play in hearts.

Col. T. Encore.

2 Lady. What luck?

Col. T. To-night at Drury-lane is play'd A comedy, and *tout nouvelle*—a spade! Is not Miss Crotchet at the play?

Mrs. Q. My niece Has made a party, Sir, to damn the piece.

At the Whist Table.

Lord M. I hate a play-house—Trump—it makes me sick.

1 Lady. We're two by honours, Ma'am.

Lord M. And we th' odd trick.

Pray do you know the author, Colonel Trill?

Col. T. I know no poets, Heav'n be prais'd—Spadille—

1 Lady. I'll tell you who, my lord.

[Whispers LORD MINUM.

Lord M. What, he again!

"And dwell such daring souls in little men?"

Be whose it will, they down our throats will cram it.

Col. T. O, no—I have a club—the best—we'll damn it.

Mrs. Q. O, bravo, colonel!—Music is my flame.

Lord M. And mine, by Jupiter!—We've won the game.

Col. T. What, do you love all music?

Mrs. Q. No, not Handel's.

And nasty plays—

Lord M. Are fit for Goths and Vandals.

[Rise from the table and pay.

From the Piquet Table.

Sir P. Well, faith and troth, that Shakspeare was no fool!

Col. T. I'm glad you like him, Sir—so ends the pool. [They pay and rise from the table

Song.—COLONEL TRILL.

I hate all their nonsense,
Their Shakspeares and Johnsons,
Their plays, and their play-house, and bards.
'Tis singing, not saying;
A fig for all playing,
But playing, as we do, at cards.

I love to see Jonas,
Am pleased too with Comus;
Each well the spectator rewards.
So clever, so neat, in
Their tricks and their cheating!
Like them, we would fain deal our cards.

Sir P. King Lare is touching!—And how fine to see

Ould Hamlet's ghost! "To be, or not to be."—

What are your op'ras to Othello's roar?

Oh, he's an angel of a Blackamoor?

Lord M. What! when he chokes his wife!

Col. T. And calls her whore?

Sir P. King Richard calls his horse—And then Macbeth,

Whene'er he murders—takes away the breath.

My blood runs cold at every syllable,

To see the dagger that's invisible. [All laugh.

Laugh if you please,—a pretty play—

Lord M. Is pretty.

Sir P. And when there's wit in't—

Col. T. To be sure, 'tis witty.

Sir P. I love the playhouse now—so light and gay

With all those candles—they have ta'en away!

[All laugh.

For all your game, what makes it so much brighter?

Col. T. Put out the lights, and then—

Lord M. 'Tis so much lighter,

Sir P. Pray, do you mane, Sirs, more than you express?

Col. T. Just as it happens—

Lord M. Either more or less.

Mrs. Q. An't you asham'd, Sir?

[To SIR PATRICK.

Sir P. Me!—I seldom blush:

For little Shakspeare, faith, I'd take a push.

Lord M. News, news! here comes Miss Crotchet from the play.

Enter MISS CROTCHET.

Mrs. Q. Well, Crotchet, what's the news?

Miss C. We've lost the day.

Col. T. Tell us, dear Miss, all you have heard and seen.

Miss C. I'm tir'd—a chair—here, take my capuchin.

Lord M. And isn't it damn'd, Miss?

Miss C. No, my lord, not quite.

But we shall damn it.

Col. T. When?

Miss C. To-morrow night.

There is a party of us, all of fashion,

Resolv'd to exterminate this vulgar passion:

A playhouse! what a place!—I must forswear it;

A little mischief only makes one bear it.

Such crowds of city folks!—so rude and pressing.

And their horse-laugh so hideously distressing!

Whene'er we hiss'd, they frown'd and fell a swearing, [ing,

Like their own Guildhall giants—fierce and star

Col. T. What said the folks of fashion? were they cross?

Lord M. The rest have no more judgment than my horse.

Miss C. Lord Grimly said 'twas execrable stuff. Says one—"Why so, my lord?"—My lord took snuff.

In the first act Lord George began to doze, And criticis'd the author through his nose; So loud indeed, that as his lordship snor'd, The pit turn'd round, and all the brutes encor'd. Some lords indeed approv'd the author's jokes.

Lord M. We have among us, Miss, some foolish folks.

Miss C. Says poor Lord Simper—"Well, now to my mind, The piece is good;"—but he's both deaf and blind.

Sir P. Upon my soul, a very pretty story! And quality appears in all its glory.

There was some merit in the piece, no doubt.

Miss C. O, to be sure!—if one could find it out.

Col. T. But, tell us, Miss, the subject of the play.

Miss C. Why, 'twas a marriage—yes—a marriage—stay—

A lord, an aunt, two sisters—and a merchant—
A baronet, two lawyers, a fat sergeant,
Are all produc'd—to talk with one another;
And about something make a mighty pother!
They all go in and out, and to and fro;
And talk and quarrel as they come and go—
Then go to bed—and then get up—and then—
Scream, faint, scold, kiss—and go to bed again.—
[*All laugh.*]

Such is the play—Your judgment—never sham it.

Col. T. Oh, damn it!

Mrs. Q. Damn it!

I Lady. Damn it!

Miss C. Damn it!

Lord M. Damn it!

Sir P. Well, faith, you speak your minds, and I'll be free—

Good night—this company's too good for me.

[*Going.*]

Col. T. Your judgment, dear Sir Patrick, makes us proud. [All laugh.]

Sir P. Laugh if you please, but pray don't laugh so loud. [*Exit.*]

Recitative.—COLONEL TRILL, MISS CROTCHET, and LORD MINUM.

Col. T. Now the barbarian's gone, Miss, tune your tongue,
And let us raise our spirits high with song.

Miss C. Colonel, *de tout mon cœur*—I've one in petto,

Which you shall join, and make it a *duetto*.

Lord M. *Bella signora, et amico mio*,

I too will join, and then we'll make a *trio*.

Col. T. Come all and join the full-mouth'd chorus:

And drive all tragedy and comedy before us.

[*All the company rise and advance to the front of the stage.*]

Trio.—COLONEL TRILL, MISS CROTCHET, and LORD MINUM.

Col. T. Would you ever go to see a tragedy?

Miss C. Never, never.

Col. T. A comedy?

Lord M. Never, never.

Live for ever.

Tweedle-dum, and tweedle-dee.

Col. T. } Live for ever.

Lord M. } Tweedle-dum, and tweedle-dee.

Miss C. } Tweedle-dum, and tweedle-dee.

Chorus. Would you ever go to see, &c.

THE LIAR:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

REMARKS.

THE *Menteur* of Corneille is the foundation of this farce, which was first produced as a comedy in three acts at Covent Garden. In that state, it was found rather tedious, and not sufficiently pointed with the *vis comica* but, reduced to two acts, it proves an agreeable comic treat, mixed with some wholesome satire.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE, 1818.
SIR JAMES ELLIOT,.....	Mr. Barnard.
OLD WILDING,.....	Mr. Powell.
YOUNG WILDING,.....	Mr. Elliston.
PAPILLION,.....	Mr. Gattie.
MISS GRANTAM,.....	Miss Boyce
MISS GODFREY,.....	Mrs. Orger.
KITTY,.....	Mrs. Allsop

ACT I.

SCENE I.—YOUNG WILDING'S Lodgings.

YOUNG WILDING and PAPILLION.

Y. Wild. And am I now, Papillion, perfectly equipped?

Pap. *Personne mieux*. Nobody better.

Y. Wild. My figure?

Pap. *Fait a peindre*.

Y. Wild. My air?

Pap. *Libre*.

Y. Wild. My address?

Pap. *Parisienne*.

Y. Wild. My hat sits easily under my arm; not like the dragged tail of my tattered academical habit?

Pap. Ah, *bien autre chose*.

Y. Wild. Why, then adieu, *Alma Mater*, and *bien venu la ville de Londres*; farewell to the schools, and welcome to the theatres; presidents, proctors, short commons with long graces, must now give place to plays, bagnios, long tavern bills, with no graces at all.

Pap. Ah, bravo! bravo!

Y. Wild. Well, but my dear Papillion, you must give me the *chart du pays*. This town is a new world to me: my provident papa, you know, would never suffer me near the smoke of London; and what can be his motive for permitting me now, I can't readily conceive.

Pap. *Ni moi*.

Y. Wild. I shall, however, take the liberty to conceal my arrival from him for a few days.

Pap. *Vous avez raison*.

Y. Wild. Well, my Mentor, and how am I to manage? Direct my road: where must I begin? But the debate is, I suppose, of consequence?

Pap. *Vraiment*.

Y. Wild. How long have you left Paris, Papillion?

Pap. Twelve, thirteen, year.

Y. Wild. I can't compliment you upon your progress in English.

Pap. The accent is difficult.

Y. Wild. But here you are at home.

Pap. *C'est vrai*.

Y. Wild. No stranger to fashionable places.

Pap. *Au fait*.

Y. Wild. Acquainted with the fashionable figures of both sexes.

Pap. *Sans doute*.

Y. Wild. Well, then, open your lecture:—and, d'ye hear, Papillion, as you have the honour to be promoted from the mortifying condition of an humble valet to the important charge of a private tutor, let us discard all distance between us. See me ready to slake my thirst at your fountain of knowledge, my Magnus Apollo.

Pap. Here, then, I disclose my Helicon to my poetical pupil.

Y. Wild. Hey, Papillion?

Pap. Sir?

Y. Wild. What is this? Why you speak English!

Pap. Without doubt.

Y. Wild. But, like a native!

Pap. To be sure.

Y. Wild. And what am I to conclude from all this?

Pap. Why, Sir—But, to be better understood, I believe it will be necessary to give you a short sketch of the principal incidents of my life.

Y. Wild. Pr'ythee, do.

Pap. Why then, you are to know, Sir, that my former situation has been rather above my present condition, having once sustained the dignity of sub-preceptor to one of those cheap, rural academies with which our county of York is so plentifully stocked.

Y. Wild. But to the point: why this disguise? why renounce your country?

Pap. There, Sir, you make a little mistake; it was my country that renounced me.

Y. Wild. Explain.

Pap. In an instant; upon quitting the school, and first coming to town, I got recommended to the compiler of the Monthly Review.

Y. Wild. What, an author too?

Pap. Oh, a voluminous one. The whole region of the *belles lettres* fell under my inspection; physic, divinity, and the mathematics, my mistress managed herself. There, Sir, like another Aristarch, I dealt out fame and damnation at pleasure. In obedience to the caprice and commands of my master, I have condemned books I never read; and applauded the fidelity of a translation, without understanding one syllable of the original.

Y. Wild. Ah! why, I thought acuteness of discernment, and depth of knowledge, were necessary to accomplish a critic.

Pap. Yes, Sir; but not a monthly one. Our method was very concise. We copy the title-page of a new book; we never go any farther. If we are ordered to praise it, we have at hand about ten words, which, scattered through as many periods, effectually does the business; as “laudable design, happy arrangement, spirited language, nervous sentiment, elevation of thought, conclusive argument.” If we are to decry, then we have, “unconnected, flat, false, illiberal, stricture, reprehensible, unnatural.” And thus, Sir, we pepper the author, and soon rid our hands of his work.

Y. Wild. A short recipe.

Pap. And yet, Sir, you have all the materials that are necessary: these are the arms with which we engage authors of every kind. To us all subjects are equal; plays or sermons, poetry or politics, music or midwifery, it is the same thing.

Y. Wild. How came you to resign this easy employment?

Pap. It would not answer. Notwithstanding what we say, people will judge for themselves; our work hung upon hand, and all I could get from the publisher was four shillings a-week and my small beer. Poor pittance!

Y. Wild. Poor, indeed.

Pap. Oh, half-starved me.

Y. Wild. What was your next change?

Pap. I was mightily puzzled to choose, when chance threw an old friend in my way that quite retrieved my affairs.

Y. Wild. Pray, who might he be?

Pap. A little bit of a Swiss genius, who had been French usher with me at the same school in

the country. I opened my melancholy story to him over three penny-worth of beef *a-la-mode* in a cellar in St. Ann's. My little foreign friend pursed up his lantern jaws, and, with a shrug of contempt, “Ah, *maître Jean, vous n'avez pas la politique*; you have no *finesse*: to trive here, you must study the folly of your own country.” —“How, Monsieur!” —“*Taisez-vous*: keep-a your tongue. *Autrefois* I teach you speak French, now I teach-a you to forget English. Go vid me to my lodgement, I vil give you proper dress, den go present yourself to de same hotels, de very same house; you will find all de doors dat was shut in your face as footman *Anglois*, will fly open demselves to a French valet de chambre.”

Y. Wild. Well, Papillion?

Pap. Gad, Sir, I thought it was but an honest artifice, so I determined to follow my friend's advice.

Y. Wild. Did it succeed?

Pap. Better than expectation. My tawny face, long cue, and broken English, was a *passe-partout*. Besides, when I am out of place, this disguise procures me many resources.

Y. Wild. As how?

Pap. Why, at a pinch, Sir, I am either a teacher of tongues, a friseur, a dentist, or a dancing-master: these, Sir, are hereditary professions to Frenchmen. But now, Sir, to the point: as you were pleased to be so candid with me, I was determined to have no reserve with you. You have studied books, I have studied men; you want advice, and I have some at your service.

Y. Wild. Well, I'll be your customer.

Pap. But guard my secret. If I should be so unfortunate as to lose your place, don't shut me out from every other.

Y. Wild. You may rely upon me.

Pap. In a few years I shall be in a condition to retire from business; but whether I shall settle at my family seat, or pass over to the continent, is as yet undetermined. Perhaps, in gratitude to the country, I may purchase a marquise near Paris, and spend the money I have got by their means generously amongst them.

Y. Wild. A grateful intention. But let us sally. Where do we open?

Pap. Let us see—one o'clock—it is a fine day: the Mall will be crowded.

Y. Wild. Allons.

Pap. But don't stare, Sir: survey every thing with an air of habit and indifference.

Y. Wild. Never fear.

Pap. But I would, Sir, crave a moment's audience, upon a subject that may prove very material to you.

Y. Wild. Proceed.

Pap. You may pardon my presumption; but you have, my good master, one little foible that I could wish you to correct.

Y. Wild. What is it?

Pap. And yet it is a pity too, you do it so very well.

Y. Wild. Pr'ythee, be plain.

Pap. You have, Sir, a lively imagination, with a most happy turn for invention.

Y. Wild. Well.

Pap. But now and then in your narratives you are hurried, by a flow of spirits, to border upon the improbable, a little given to the marvellous.

Y. Wild. I understand you: what I am somewhat subject to lying?

Pap. Oh, pardon me, Sir; I don't say that; no, no: only a little apt to embellish; that's all. To be sure it is a fine gift, that there is no disputing: but men in general are so stupid, so rigorously attached to matter of fact—And yet this talent of yours is the very soul and spirit of poetry; and why it should not be the same in prose, I can't for my life determine.

Y. Wild. You would advise me, then, not to be quite so poetical in my prose?

Pap. Why, Sir, if you would descend a little to the grovelling comprehension of the million, I think it would be as well.

Y. Wild. I'll think of it.

Pap. Besides, Sir, in this town, people are more smoky and suspicious. Oxford, you know, is the seat of the muses; and a man is naturally permitted more ornament and garniture to his conversation, than they will allow in this latitude.

Y. Wild. I believe you are right. But we shall be late. D'ye hear me, Papillion: if at any time you find me growing too poetical, give me a hint; your advice sha'n't be thrown away. *[Exit.]*

Pap. I wish it mayn't: but the disease is too rooted to be quickly removed. Lord, how I have sweat for him! yet he is as unembarrassed, easy, and fluent, all the time, as if he really believed what he said. Well, to be sure, he is a great master; it is a thousand pities his genius could not be converted to some public service. I think the government should employ him to answer the Brussels Gazette. I'll be hanged if he is not too many for Monsieur Maubert, at his own weapons. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—The Park.

Enter MISS GRANTAM, YOUNG WILDING, and PAPILLION following.

Y. Wild. Your ladyship's handkerchief, Ma'am.

Miss Gr. I am, Sir, concerned at the trouble—

Y. Wild. A most happy incident for me, Madam; as chance has given me an honour, in one lucky minute, that the most diligent attention has not been able to procure for me in the whole tedious round of a revolving year.

Miss Gr. Is this meant to me, Sir?

Y. Wild. To whom else, Madam? surely, you must have marked my respectful assiduity, my uninterrupted attendance; to plays, operas, balls, routs, and ridottos, I have pursued you like your shadow; I have besieged your door for a glimpse of your exit and entrance, like a distressed creditor, who has no arms against privilege but perseverance.

Pap. So, now, he is in for it; stop him who can.

Y. Wild. In short, Madam, ever since I quitted America, which I take now to be about a year, I have as faithfully guarded the live-long night your ladyship's portal, as a sentinel the powder magazine in a fortified city.

Pap. Quitted America! well pulled.

Miss Gr. You have served in America, then?

Y. Wild. Full four years, Ma'am: and during that whole time, not a single action of consequence, but I had an opportunity to signalize myself; and I think I may, without vanity, affirm, I did not miss the occasion. You have heard of Quebec, I presume?

Pap. What the deuce is he driving at now?

Y. Wild. The project to surprise that place was thought a happy expedient, and the first mounting the breach a gallant exploit. There indeed the whole army did me justice.

Miss Gr. I have heard the honour of that conquest attributed to another name.

Y. Wild. The mere taking the town, Ma'am; but that's a trifle.—But, Madam, it is not to the French alone that my feats are confined: Cherokees, Catabaws, with all the Aws and Ees of the continent, have felt the force of my arms.

Pap. This is too much, Sir.

Y. Wild. Hands off! nor am I less adroit at a treaty, Madam, than terrible in battle. To me we owe the friendship of the Five Nations; and I had the first honour of smoking the pipe of peace with the Little Carpenter.

Miss Gr. And so young!

Y. Wild. This gentleman, though a Frenchman and an enemy, I had the fortune to deliver from the Mohawks, whose prisoner he had been for nine years. He gives a most entertaining account of their laws and customs; he shall present you with the wampum belt and a scalping-knife. Will you permit him, Madam, just to give you a taste of the military-dance, with a short specimen of their war-whoop.

Pap. For Heaven's sake!

Miss Gr. The place is too public.

Y. Wild. In short, Madam, after having gathered as many laurels abroad as would garnish a Gothic cathedral at Christmas, I returned to reap the harvest of the well-fought field. Here it was my good fortune to encounter you: then was the victor vanquished; what the enemy could never accomplish, your eyes in an instant achieved; prouder to serve here than command in chief elsewhere; and more glorious in wearing your chains, than in triumphing over the vanquished world.

Miss Gr. I see Sir James Elliot coming, and must dismiss him. *[Aside.]*—Well, Sir, I accept the *tendre* of your passion, and may find a time to renew our acquaintance; at present it is necessary we should separate.

Y. Wild. Slave to your will, I live but to obey you. But, may I be indulged with the knowledge of your residence?

Miss Gr. Sir?

Y. Wild. Your place of abode?

Miss Gr. Oh, Sir, you can't want to be acquainted with that; you have a whole year stood sentinel at my ladyship's portal.

Y. Wild. Madam, I—I—I—

Miss Gr. Oh, Sir, your servant. Ha, ha, ha! What, you are caught? ha, ha, ha! Well, he has a most intrepid assurance. Adieu, my Mars. Ha, ha, ha! *[Exit.]*

Pap. That last was an unlucky question, Sir.

Y. Wild. A little *mal-a-propos*, I must confess.

Pap. A man should have a good memory who deals much in this poetical prose.

Y. Wild. Poh! I'll soon re-establish my credit: but I must know who this girl is. Hark ye, Papillion; could not you contrive to pump out of her footman—I see there he stands—the name of his mistress?

Pap. I will try.

[Exit.]
[WILDING retires to the back of the stage.]

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT and SERVANT.

Sir J. Music and an entertainment?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Sir J. Last night, upon the water?

Serv. Upon the water, last night.

Sir J. Who gave it?

Serv. That, Sir, I can't say.

To them WILDING.

Y. Wild. Sir James Elliot, your most devoted.

Sir J. Ah, my dear Wilding! you are welcome to town.

Y. Wild. You will pardon my impatience; I interrupted you; you seemed upon an interesting subject?

Sir J. Oh, an affair of gallantry.

Y. Wild. Of what kind?

Sir J. A young lady regaled last night by her lover on the Thames.

Y. Wild. As how?

Sir J. A band of music in boats.

Y. Wild. Were they good performers?

Sir J. The best. Then conducted to Marble-hall, where she found a magnificent collation.

Y. Wild. Well ordered?

Sir J. With elegance. After supper, a ball; and, to conclude the night, a firework.

Y. Wild. Was the last well designed?

Sir J. Superb.

Y. Wild. And happily executed?

Sir J. Not a single *faux pas*.

Y. Wild. And you don't know who gave it?

Sir J. I can't even guess.

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir J. Why do you laugh?

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha! It was me.

Sir J. You!

Pap. You, Sir!

Y. Wild. *Moi*—me.

Pap. So, so, so; he's entered again.

Sir J. Why, you are fortunate to find a mistress in so short a space of time.

Y. Wild. Short! why, man, I have been in London these six weeks.

Pap. O Lord, O Lord!

Y. Wild. It is true, not caring to encounter my father, I have rarely ventured out but of nights.

Pap. I can hold no longer. Dear Sir—

Y. Wild. Peace, puppy.

Pap. A curb to your poetical vein.

Y. Wild. I shall curb your impertinence.—But since the story is got abroad, I will, my dear friend, treat you with all the particulars.

Sir J. I shall hear it with pleasure.—This is a lucky adventure: but he must not know he is my rival. [Aside.]

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, between six and seven my goddess embarked at Somerset-stairs, in one of the companies' barges, gilt and hung with damask, expressly for the occasion.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Y. Wild. At the cabin-door she was accosted by a beautiful boy, who, in the garb of a Cupid, paid her some compliments in verse, of my own composing. The conceits were pretty; allusions to Venus and the sea—the lady and the Thames—no great matter; but, however, well timed, and, what was better, well taken.

Sir J. Doubtless.

Pap. At what a rate he runs!

Y. Wild. As soon as we had gained the centre of the river, two boats, full of trumpets, French-horns, and other martial music, struck up their sprightly strains from the Surry side, which were echoed by a suitable number of lutes, flutes, and hautboys, from the opposite shore. In this state, the oars keeping time, we majestically sailed along, till the arches of the new bridge gave a pause, and an opportunity for an elegant dessert in Dresden

China, by Robinson. Here the repast closed with a few favourite airs from Eliza, *Tenducci*, and the *Maitte*.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Y. Wild. Opposite Lambeth, I had prepared a naval engagement, in which Boscawen's victory over the French was repeated: the action was conducted by one of the commanders on that expedition, and not a single incident omitted.

Sir J. Surely, you exaggerate a little.

Pap. Yes, yes, this battle will sink him.

Y. Wild. True to the letter, upon my honour. I sha'n't trouble you with a repetition of our collation, ball, *feu d'artifice*, with the thousand little incidental amusements that chance or design produced: it is enough to know, that all that could flatter the senses, fire the imagination, or gratify the expectation, was there produced in a lavish abundance.

Sir J. The sacrifice was, I presume, grateful to your deity.

Y. Wild. Upon that subject you must pardon my silence.

Pap. Modest creature!

Sir J. I wish you joy of your success—For the present, you will excuse me.

Y. Wild. Nay, but stay and hear the conclusion.

Sir J. For that I shall seize another occasion. [Exit.]

Pap. Nobly performed, Sir.

Y. Wild. Yes, I think, happily hit off.

Pap. May I take the liberty to offer one question?

Y. Wild. Freely.

Pap. Pray, Sir, are you often visited with these waking dreams?

Y. Wild. Dreams! what dost mean by dreams? Pap. Those ornamental reveries, those frolics of fancy, which, in the judgment of the vulgar, would be deemed absolute flams.

Y. Wild. Why, Papillion, you have but a poor, narrow, circumscribed genius.

Pap. I must own, Sir, I have not sublimity sufficient to relish the full fire of your Pindaric muse.

Y. Wild. No; a plebeian soul! But I will animate thy clay; mark my example, follow my steps, and in time thou may'st rival thy master.

Pap. Very well, Sir, this is all very lively; but remember the travelling pitcher: if you don't one time or other, under favour, lie yourself into some confounded scrape, I will be content to be hanged.

Y. Wild. Do you think so, Papillion?—And whenever that happens, if I don't lie myself out of it again, why then I will be content to be crucified. And so, along after the lady—[Stops short, going out.] Zounds, here comes my father! I must fly. Watch him, Papillion, and bring me word to the Cardigan. [Exeunt separately.]

SCENE III.—A Tavern.

YOUNG WILDING and PAPILLION rising from table.

Y. Wild. Gad, I had like to have run into the old gentleman's mouth.

Pap. It is pretty near the same thing; for I saw him join Sir James Elliot: so your arrival is no longer a secret.

Y. Wild. Why then I must lose my pleasure, and you your preferment: I must submit to the dull decency of a sober family, and you to the customary duties of brushing and powdering. But

I was so fluttered at meeting my father, that I forgot the fair: prythee, who is she?

Pap. There were two.

Y. Wild. That I saw.

Pap. From her footman, I learned her name was Godfrey.

Y. Wild. And her fortune?

Pap. Immense.

Y. Wild. Single, I hope?

Pap. Certainly.

Y. Wild. Then will I have her.

Pap. What, whether she will or no?

Y. Wild. Yes.

Pap. How will you manage that?

Y. Wild. By making it impossible for her to marry any one else.

Pap. I don't understand you, Sir.

Y. Wild. Oh, I shall only have recourse to that talent you so mightily admire. You will see, by the circulation of a few anecdotes, how soon I will get rid of my rivals.

Pap. At the expense of the lady's reputation, perhaps.

Y. Wild. That will be as it happens.

Pap. And have you no qualms, Sir?

Y. Wild. Why, where's the injury?

Pap. No injury, to ruin her fame!

Y. Wild. I will restore it to her again.

Pap. How?

Y. Wild. Turn tinker, and mend it myself.

Pap. Which way?

Y. Wild. The old way; solder it by marriage: that, you know, is the modern salve for every sore.

Enter WAITER.

Wait. An elderly gentleman to inquire for Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. For me! what sort of being is it?

Wait. Being, Sir!

Y. Wild. Ay; how is he dressed?

Wait. In a tye-wig and snuff-coloured coat.

Pap. Zooks, Sir, it is your father.

Y. Wild. Show him up. [*Exit WAITER.*]

Pap. And what must I do?

Y. Wild. Recover your broken English, but preserve your rank; I have a reason for it.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Your servant, Sir: you are welcome to town.

Y. Wild. You have just prevented me, Sir: I was preparing to pay my duty to you.

O. Wild. If you thought it a duty, you should, I think, have sooner discharged it.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. Was it quite so decent, Jack, to be six weeks in town, and conceal yourself only from me.

Y. Wild. Six weeks! I have scarce been six hours.

O. Wild. Come, come; I am better informed.

Y. Wild. Indeed, Sir, you are imposed upon. This gentleman (whom first gave me leave to have the honour of introducing to you,) this, Sir, is the Marquis de Chateau Brilliant, of an ancient house in Brittany; who, travelling through England, chose to make Oxford for some time the place of his residence, where I had the happiness of his acquaintance.

O. Wild. Does he speak English?

Y. Wild. Not fluently, but understands it perfectly.

Pap. Pray, Sir—

Y. Wild. Any services, Sir, that I can render you here, you may readily command.

Pap. *Beaucoup d'honneur.*

Y. Wild. This gentleman, I say, Sir, whose quality and country are sufficient securities for his veracity, will assure you, that yesterday we left Oxford together.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Pap. *C'est vrai.*

O. Wild. This is amazing. I was at the same time informed of another circumstance too, that, I confess, made me a little uneasy, as it interfered with a favourite scheme of my own.

Y. Wild. What could that be, pray, Sir?

O. Wild. That you had conceived a violent affection for a fair lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And had given her very gallant and very expensive proofs of your passion.

Y. Wild. Me, Sir!

O. Wild. Particularly last night; music, collations, balls, and fireworks.

Y. Wild. Monsieur le Marquis!—And pray, Sir, who could tell you all this?

O. Wild. An old friend of yours.

Y. Wild. His name, if you please?

O. Wild. Sir James Elliot.

Y. Wild. Yes; I thought he was the man.

O. Wild. Your reason.

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, though Sir James Elliot has a great many good qualities, and is upon the whole a valuable man, yet he has one fault which has long determined me to drop his acquaintance.

O. Wild. What may that be?

Y. Wild. Why you can't, Sir, be a stranger to his prodigious skill in the traveller's talent?

O. Wild. How!

Y. Wild. Oh, notorious to a proverb. His friends, who are tender of his fame, gloss over his foible, by calling him an agreeable novelist; and so he is, with a vengeance. Why, he will tell you more lies in an hour, than all the circulating libraries put together will publish in a year.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Y. Wild. Oh, he is the modern Mandeville at Oxford: he was always distinguished by the facetious appellation of the *Bouncer*.

O. Wild. Amazing!

Y. Wild. Lord, Sir, he is so well understood in his own county, that at the last Hereford assizes, a cause, as clear as the sun, was absolutely thrown away by his being merely mentioned as a witness.

O. Wild. A strange turn!

Y. Wild. Unaccountable. But there, I think, they went a little too far; for if it had come to an oath, I don't think he would have bounced neither; but in common occurrences, there is no repeating after him. Indeed, my great reason for dropping him was, that my credit began to be a little suspected too.

Pap. Poor gentleman!

O. Wild. Why, I never heard this of him.

Y. Wild. That may be: but can there be a stronger proof of his practice than the flam he has been telling you of fireworks, and the Lord-knows-what? And I dare swear, Sir, he was very fluent and florid in his description.

O. Wild. Extremely.

Y. Wild. Yes, that is just his way; and not a syllable of truth from the beginning to the ending, Marquis?

Pap. Oh, dat is all a fiction, upon mine honour.

Y. Wild. You see, Sir—

O. Wild. Clearly. I really can't help pitying the poor man. I have heard of people, who, by long habit, become a kind of constitutional liars.

Y. Wild. Your observation is just; that is exactly his case.

Pap. I'm sure it is yours.

[*Aside.*

O. Wild. Well, Sir, I suppose we shall see you this evening.

Y. Wild. The Marquis has an appointment with some of his countrymen, which I have promised to attend; besides, Sir, as he is an entire stranger in town, he may want my little services.

O. Wild. Where can I see you in about an hour? I have a short visit to make, in which you are deeply concerned.

Y. Wild. I shall attend your commands; but where?

O. Wild. Why, here. Marquis, I am your obedient servant.

Pap. *Votre serviteur tres humble.*

[*Exit OLD W.*

Y. Wild. So, Papillion, that difficulty is despatched. I think I am even with Sir James for his tattling.

Pap. Most ingeniously managed:—but are not you afraid of the consequence?

Y. Wild. I don't comprehend you.

Pap. A future explanation between the parties.

Y. Wild. That may embarrass: but the day is distant. I warrant I will bring myself off.

Pap. It is in vain for me to advise.

Y. Wild. Why, to say truth, I do begin to find my system attended with danger. Give me your hand, Papillion—I will reform.

Pap. Ah, Sir!

Y. Wild. I positively will. Why this practice may in time destroy my credit.

Pap. That is pretty well done already. [*Aside.*] Ay, think of that, Sir.

Y. Wild. Well, if I don't turn out the merest dull matter-of-fact fellow—But, Papillion, I must scribble a billet to my new flame. I think her name is—

Pap. Godfrey; her father, an India governor shut up in the strong room at Calcutta, left her all his wealth: she lives near Miss Grantam, by Grosvenor-square.

Y. Wild. A governor!—Oh ho!—Bushels of rupees and pecks of pagodas, I reckon.—Well, I long to be rummaging.—But the old gentleman will soon return: I will hasten to finish my letter.—But, Papillion, what could my father mean by a visit in which I am deeply concerned?

Pap. I can't guess.

Y. Wild. I shall know presently.—To Miss Godfrey, formerly of Calcutta, now residing in Grosvenor-square.—Papillion, I won't tell her a word of a lie.

Pap. You wont, Sir.

Y. Wild. No; it would be ungenerous to deceive a lady. No; I will be open, candid, and sincere.

Pap. If you are, it will be for the first time.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter MISS GRANTAM and MISS GODFREY.

Miss God. And you really like this gallant spark?

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Miss Gr. Prodigious! Oh, I'm quite in love with his assurance! I wonder who he is: he can't have been long in town? A young fellow of his easy impudence must have soon made his way to the best of company.

Miss God. By way of amusement he may prove no disagreeable acquaintance; but you can't surely have any serious designs upon him?

Miss Gr. Indeed but I have.

Miss God. And poor Sir James Elliot is to be discarded at once?

Miss Gr. Oh, no!

Miss God. What is your intention in regard to him?

Miss Gr. Hey?—I can't tell you. Perhaps, if I don't like this new man better, I may marry him.

Miss God. Thou art a strange, giddy girl.

Miss Gr. Quite the reverse; a perfect pattern of prudence; why, would you have me less careful of my person than my purse?

Miss God. My dear?

Miss Gr. Why, I say, child, my fortune being in money, I have some in India-bonds, some in the bank, some on this loan, some on the other; so that if one fund fails, I have a sure resource in the rest.

Miss God. Very true.

Miss Gr. Well, my dear, just so I manage my love affairs. If I should not like this man—if he should not like me—if we should quarrel—if, if—or in short, if any of the ifs should happen, which you know break engagements every day; why, by this means I shall be never at a loss.

Miss God. Quite provident. Well, and pray, on how many different securities have you at present placed out your love?

Miss Gr. Three; the sober Sir James Elliot; the new America-man; and this morning I expect a formal proposal from an old friend of my father.

Miss God. Mr. Wilding?

Miss Gr. Yes: but I don't reckon much upon him: for you know my dear, what can I do with an awkward, raw, college cub! Though, upon second thoughts, that may'n't be too bad neither; for as I must have the fashioning of him, he may be easily moulded to one's mind.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Wilding, Madam.

Miss Gr. Show him in. [*Exit SERVANT.*]—You need not go, my dear; we have no particular business.

Miss God. I wonder, now, what she calls particular business.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Ladies, your servant. I wait upon you, Madam, with a request from my son, that he may be permitted the honour of kissing your hand.

Miss Gr. Your son is in town then, Sir?

O. Wild. He came last night, Ma'am; and though but just from the university, I think I may venture to affirm, with as little the air of a pedant as—

Miss Gr. I don't, Mr. Wilding, question the accomplishments of your son; and shall own too, that his being descended from the old friend of my father is, to me, the strongest recommendation.

O. Wild. You honour me, Madam.

Miss Gr. But, Sir, I have something to say—
O. Wild. Pray, Madam, speak out; it is impossible to be too explicit on these important occasions.

Miss Gr. Why then, Sir, to a man of your wisdom and experience, I need not observe, that the loss of a parent to counsel and direct at this solemn crisis, has made a greater degree of personal prudence necessary in me.

O. Wild. Perfectly right, Ma'am.

Miss Gr. We live, Sir, in a very censorious world; a young woman can't be too much on her guard; nor should I choose to admit any man in the quality of a lover, if there was not at least a strong probability—

O. Wild. Of a more intimate connection. I hope, Madam, you have heard nothing to the disadvantage of my son.

Miss Gr. Not a syllable: but you know, Sir, there are such things in nature as unaccountable antipathies, aversions, that we take at first sight. I should be glad there could be no danger of that.

O. Wild. I understand you, Madam: you shall have all the satisfaction imaginable: Jack is to meet me immediately; I will conduct him under your window; and if his figure has the misfortune to displease, I will take care his addresses shall never offend you. Your most obedient servant. *[Exit.]*

Miss Gr. Now, there is a polite, sensible, old father for you.

Miss God. Yes! and a very discreet, prudent daughter he is likely to have. Oh, you are a great hypocrite, Kitty.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. A letter for you, Madam. *[To MISS GODFREY.]* Sir James Elliot to wait on your ladyship. *[To MISS GRANTAM. Exit.]*

Miss Gr. Lord, I hope he wont stay long here. He comes, and seems entirely wrapped up in the dismal: what can be the matter now?

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir J. In passing by your door, I took the liberty, Ma'am, of inquiring after your health.

Miss Gr. Very obliging. I hope, Sir, you received a favourable account.

Sir J. I did not know but you might have caught cold last night.

Miss Gr. Cold! why, Sir, I hope I didn't sleep with my bed-chamber window open.

Sir J. Ma'am!

Miss Gr. Sir!

Sir J. No, Ma'am; but it was rather hazardous to stay so late upon the water.

Miss Gr. Upon the water?

Sir J. Not but the variety of amusements, it must be owned, were a sufficient temptation.

Miss Gr. What can he be driving at now?

Sir J. And pray, Madam, what think you of young Wilding? is not he a gay, agreeable, sprightly—

Miss Gr. I never give my opinion of people I don't know.

Sir J. You don't know him!

Miss Gr. No.

Sir J. And his father I did not meet at your door!

Miss Gr. Most likely you did.

Sir J. I am glad you own that, however, but for the son, you never—

Miss Gr. Set eyes upon him.

Sir J. Really?

Miss Gr. Really

Sir J. Finely supported. Now, Madam, do you know that one of us is just going to make a very ridiculous figure?

Miss Gr. Sir, I never had the least doubt of your talents for excelling in that way.

Sir J. Ma'am, you do me honour: but it does not happen to fall to my lot upon this occasion, however.

Miss Gr. And that is a wonder!—what, then, I am to be the fool of the comedy, I suppose?

Sir J. Admirably rallied! But I shall dash the spirit of that triumphant laugh.

Miss Gr. I dare the attack. Come on, Sir.

Sir J. Know then and blush, if you are not as lost to shame as dead to decency, that I am no stranger to all last night's transactions.

Miss Gr. Indeed!

Sir J. From your first entering the barge at Somerset-house, to your last landing at Whitehall.

Miss Gr. Surprising!

Sir J. Cupids, collations, feasts, fireworks, all have reached me.

Miss Gr. Why, you deal in magic.

Sir J. My intelligence is as natural as it is infallible.

Miss Gr. May I be indulged with the name of your informer?

Sir J. Freely, Madam. Only the very individual spark to whose folly you were indebted for this gallant profusion.

Miss Gr. But his name?

Sir J. Young Wilding.

Miss Gr. You had this story from him?

Sir J. I had.

Miss Gr. From Wilding!—That is amazing.

Sir J. Oh ho! what, you are confounded at last! and no evasion, no subterfuge, no—

Miss Gr. Look ye, Sir James; what you can mean by this strange story, and very extraordinary behaviour, it is impossible for me to conceive; but if it is meant as an artifice to palliate your infidelity to me, less pains would have answered your purpose.

Sir J. Oh, Madam, I know you are provided.

Miss Gr. Matchless insolence! As you can't expect that I should be prodigiously pleased with the subject of this visit, you wont be surprised at my wishing it as short as possible.

Sir J. I don't wonder you feel pain at my presence; but you may rest secure you will have no interruption for me; and I really think it would be pity to part two people so exactly formed for each other. Your ladyship's servant. *[Going.]*—But, Madam, though your sex secures you from any farther resentment, yet the present object of your favour may have something to fear.

[Exit.]

Miss Gr. Very well. Now, my dear, I hope you will acknowledge the prudence of my plan. To what a pretty condition I must have been reduced, if my hopes had rested upon one lover alone!

Miss God. But you are sure that your method to multiply may not be the means to reduce the number of your slaves?

Miss Gr. Impossible!—Why, can't you discern that this flam of Sir James Elliot's is a mere fetch to favour his retreat?

Miss God. And you never saw Wilding?

Miss Gr. Never.

Miss God. There is some mystery in this. I have, too, here in my hand, another mortification that you must endure.

Miss Gr. Of what kind?

Miss God. A little allied to the last; it is from the military spark you met this morning.

Miss Gr. What are the contents?

Miss God. Only a formal declaration of love.

Miss Gr. Why, you did not see him.

Miss God. But it seems he did me.

Miss Gr. Might I peruse it?—"Battles—no wounds so fatal—cannon-balls—Cupid—spring a mine—cruelty—die on a counterscarp—eyes—artillery—death—the stranger." It is addressed to you.

Miss God. I told you so.

Miss Gr. You will pardon me, my dear; but I really can't compliment you upon the supposition of a conquest at my expense.

Miss God. That would be enough to make me vain: but why do you think it was so impossible?

Miss Gr. And do you positively want a reason?

Miss God. Positively.

Miss Gr. Why, then, I shall refer you for an answer to a faithful counsellor and most accomplished critic.

Miss God. Who may that be?

Miss Gr. The mirror upon your toilet.

Miss God. Perhaps you may differ in judgment.

Miss Gr. Why, can glasses flatter?

Miss God. I can't say I think that necessary.

Miss Gr. Saucy enough!—But come, child, don't let us quarrel upon so whimsical an occasion; time will explain the whole. You will favour me with your opinion of young Wilding at my window.

Miss God. I attend you.

Miss Gr. You will forgive me, my dear, the little hint I dropp'd; it was meant merely to serve you; for indeed, child, there is no quality so insufferable in a young woman as self-conceit and vanity.

Miss God. You are most prodigiously obliging.

Miss Gr. I'll follow you, Miss. [*Exit Miss GODFREY.*] Pert thing!—She grows immoderately ugly. I always thought her awkward, but she is now an absolute fright.

Miss God. [*Within.*] Miss, Miss Grantam, your hero's at hand.

Miss Gr. I come.

Miss God. As I live, the very individual stranger!

Miss Gr. No, sure!—Oh Lord, let me have a peep.

Miss God. It is he, it is he, it is he!

Enter OLD WILDING, YOUNG WILDING, and PAPILLION.

O. Wild. There, Marquis, you must pardon me; for though Paris be more compact, yet surely London covers a much greater quantity.—Oh, Jack, look at that corner-house; how d'ye like it?

Y. Wild. Very well; but I don't see any thing extraordinary.

O. Wild. I wish, though, you were the master of what it contains.

Y. Wild. What may that be, Sir?

O. Wild. The mistress, you rogue you: a fine girl, and an immense fortune; ay, and a prudent, sensible wench into the bargain.

Y. Wild. Time enough yet, Sir.

O. Wild. I don't see that: you are, lad, the last of our race, and I should be glad to see some probability of its continuance.

Y. Wild. Suppose, Sir, your were to repeat your endeavours; you have cordially my consent.

O. Wild. No; rather too late in life for that experiment.

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, would you recommend a condition to me, that you disapprove yourself?

O. Wild. Why, sirrah, I have done my duty to the public and my family, by producing you: now, Sir, it is incumbent on you to discharge your debt.

Y. Wild. In the college cant, I shall beg leave to tick a little longer.

O. Wild. Why, then, to be serious, son, this is the very business I wanted to talk with you about. In a word, I wish you married; and by providing the lady of that mansion for the purpose, I have proved myself both a father and a friend.

Y. Wild. Far be it from me to question your care; yet some preparation for so important a change—

O. Wild. Oh, I will allow you a week.

Y. Wild. A little more knowledge of the world.

O. Wild. That you may study at leisure.

Y. Wild. Now all Europe is in arms, my design was to serve my country abroad.

O. Wild. You will be full as useful to it by recruiting her subjects at home.

Y. Wild. You are then resolved?

O. Wild. Fixed.

Y. Wild. Positively?

O. Wild. Peremptorily.

Y. Wild. No prayers—

O. Wild. Can move me.

Y. Wild. How the deuce shall I get out of this toil? [*Aside.*]—But suppose, Sir, there should be an insurmountable objection?

O. Wild. Oh, leave the reconciling that to me; I am an excellent casuist.

Y. Wild. But I say, Sir, if it should be impossible to obey your commands?

O. Wild. Impossible!—I don't understand you.

Y. Wild. Oh, Sir!—but on my knees first let me crave your pardon.

O. Wild. Pardon! for what?

Y. Wild. I fear I have lost all title to your future favour.

O. Wild. Which way?

Y. Wild. I have done a deed—

O. Wild. Let's hear it.

Y. Wild. At Abingdon, in the county of Berks.

O. Wild. Well?

Y. Wild. I am.

O. Wild. What?

Y. Wild. Already married.

O. Wild. Married!

Pap. Married!

Y. Wild. Married.

O. Wild. And without my consent?

Y. Wild. Compelled; fatally forced. Oh, Sir, did you but know all the circumstances of my sad, sad story, your rage would soon convert itself to pity.

O. Wild. What an unlucky event!—but rise, and let me hear it all.

Y. Wild. The shame and confusion I now feel, render that task at present impossible: I must therefore rely for the relation on the good offices of this faithful friend.

Pap. Me, Sir! I never heard one word of the matter.

O. Wild. Come, Marquis, favour me with the particulars.

Pap. Upon my vard, sare, dis affair has so shock me, dat I am almost as incapable to tell de tale as your son.—[*To* YOUNG WILDING.]—Dry-a your tears. What can I say, Sir.

Y. Wild. Any thing.—Oh!—[*Seems to weep.*]

Pap. You see, sare.

O. Wild. Your kind concern at the misfortunes of my family calls for the most grateful acknowledgment.

Pap. Dis is great misfortunes, *sans doute*.

O. Wild. But if you, a stranger, are thus affected, what must a father feel?

Pap. Oh, *beaucoup*, a great deal more.

O. Wild. But since the evil is without a remedy, let us know the worst at once. Well, Sir, at Abingdon?

Pap. Yes, at Abingdon.

O. Wild. In the county of Berks?

Pap. Dat is right, in the county of Berks.

Y. Wild. Oh, oh!

O. Wild. Ah, Jack, Jack! are all my hopes then—Though I dread to ask, yet it must be known; who is the girl, pray, Sir?

Pap. De girl, Sir—[*Aside to* YOUNG WILDING.]—Who shall I say?

Y. Wild. Any body.

Pap. For de girl, I can't say upon my vard.

O. Wild. Her condition?

Pap. *Pas grande* condition: dat is to be sure. But dere is no help—[*Aside to* YOUNG WILDING.]—Sir, I am quite a-ground.

O. Wild. Yes, I read my shame in his reserve: some artful hussy.

Pap. Dat may be. Vat you call hussy?

O. Wild. Or perhaps some common creature. But I'm prepared to hear the worst.

Pap. Have you no mercy?

Y. Wild. I'll step to your relief, Sir.

Pap. O lord, a happy deliverance.

Y. Wild. Though it is almost death for me to speak, yet it would be infamous to let the reputation of the lady suffer by my silence. She is, Sir, of an ancient house and unblemished character.

O. Wild. That is something.

Y. Wild. And though her fortune may not be equal to the warm wishes of a fond father, yet—

O. Wild. Her name?

Y. Wild. Miss Lydia Sybthorp.

O. Wild. Sybthorp—I never heard of the name.—But proceed.

Y. Wild. The latter end of last long vacation, I went with Sir James Elliot to pass a few days at a new purchase of his near Abingdon. There, at an assembly, it was my chance to meet and dance with this lady.

O. Wild. Is she handsome?

Y. Wild. Oh, Sir, more beautiful—

O. Wild. Nay, no raptures; but go on.

Y. Wild. But to her beauty she adds politeness, affability, and discretion; unless she forfeited that character by fixing her affection on me.

O. Wild. Modestly observed.

Y. Wild. I was deterred from a public declaration of my passion, dreading the scantiness of her fortune would prove an objection to you. Some private interviews she permitted.

O. Wild. Was that so decent?—But love and prudence, madness and reason.

Y. Wild. One fatal evening, the twentieth of September, if I mistake not, we were in a retired room, innocently exchanging mutual vows, when her father, whom we expected to sup abroad, came suddenly upon us. I had just time to conceal myself in a closet.

O. Wild. What, unobserved by him?

Y. Wild. Entirely. But as my ill stars would have it, a cat, of whom my wife is vastly fond, had a few days before lodged a litter of kittens in the same place; I unhappily trod upon one of the brood; which so provoked the implacable mother, that she flew at me with the fury of a tiger.

O. Wild. I have observed those creatures very fierce in defence of their young.

Pap. I shall hate a cat as long as I live.

Y. Wild. The noise roused the old gentleman's attention: he opened the door, and there discovered your son.

Pap. Unlucky.

Y. Wild. I rushed to the door; but fatally my foot slipped at the top of the stairs, and down I came tumbling to the bottom; the pistol in my hand went off by accident; this alarmed her three brothers in the parlour, who with all their servants, rushed with united force upon me.

O. Wild. And so surprised you!

Y. Wild. No, Sir; with my sword I for some time made a gallant defence, and should have inevitably escaped, but a rawboned, overgrown, clumsy cook-wench, struck at my sword with a kitchen-poker, broke it in two, and compelled me to surrender at discretion; the consequence of which is obvious enough.

O. Wild. Natural. The lady's reputation, your condition, her beauty, your love, all combined to make marriage an unavoidable measure.

Y. Wild. May I hope, then, you rather think me unfortunate than culpable?

O. Wild. Why, your situation is a sufficient excuse: all I blame you for is, your keeping it a secret from me. With Miss Grantam I shall make an awkward figure; but the best apology is the truth: I'll hasten and explain it to her all—Oh, Jack, Jack, this is a mortifying business.

Y. Wild. Most melancholy.

[*Exit* OLD WILDING.]

Pap. I am amazed, Sir, that you have so carelessly concealed this transaction from me.

Y. Wild. Hey-day: what, do you believe it too?

Pap. Believe it! why, is not the story of the marriage true?

Y. Wild. Not a syllable.

Pap. And the cat, and the pistol, and the poker?

Y. Wild. All invention. And were you really taken in?

Pap. Lord, Sir, how was it possible to avoid it?—Mercy on us! what a collection of circumstances have you crowded together!

Y. Wild. Genius; the mere effects of genius, Papillon. But to deceive you who so thoroughly know me!

Pap. But to prevent that for the future, could you not just give your humble servant a hint when you are bent upon bouncing. Besides, Sir, if you recollect your fixed resolution to reform—

Y. Wild. Ay, as to matter of fancy, the mere sport and frolic of invention: but in case of necessity—why, Miss Godfrey was at stake, and I was forced to use all my finesse!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Two letters, Sir. [*Exit.*

Pap. There are two things, in my conscience, my master will never want; a prompt lie, and a ready excuse for telling of it. [*Aside.*

Y. Wild. Hum! business begins to thicken upon us: a challenge from Sir James Elliot, and a rendezvous from the pretty Miss Godfrey. They shall both be observed, but in their order; therefore the lady first. Let me see—I have not been twenty hours in town, and I have already got a challenge, a mistress, and a wife; now if I can but get engaged in a chancery suit, I shall have my hands pretty full of employment. Come, Pappillon, we have no time to be idle. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—An Apartment in MISS GRANTAM'S House.

Enter SERVANT, conducting in OLD WILDING.

Ser. My lady, Sir, will be at home immediately: Sir James Elliot is in the next room waiting her return.

O. Wild. Pray, honest friend, will you tell Sir James that I beg the favour of a word with him? [*Exit SERVANT.*] This unthinking boy! Half the purpose of my life has been to plan this scheme for his happiness, and in one heedless hour has he mangled all.

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir, I ask your pardon; but upon so interesting a subject I hope you will excuse my intrusion. Pray, Sir, of what credit is the family of the Sybthorps in Berkshire?

Sir J. Sir?

O. Wild. I don't mean as to property; that I am not so solicitous about; but as to their character. Do they live in reputation? Are they respected in the neighbourhood?

Sir J. The family of the Sybthorps!

O. Wild. Of the Sybthorps.

Sir J. Really I don't know, Sir.

O. Wild. Not know!

Sir J. No; it is the very first time I have heard of the name.

O. Wild. How steadily he denies it! Well done, baronet! I find Jack's account was a just one. [*Aside.*] Pray, Sir James, recollect yourself.

Sir J. It will be to no purpose.

O. Wild. Come, Sir, your motive for this affected ignorance is a generous but unnecessary proof of your friendship for my son; but I know the whole affair.

Sir J. What affair?

O. Wild. Jack's marriage.

Sir J. What Jack?

O. Wild. My son Jack.

Sir J. Is he married?

O. Wild. Is he married? why you know he is.

Sir J. Not I, upon my honour.

O. Wild. Nay, that is going a little too far; but to remove all your scruples at once, he has owned it himself.

Sir J. He has!

O. Wild. Ay, ay, to me. Every circumstance; going to your new purchase at Abingdon—meeting Lydia Sybthorp at the assembly—their private interviews—surprised by the father—pistol—poker—and marriage; in short, every particular.

Sir J. And this account you had from your son?

O. Wild. From Jack; not two hours ago.

Sir J. I wish you joy, Sir.

O. Wild. Not much of that, I believe.

Sir J. Why, Sir, does the marriage displease you?

O. Wild. Doubtless.

Sir J. Then I fancy you may make yourself easy.

O. Wild. Why so?

Sir J. You have got, Sir, the most prudent daughter-in-law in the British dominions.

O. Wild. I am happy to hear it.

Sir J. For, though she mayn't have brought you much, I'm sure she'll not cost you a farthing.

O. Wild. Ay; exactly Jack's account.

Sir J. She'll be easily jointured.

O. Wild. Justice shall be done to her.

Sir J. No provision necessary for young children.

O. Wild. No, Sir! why not?—I can tell you, if she answers your account, not the daughter of a duke—

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

O. Wild. You are merry, Sir.

Sir J. What an unaccountable fellow!

O. Wild. Sir!

Sir J. I beg your pardon, Sir. But with regard to this marriage—

O. Wild. Well, Sir!

Sir J. I take the whole history to be neither more or less than an absolute fable.

O. Wild. How, Sir?

Sir J. Even so.

O. Wild. Why, Sir, do you think my son would dare to impose upon me?

Sir J. He would dare to impose upon any body. Don't I know him?

O. Wild. What do you know?

Sir J. I know, Sir, that his narratives gain him more applause than credit; and that, whether from constitution or habit, there is no believing a syllable he says.

O. Wild. Oh, mighty well, Sir!—He wants to turn the tables upon Jack.—But it won't do; you are forestalled: your novels wont pass upon me.

Sir J. Sir!

O. Wild. Nor is the character of my son to be blasted with the breath of a bouncer.

Sir J. What is this?

O. Wild. No, no, Mr. Mandeville, it wont do; you are well known here as in your own county of Hereford.

Sir J. Mr. Wilding, but that I am sure this extravagant behaviour owes its rise to some impudent impositions of your son, your age would scarce prove your protection.

O. Wild. Nor, Sir, but that I know my boy equal to the defence of his own honour, should he want a protector in this arm, withered and impotent as you may think it.

Enter MISS GRANTAM.

Miss Gr. Bless me, gentlemen, what is the meaning of this?

Sir J. No more at present, Sir: I have another demand upon your son; we'll settle the whole together.

O. Wild. I am sure he will do you justice

Miss Gr. How, Sir James Elliot! I flattered myself that you had finished your visits here, Sir. Must I be the eternal object of your outrage? not

only insulted in my own person, but in that of my friends! pray, Sir, what right—

O. Wild. Madam, I ask your pardon; a disagreeable occasion brought me here: I come, Madam, to renounce all hopes of being nearer allied to you, my son unfortunately being married already.

Miss Gr. Married!

Sir J. Yes, Madam, to a lady in the clouds: and because I have refused to acknowledge her family, this old gentleman has behaved in a manner very inconsistent with his usual politeness.

O. Wild. Sir, I thought this affair was to be reserved for another occasion; but you it seems—

Miss Gr. Oh, is that the business!—Why, I begin to be afraid that we are here a little in the wrong, Mr. Wilding.

O. Wild. Madam!

Miss Gr. Your son has just confirmed Sir James Elliot's opinion, at a conference under Miss Godfrey's window.

O. Wild. Is it possible?

Miss Gr. Most true; and assigned two most whimsical motives for the unaccountable tale.

O. Wild. What can they be?

Miss Gr. An aversion for me, whom he has seen but once; and an affection for Miss Godfrey, whom I am almost sure he never saw in his life.

O. Wild. You amaze me.

Miss Gr. Indeed, Mr. Wilding, your son is a most extraordinary youth; he has finely perplexed us all. I think, Sir James, you have a small obligation to him.

Sir J. Which I shall take care to acknowledge the first opportunity.

O. Wild. You have my consent. An abandoned profligate! was his father a proper subject for him—But I discard him.

Miss Gr. Nay, now, gentlemen, you are rather too warm; I can't think Mr. Wilding bad-hearted at the bottom. This is a levity—

O. Wild. How, Madam, a levity?

Miss Gr. Take my word for it, no more; inflamed into habit by the approbation of his juvenile friends. Will you submit his punishment to me? I think I have the means in my hands, both to satisfy your resentments, and accomplish his cure into the bargain.

Sir J. I have no quarrel to him, but for the ill offices he has done me with you.

Miss Gr. D'ye hear, Mr. Wilding? I am afraid my opinion with Sir James must cement the general peace.

O. Wild. Madam, I submit to any—

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Wilding, to wait upon you, Madam.

[*Exit.*]

Miss Gr. He is punctual, I find. Come, good folks, you all act under my direction. You, Sir, will get from your son, by what means you think fit, the real truth of the Abingdon business. You must likewise seemingly consent to his marriage with Miss Godfrey, whom I shrewdly suspect he has, by some odd accident mistaken for me; the lady herself shall appear at your call. Come, Sir James, you will withdraw. I intend to produce another performer, who will want a little instruction. Kitty!

Enter KITTY.

Let John show Mr. Wilding in to his father:

then come to my dressing-room: I have a short scene to give you to study. [*Exit KITTY.*—The girl is lively, and I warrant will do her character justice. Come, Sir James. Nay, no ceremony; we must be as busy as bees. [*Exeunt.*]

O. Wild. This strange boy!—But I must command my temper.

Y. Wild. [*Speaks as he enters.*—People to speak with me! see what they want, Papillion.—My father here! that's unlucky enough.

O. Wild. Ha, Jack, what brings you here?

Y. Wild. Why, I thought it my duty to wait upon Miss Grantam, in order to make her some apology for the late unfortunate—

O. Wild. Well, now, that is prudently as well as politely done.

Y. Wild. I am happy to meet, Sir, with your approbation.

O. Wild. I have been thinking, Jack, about my daughter-in-law: as the affair is public, it is not decent to let her continue long at her father's.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. Would it not be right to send for her home?

Y. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. I think so. Why then, to-morrow my chariot shall fetch her.

Y. Wild. The devil it shall! [*Aside.*—Not quite so soon, if you please, Sir.

O. Wild. No! why not?

Y. Wild. The journey may be dangerous in her present condition.

O. Wild. What's the matter with her?

Y. Wild. She is big with child, Sir.

O. Wild. An audacious—Big with child! that is unfortunate. But, however, an easy carriage, and short stages, can't hurt her.

Y. Wild. Pardon me, Sir, I dare not trust her: she is six months gone.

O. Wild. Nay, then, there may be danger indeed. But should not I write to her father, just to let him know that you have discovered the secret?

Y. Wild. By all means, Sir, it will make him extremely happy.

O. Wild. Why then, I will about it instantly. Pray, how do you direct to him?

Y. Wild. Abingdon, Berkshire.

O. Wild. True; but his address?

Y. Wild. You need not trouble yourself, Sir: I shall write by this post to my wife, and will send your letter inclosed.

O. Wild. Ay, ay, that will do.

[*Going.*]

Y. Wild. So, I have parried that thrust.

O. Wild. Though, upon second thoughts, Jack, that will rather look too familiar for an introductory letter.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And these country gentlemen are full of punctilios—No, I'll send him a letter apart; so give me his direction.

Y. Wild. You have it, Sir.

O. Wild. Ay, but his name: I have been so hurried that I have entirely forgot it.

Y. Wild. I am sure so have I. [*Aside.*—His name—his name, Sir—Hopkins.

O. Wild. Hopkins!

Y. Wild. Yes, Sir.

O. Wild. That is not the same name that you gave me before: that, if I recollect, was either Sydhthorp or Sybthorp.

Y. Wild. You are right, Sir; that is his pa-

ternal appellation: but the name of Hopkins he took for an estate of his mother's; so he is indiscriminately called Hopkins or Sybthorp: and now I recollect I have his letter in my pocket—he signs himself Sybthorp Hopkins.

O. Wild. There is no end of this: I must stop him at once. Hark ye, Sir: I think you are called my son?

Y. Wild. I hope, Sir, you have no reason to doubt it.

O. Wild. And look upon yourself as a gentleman?

Y. Wild. In having the honour of descending from you.

O. Wild. And that you think a sufficient pretension?

Y. Wild. Sir—pray, Sir—

O. Wild. And by what means do you imagine your ancestors obtained that distinguishing title? by their pre-eminence in virtue, I suppose.

Y. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. And has it never occurred to you, that what was gained by honour might be lost by infamy?

Y. Wild. Perfectly, Sir.

O. Wild. Are you to learn what redress even the imputation of a lie demands; and that nothing less than the life of the adversary can extinguish the affront?

Y. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. Then how dare you call yourself a gentleman? you, whose life has been one continued scene of fraud and falsity! And would nothing content you but making me a partner in your infamy? within this hour my life was nearly sacrificed in defence of your fame: but perhaps that was your intention; and the story of your marriage merely calculated to send me out of the world, as a grateful return for bringing you into it.

Y. Wild. For Heaven's sake, Sir!

O. Wild. I am now deaf to your delusions.

Y. Wild. But hear me, Sir, I own the Abingdon business an absolute fiction.

O. Wild. And how dare you—

Y. Wild. I crave but a moment's audience.

O. Wild. Go on.

Y. Wild. Previous to the communication of your intention for me, I accidentally met with a lady, whose charms—

O. Wild. So!—what, here's another marriage trumped out! but that is a stale device. And, pray, Sir, what place does this lady inhabit? come, come, go on; you have a fertile invention, and this is a fine opportunity. Well, Sir, and this charming lady, residing, I suppose, *in nubibus*—

Y. Wild. No, Sir; in London.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Y. Wild. Nay, more, and at this instant in this house.

O. Wild. And her name—

Y. Wild. Godfrey.

O. Wild. The friend of Miss Grantam?

Y. Wild. The very same, Sir.

O. Wild. Have you spoke to her?

Y. Wild. Parted from her not ten minutes ago; nay, am here by her appointment.

O. Wild. Has she favoured your address?

Y. Wild. Time, Sir, and your approbation, will, I hope.

O. Wild. Look ye, Sir, as there is some little probability in this story, I shall think it worth farther inquiry. To be plain with you, I know

Miss Godfrey; am intimate with her family; and though you deserve but little from me, I will endeavour to aid your intention. But if, in the progress of this affair, you practise any of your usual arts; if I discover the least falsehood, the least duplicity; remember, you have lost a father.

Y. Wild. I shall submit without a murmur.

[*Exit* OLD WILDING.]

Enter PAPILLION.

Now, Papillion, I have news for you. My father has got to the bottom of the whole Abingdon business.

Pap. The deuce!

Y. Wild. We parted this moment. Such a scene!

Pap. And what was the issue?

Y. Wild. Happy beyond my hopes. Not only an act of oblivion, but a promise to plead my cause with the fair.

Pap. With Miss Godfrey!

Y. Wild. Who else?—He is now with her in another room.

Pap. And there is no—you understand me—in all this?

Y. Wild. No, no; that is all over now—my reformation is fixed.

Pap. As a weather-cock.

Y. Wild. Here comes my father.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Well, Sir, I find in this last article you have condescended to tell me the truth: the young lady is not averse to the union: but in order to fix so mutable a mind, I have drawn up a slight contract, which you are both to sign.

Y. Wild. With transport.

O. Wild. I will introduce Miss Godfrey.

[*Exit.*]

Y. Wild. Did not I tell you, Papillion?

Pap. This is amazing, indeed!

Y. Wild. Am not I happy, fortunate?—But they come.

Enter OLD WILDING and MISS GODFREY.

O. Wild. If, Madam, he has not the highest sense of the great honour you do him, I shall cease to regard him.—There, Sir, make your own acknowledgments to that lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. This is more than you merit; but let your future behaviour testify your gratitude.

Y. Wild. Papillion! Madam! Sir!

O. Wild. What, is the puppy petrified!—Why don't you go up to the lady?

Y. Wild. Up to the lady!—That lady!

O. Wild. That lady!—to be sure. What other lady?—To Miss Godfrey.

Y. Wild. That lady Miss Godfrey?

O. Wild. What is all this?—Hark ye, Sir, I see what you are at; but no trifling; I'll be no more the dupe of your double detestable—Recollect my last resolution; this instant your hand to the contract, or tremble at the consequence.

Y. Wild. Sir, that, I hope, is—might not I—to be sure—

O. Wild. No further evasions! There, Sir.

Y. Wild. Heigh ho!

[*Signs &c.*]

O. Wild. Very well. Now, Madam, your name, if you please.

Y. Wild. Papillion, do you know who she is?

Pap. That's a question, indeed! don't you, Sir?

Y. Wild. Not I, as I hope to be saved.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. A young lady begs to speak with Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. With me?

Miss God. A young lady with Mr. Wilding!

Serv. Seems distressed, Madam, and extremely pressing for admittance.

Miss God. Indeed: there may be something in this! You must permit me, Sir, to pause a little: who knows but a prior claim may prevent—

O. Wild. How, Sir, who is this lady?

Y. Wild. It is impossible for me to divine, Sir.

O. Wild. You know nothing of her?

Y. Wild. How should I?

O. Wild. You hear, Madam.

Miss God. I presume your son can have no objection to the lady's appearance.

Y. Wild. Not in the least, Madam.

Miss God. Show her in, John. [*Exit SERV.*]

O. Wild. No, Madam, I don't think there is the least room for suspecting him: he can't be so abandoned as to—But she is here. Upon my word, a sightly woman.

Enter KITTY as MISS SYBTHORP.

Kit. Where is he?—Oh, let me throw my arms—my life, my—

Y. Wild. Hey-day!

Kit. And could you leave me? and for so long a space? think how the tedious time has lagged along.

O. Wild. Madam!

Kit. But we are met at last, and now will part no more.

Y. Wild. The deuce we wont!

Kit. What, not one kind look; no tender word to hail our second meeting!

Y. Wild. What the devil is all this?

Kit. Are all your oaths, your protestations, come to this? have I deserved such treatment? quitted my father's house, left all my friends, and wandered here alone in search of thee, thou first, last, only object of my love.

O. Wild. To what can all this tend? Hark ye, Sir, unriddle this mystery.

Y. Wild. *Davus, non Ædipus, sum.* It is beyond me, I confess. Some lunatic escaped from her keeper, I suppose.

Kit. Am I disowned then, contemned, slighted?

O. Wild. Hold; let me inquire into this matter a little. Pray, Madam—You seem to be pretty familiar here.—Do you know this gentleman?

Kit. Too well.

O. Wild. His name?

Kit. Wilding.

O. Wild. So far she is right. Now yours, if you please?

Kit. Wilding.

Omnes. Wilding!

O. Wild. And how came you by that name, pray?

Kit. Most lawfully, Sir: by the sacred band, the holy tie that made us one.

O. Wild. What, married to him!

Kit. Most true.

Omnes. How!

Y. Wild. Sir, may I never—

O. Wild. Peace, monster!—One question more: your maiden name?

Kit. Sybthorp.

O. Wild. Lydia, from Abingdon, in the county of Berks?

Kit. The same.

O. Wild. As I suspected. So then the whole story is true, and the monster is married at last.

Y. Wild. Me, Sir! by all that's—

O. Wild. Eternal dumbness seize thee, measureless liar.

Y. Wild. If not me, hear this gentleman. Marquis—

Pap. Not I; I'll be drawn into some of your scrapes: it is a pit of your own digging; and so get out as well as you can. Meantime I'll shift for myself. [*Exit.*]

O. Wild. What evasion now, monster?

Miss God. Deceiver!

O. Wild. Liar!

Miss God. Impostor!

Y. Wild. Why, this is a general combination to distract me; but I will be heard. Sir, you are grossly imposed upon: the low contriver of this woman's shallow artifice I shall soon find means to discover: and as to you, Madam, with whom I have been suddenly surprised into a contract, I most solemnly declare this is the first time I ever set eyes on you.

O. Wild. Amazing confidence! did not I bring her at your own request?

Y. Wild. No.

Miss God. Is not this your own letter?

Y. Wild. No.

Kit. Am not I your wife?

Y. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Did not you own it to me?

Y. Wild. Yes—that is—no, no!

Kit. Hear me.

Y. Wild. No.

Miss God. Answer me.

Y. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Have not I—

Y. Wild. No, no, no. Zounds! you are all mad; and if I stay, I shall catch the infection. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT and MISS GRANTAM

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Gr. Finely performed.

O. Wild. You have kept your promise, and I thank you, Madam.

Miss Gr. My medicine was somewhat rough, Sir; but in desperate cases, you know—

O. Wild. If his cure is completed, he will gratefully acknowledge the cause; if not, the punishment comes far short of his crimes. It is needless to pay you any compliments, Sir James; with that lady you can't fail to be happy. I sha'n't venture to hint a scheme I have greatly at heart, till we have undeniable proofs of the success of our operations. To the ladies, indeed, no character is so dangerous as that of a liar:

They in the fairest fames can fix a flaw,
And vanquish females whom they never saw.

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY JAMES THOMSON, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

TANCRED, Count of Leece.

MATTEO SIFFREDI, Lord High Chancellor of Sicily.

EARL OSMOND, Lord High Constable of Sicily.

RODOLPHO, Friend to Tancred, and Captain of the Guards.

SIGISMUNDA, Daughter of Siffredi.

LAURA, Sister of Rodolpho, and Friend to Sigismunda.

Barons, Officers, Guards, &c.

SCENE.—The City of PALERMO in Italy.

PROLOGUE.

BOLD is the man! who, in this nicer age,
Presumes to tread the chaste, corrected stage,
Now, with gay tinsel arts, we can no more
Conceal the want of nature's sterling ore.
Our spells are vanish'd, broke our magic wand,
That us'd to waft you over sea and land.
Before your light the fairy people fade,
The demons fly—the ghost itself is laid.
In vain of martial scenes the loud alarms,
The mighty prompter thundering out to arms,
The playhouse posse clattering from afar,
The close-wedged battle, and the din of war.
Now, even the senate seldom we convene;
The yawning fathers nod behind the scene.
Your taste rejects the glittering, false sublime,
To sigh in metaphor, and die in rhyme.
High rant is tumbled from his gallery throne;
Description, dreams—nay, similes are gone.

What shall we then? to please you how devise,
Whose judgment sits not in your ears nor eyes?
Thrice happy, could we catch great Shakspeare's art,
To trace the deep recesses of the heart:
His simple, plain sublime, to which is given
To strike the soul with darted flame from Heaven:

Could we awake soft Otway's tender wo.
The pomp of verse and golden lines of Rowe.

We to your hearts apply: let them attend;
Before their silent, candid bar we bend.

If warm'd they listen, 'tis our noblest praise:
If cold, they wither all the Muse's bays.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA.

Sig. Ah, fatal day to Sicily! the king
Touches his last moments!

Laura. So 'tis fear'd.

Sig. The death of those distinguish'd by their
station,

But by their virtue more, awakes the mind
To solemn dread, and strikes a saddening awe:
Not that we grieve for them, but for ourselves,
Left to the toil of life—And yet the best
Are, by the playful children of this world,
At once forgot, as they had never been.
Laura, 'tis said, the heart is sometimes charged
With a prophetic sadness; such, methinks,
Now hangs on mine. The king's approaching
death

Suggests a thousand fears. What troubles
thence

May throw the state once more into confusion,
What sudden changes in my father's house
May rise, and part me from my dearest Tan-
cred,

Alarms my thoughts.

Laura. The fears of love-sick fancy!

Perversely busy to torment itself.

But be assured, your father's steady friendship,
Join'd to a certain genius, that commands,
Not kneels to fortune, will support and cherish,
Here in the public eye of Sicily,

This, I may call him, his adopted son,
The noble Tancred, form'd to all his virtues.

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Sig. Ah, form'd to charm his daughter!—this fair morn
Has tempted far the chase. Is he not yet Return'd?

Laura. No.—When your father to the king,
Who now expiring lies, was call'd in haste,
He sent each way his messengers to find him;
With such a look of ardour and impatience,
As if this near event was to Count Tancred
Of more importance than I comprehend.

Sig. There lies, my Laura, o'er my Tancred's birth
A cloud I cannot pierce. With princely accost,
Nay, with respect, which oft I have observ'd,
Stealing at times submissive o'er his features,
In Belmont's woods my father rear'd this youth—

Ah, woods! where first my artless bosom learn'd
The sighs of love.—He gives him out the son
Of an old friend, a baron of Apulia,
Who in the late crusado bravely fell.
But then 'tis strange; is all his family
As well as father dead? and all their friends,
Except my sire, the generous, good Siffredi?
Had he a mother, sister, brother left,
The last remnant of kindred; with what pride,
What rapture, might they fly o'er earth and sea,

To claim this rising honour of their blood!
This bright unknown! this all-accomplish'd youth!

Who charms too much the heart of Sigismunda!
Laura, perhaps your brother knows him better,
The friend and partner of his freest hours.
What says Rodolpho? Does he truly credit
This story of his birth?

Laura. He has sometimes,
Like you, his doubts; yet, when maturely weigh'd,
Believes it true. As for Lord Tancred's self,
He never entertain'd the slightest thought
That verg'd to doubt; but oft laments his state,
By cruel fortune so ill pair'd to yours.

Sig. Merit like his, the fortune of the mind,
Beggars all wealth—Then, to your brother,
Laura,
He talks of me?

Laura. Of nothing else. Howe'er
The talk begin, it ends with Sigismunda.
Their morning, noontide, and their evening walks,

Are full of you, and all the woods of Belmont
Enamour'd with your name—

Sig. Away, my friend,
You flatter—yet the dear delusion charms.

Laura. No, Sigismunda, 'tis the strictest truth,
Nor half the truth, I tell you. Even with fondness

My brother talks for ever of the passion,
That fires young Tancred's breast. So much it strikes him,
He praises love as if he were a lover.

He blames the false pursuits of vagrant youth,
Calls them gay folly, a mistaken struggle
Against best judging nature. Heaven, he says,
In lavish'd bounty form'd the heart for love;
In love included all the finer seeds
Of honour, virtue, friendship, purest bliss—

Sig. Virtuous Rodolpho!

Laura. Then his pleasing theme
He varies to the praises of your lover—

Sig. And what, my Laura, says he on the subject?

Laura. He says that, though he was not newly born,
Nature has form'd him noble, generous, brave,
Truly magnanimous, and warmly scorning
Whatever bears the smallest taint of baseness;
That every easy virtue is his own;
Not learnt by painful labour, but inspir'd,
Implanted in his soul.—Chiefly one charm
He in his graceful character observes;
That though his passions burn with high impatience,

And sometimes, from a noble heat of nature,
Are ready to fly off; yet the least check
Of ruling reason brings them back to temper,
And gentle softness.

Sig. True! Oh, true, Rodolpho!
Bless'd be thy kindred worth, for loving his!
He is all warmth, all amiable fire,
All quick, heroic ardour! temper'd soft
With gentleness of heart, and manly reason!
If virtue were to wear a human form,
To light it with her dignity and flame,
Then softening mix her smiles and tender graces;

Oh, she would choose the person of my Tancred!
Go on, my friend, go on, and ever praise him;
The subject knows no bounds, nor can I tire,
While my breast trembles to that sweetest music!

The heart of woman tastes no truer joy,
Is never flatter'd with such dear enchantment—
'Tis more than selfish vanity—as when
She hears the praises of the man she loves—

Laura. Madam, your father comes.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. [To an ATTENDANT as he enters.] Lord Tancred

Is found?

At. My lord, he quickly will be here.

I scarce could keep before him, though he bid me

Speed on, to say he would attend your orders.

Sif. 'Tis well—retire—You too, my daughter, leave me.

Sig. I go, my father, but how fares the king?

Sif. He is no more. Gone to that awful state,
Where kings the crown wear only of their virtues.

Sig. How bright must then be his!—This stroke is sudden;

He was this morning well, when to the chase
Lord Tancred went.

Sif. 'Tis true. But at his years

Death gives short notice—Drooping nature then,
Without a gust of pain to shake it, falls.

His death, my daughter, was that happy period
Which few attain. The duties of his day
Were all discharg'd, and gratefully enjoy'd
Its noblest blessings; calm as evening skies
Was his pure mind, and lighted up with hopes
That open heaven; when for his last long sleep
Timely prepar'd, a lassitude of life,
A pleasing weariness of mortal joy,
Fell on his soul, and down he sunk to rest.

Oh, may my death be such!—He but one wish
Left unfulfill'd, which was to see Count Tancred—

Sig. To see Count Tancred!—Pardon me, my lord—

Sif. For what, my daughter?—But, with such emotion,
Why did you start at mention of Count Tancred—

Sig. Nothing—I only hop'd the dying king
Might mean to make some generous just provision

For this worthy charge, this noble orphan.

Sif. And he has done it largely—Leave me now—

I want some private conference with Lord Tancred. [*Exeunt SIGISMUNDA and LAURA.*]

My doubts are but too true—If these old eyes
Can trace the marks of love, a mutual passion
Has seiz'd, I fear, my daughter and this prince,
My sovereign now—Should it be so? Ah, there,
There lurks a brooding tempest, that may shake
My long concerted scheme, to settle firm
The public peace and welfare, which the king
Has made the prudent basis of his will—
Away, unworthy views! you shall not tempt me!

Nor interest nor ambition shall seduce
My fix'd resolve—Perish the selfish thought,
Which our own good prefers to that of millions!
He comes, my king, unconscious of his fortune.

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. My Lord Siffredi, in your looks I read
Confirm'd, the mournful news that fly abroad
From tongue to tongue—We then, at last, have lost

The good old king?

Sif. Yes, we have lost a father!

The greatest blessing Heaven bestows on mortals,

And seldom found amidst these wiles of time.

A good, a worthy king!—Hear me, my Tancred,
And I will tell thee, in a few plain words,
How he deserv'd that best, that glorious title.

'Tis nought complex, 'tis clear as truth and virtue.

He lov'd his people, deem'd them all his children;
The good exalted, and depress'd the bad.

He spurn'd the flattering crew, with scorn rejected

Their smooth advice that only means themselves,
Their schemes to aggrandize him into baseness;

Nor did he less disdain the secret breath,
The whisper'd tale, that blights a virtuous name.

He sought alone the good of those for whom
He was intrusted with the sovereign power:

Well knowing that a people, in their rights
And industry protected, living safe

Beneath the sacred shelter of the laws,
Encourag'd in their genius, arts, and labours,

And happy each as he himself deserves,
Are ne'er ungrateful. With an unsparing hand

They will for him provide: their filial love
And confidence are his unfailing treasure,

And every honest man his faithful guard.

Tan. A general face of grief o'erspreads the city.

I mark'd the people, as I hither came,
In crowds assembled, struck with silent sorrow,
And pouring forth the noblest praise of tears.

Those, whom remembrance of their former woes,
And long experience of the vain illusions

Of youthful hope, had into wise consent
And fear of change corrected, wrung their hands,

And, often casting up their eyes to heaven,

Gave sign of sad conjecture. Others show'd,
Athwart their grief, or real or affected,
A gleam of expectation, from what chance
A change might bring. A mingled murmur ran
Along the streets; and from the lonely court
Of him who can no more assist their fortunes,
I saw the courtier-fry, with eager haste,
All hurrying to Constantia.

Sif. Noble youth!

I joy to hear from thee these just reflections,
Worthy of riper years—But if they seek
Constantia, trust me, they mistake their course.

Tan. How! Is she not, my lord, the late king's sister,

Heir to the crown of Sicily? the last
Of our fam'd Norman line, and now our queen?

Sif. Tancred, 'tis true; she is the late king's sister,

The sole surviving offspring of that tyrant
William the Bad—so for his vices styl'd;

Who spilt much noble blood, and sore oppress'd
Th' exhausted land: whence grievous wars

arose,
And many a dire convulsion shook the state.

When he, whose death Sicilia mourns to-day,
William, who has and well deserv'd the name
Of Good, succeeding to his father's throne,
Reliev'd his country's woes—But to return;
She is the late king's sister, born some months
After the tyrant's death, but not next heir.

Tan. You much surprise me—May I then presume

To ask who is?

Sif. Come nearer, noble Tancred,
Son of my care. I must, on this occasion,
Consult thy generous heart; which, when conducted

By rectitude of mind and honest virtues,
Gives better counsel than the hoary head—
Then know, there lives a prince, here in Palermo,

The lineal offspring of our famous hero,
Roger the First.

Tan. Great Heaven! how far remov'd
From that our mighty founder?

Sif. His great grandson:

Sprung from his eldest son, who died untimely,
Before his father.

Tan. Ha! the prince you mean,
Is he not Manfred's son? The generous, brave,
Unhappy Manfred! whom the tyrant William,
You just now mention'd, not content to spoil
Of his paternal crown, threw into fetters,
And infamously murder'd?

Sif. Yes, the same.

Tan. By Heavens, I joy to find our Norman reign,

The world's sole light amidst these barbarous ages,

Yet rears its head; and shall not, from the lance,

Pass to the feeble distaff.—But this prince,
Where has he lain conceal'd?

Sif. The late good king,
By noble pity mov'd, contriv'd to save him
From his dire father's unrelenting rage,
And had him rear'd in private, as became
His birth and hopes, with high and princely nurture,

Till now, too young to rule a troubled state,
By civil broils most miserably torn,
He in his safe retreat has lain conceal'd,

His birth and fortune to himself unknown;
But when the dying king to me intrusted,
As to the chancellor of the realm, his will,
His successor he nam'd him.

Tan. Happy youth!
He then will triumph o'er his father's foes,
O'er haughty Osmond, and the tyrant's daughter.

Sif. Ay, that is what I dread—the heat of youth;

There lurks, I fear, perdition to the state.
I dread the horrors of rekindled war:
Though dead, the tyrant still is to be fear'd;
His daughter's party still is strong and numerous:
Her friend, Earl Osmond, constable of Sicily,
Experienc'd, brave, high-born, of mighty interest.
Better the prince and princess should by marriage
Unite their friends, their interest, and their claims!

Then will the peace and welfare of the land
On a firm basis rise.

Tan. My Lord Siffredi,
If by myself I of this prince may judge,
That scheme will scarce succeed—Your prudent age

In vain will counsel, if the heart forbid it—
But wherefore fear? The right is clearly his;
And, under your direction, with each man
Of worth and steadfast loyalty to back
At once the king's appointment and his birth-right,

There is no ground for fear. They have great odds,

Against th' astonish'd sons of violence,
Who fight with awful justice on their side.
All Sicily will rouse, all faithful hearts
Will range themselves around Prince Manfred's son.

For me, I here devote me to the service
Of this young prince; I every drop of blood
Will lose with joy, with transport, in his cause—
Pardon my warmth—but that, my lord, will never

To this decision come.—Then find the prince;
Lose not a moment to awaken in him
The royal soul. Perhaps he now, desponding,
Pines in a corner, and laments his fortune;
That in the narrower bounds of private life
He must confine his aims, those swelling virtues
Which from his noble father he inherits.

Sif. Perhaps, regardless, in the common bane
Of youth, he melts, in vanity and love.

But if the seeds of virtue glow within him,
I will awake a higher sense, a love
That grasps the loves and happiness of millions.

Tan. Why that surmise? Or should he love,
Siffredi,

I doubt not, it is nobly, which will raise
And animate his virtues—Oh, permit me
To plead the cause of youth—Their virtue oft,
In pleasure's soft enchantment lull'd awhile,
Forgets itself; it sleeps and gaily dreams,
Till great occasion rouse it; then, all flame,
It walks abroad, with heighten'd soul and vigour,
And by the change astonishes the world.
Even with a kind of sympathy, I feel
The joy that waits this prince; when all the powers,

Th' expanding heart can wish, of doing good;
Whatever swells ambition, or exalts
The human soul into divine emotions,
All crowd at once upon him.

Sif. Ah, my Tancred,

Nothing so easy as in speculation,
And at a distance seen, the course of honour,
A fair delightful champaign strew'd with flowers.
But when the practice comes; when our fond

passions,
Pleasure and pride, and self-indulgence, throw
Their magic dust around, the prospect roughens;
Then dreadful passes, craggy mountains rise,
Cliffs to be scal'd, and torrents to be stemm'd;
Then toil ensues, and perseverance stern;
And endless combats with our grosser sense,
Oft lost, and oft renew'd; and generous pain
For others felt; and, harder lesson still!

Our honest bliss for others sacrific'd;
And all the rugged task of virtue quells
The stoutest heart of common resolution,
Few get above this turbid scene of strife.
Few gain the summit, breathe that purest air,
That heavenly ether, which untroubled sees
The storm of vice and passion rage below.

Tan. Most true, my lord. But why thus augur ill?

You seem to doubt this prince. I know him not.
Yet, oh, methinks, my heart could answer for him!

The juncture is so high, so strong the gale
That blows from Heaven, as through the dearest soul

Might breathe the godlike energy of virtue.

Sif. Hear him, immortal shades of his great fathers!

Forgive me, Sir, this trial of your heart.

Thou! thou, art he!

Tan. Siffredi!

Sif. Tancred, thou!

Thou art the man of all the many thousands
That toil upon the bosom of this isle,
By Heaven elected to command the rest,
To rule, protect them, and to make them happy!

Tan. Manfred my father! I the last support
Of the fam'd Norman line, that awes the world!
I, who this morning wander'd forth an orphan,
Outcast of all but thee, my second father!
Thus call'd to glory! to the first great lot
Of human-kind!—Oh, wonder-working hand,
That, in majestic silence, sways at will
The mighty movements of unbounded nature;
Oh, grant me, Heaven, the virtues to sustain
This awful burden of so many heroes!

Let me not be exalted into shame,
Set up the worthless pageant of vain grandeur!
Meantime I thank the justice of the king,

Who has my right bequeath'd me. Thee, Siffredi,

I thank thee—Oh, I ne'er enough can thank thee!

Yes, thou hast been—thou art—shalt be my father!

Thou shalt direct my unexperienc'd years,
Shalt be the ruling head, and I the hand.

Sif. It is enough for me—to see my sovereign
Assert his virtues, and maintain his honour.

Tan. I think, my lord, you said the king committed

To you his will. I hope it is not clogg'd
With any base conditions, any clause,
To tyrannize my heart, and to Constantia
Enslave my hand devoted to another.
The hint you just now gave of that alliance,
You must imagine, wakes my fear. But know,
In this alone I will not bear dispute,
Not even from thee, Siffredi!—Let the council

Be straightassembled, and the will there open'd :
Thence issue speedy orders to convene,
This day, ere noon, the senate : where those ba-
rons,

Who now are in Palermo, will attend,
To pay their ready homage to the king,
Their rightful king, who claims his native crown,
And will not be a king by deeds and parchments.

Sig. I go, my liege. But once again permit
me

To tell you—Now, is the trying crisis,
That must determine of your future reign.
Oh, with heroic rigour watch your heart !
And to the sovereign duties of the king,
Th' unequal'd pleasures of a god on earth,
Submit the common joys, the common passions,
Nay, even the virtues of the private man.

Tan. Of that no more. They not oppose, but
aid,

Invalidate, cherish, and reward each other,
The kind all-ruling wisdom is no tyrant.

[*Exit SIFFREDI.*]

Now, generous Sigismunda, comes my turn
To show my love was not of thine unworthy,
When fortune bade me blush to look to thee.
But what is fortune to the wish of love ?
A miserable bankrupt ! Oh, 'tis poor,
'Tis scanty all, whate'er we can bestow !
The wealth of kings is wretchedness and want !
Quick, let me find her ! taste that highest joy,
Th' exalted heart can know, the mix'd effusion
Of gratitude and love !—Behold she comes !

Enter SIGISMUNDA.

My fluttering soul was all on wing to find thee,
My love, my Sigismunda !

Sig. Oh, my Tancred !
Tell me, what means this mystery and gloom
That lowers around ? Just now, involv'd in
thought,

My father shot athwart me—You, my lord,
Seem strangely mov'd—I fear some dark event,
From the king's death, to trouble our repose,
That tender calm we in the woods of Belmont
So happily enjoy'd—Explain this hurry
What means it ? Say.

Tan. It means that we are happy !
Beyond our most romantic wishes happy !

Sig. You but perplex me more.

Tan. It means, my fairest,
That thou art queen of Sicily ; and I
The happiest of mankind ! than monarch more !
Because with thee I can adorn my throne.
Manfred, who fell by tyrant William's rage,
Fam'd Roger's lineal issue, was my father.

[*Pausing.*]

You droop, my love ; dejected on a sudden ;
You seem to mourn my fortune—The soft tear
Springs in thy eye—Oh, let me kiss it off—
Why this, my Sigismunda ?

Sig. Royal Tancred,
None at your glorious fortune can like me
Rejoice ;—yet me alone, of all Sicilians,
It makes unhappy.

Tan. I should hate it then !
Should throw, with scorn, the splendid ruin
from me !

No, Sigismunda, 'tis my hope with thee
To share it, whence it draws its richest value.

Sig. You are my sovereign—I at humble dis-
tance—

Tan. Thou art my queen ! the sovereign of
my soul !

You never reign'd with such triumphant lustre,
Such winning charms, as now ; yet thou art still
The dear, the tender, generous Sigismunda !

Who, with a heart exalted far above
Those selfish views that charm the common
breast,

Stoop'd from the height of life and courted beauty,
Then, then, to love me, when I seem'd of fortune
The hopeless outcast, when I had no friend,
None to protect and own me, but thy father.
And wouldst thou claim all goodness to thyself ?
Canst thou thy Tancred deem so dully form'd,
Of such gross clay, just as I reach'd the point—
A point my wildest hopes could ne'er imagine—
In that great moment, full of every virtue,
That I should then so mean a traitor prove
To the best bliss and honour of mankind,
So much disgrace the human heart, as then,
For the dead form of flattery and pomp,
The faithless joys of courts, to quit kind truth,
The cordial sweets of friendship and of love,
The life of life ! my all, my Sigismunda ?
I could upbraid thy fears, call them unkind,
Cruel, unjust, an outrage to my heart,
Did they not spring from love.

Sig. Think not, my lord,
That to such vulgar doubts I can descend.
Your heart, I know, disdains the little thought
Of changing with the vain, external change
Of circumstance and fortune. Rather thence
It would, with rising ardour, greatly feel
A noble pride, to show itself the same.

But, ah ! the hearts of kings are not their own.
There is a haughty duty that subjects them
To chains of state, to wed the public welfare,
And not indulge the tender private virtues.
Some high descended princess, who will bring
New power and interest to your throne, demands
Your royal hand—perhaps Constantia—

Tan. She !

Oh, name her not ! were I this moment free
And disengag'd as he who never felt
The powerful eye of beauty, never sigh'd
For matchless worth like thine, I should abhor
All thoughts of that alliance. Her fell father
Most basely murder'd mine ; and she, his daugh-
ter,

Supported by his barbarous party still,
His pride inherits, his imperious spirit,
And insolent pretensions to my throne,
And, canst thou deem me then so poorly tame,
So cool a traitor to my father's blood,
As from the prudent cowardice of state
E'er to submit to such a base proposal ?
Detested thought ! Oh, doubly, doubly hateful !
From the two strongest passions ; from aversion
To this Constantia—and from love to thee.
Custom, 'tis true, a venerable tyrant,
O'er servile man extends a blind dominion ;
The pride of kings enslave them ; their ambition,
Or interest, lords it o'er the better passions.
But vain their talk, mask'd under specious words
Of station, duty, and of public good.
They whom just Heaven has to a throne exalted,
To guard the rights and liberties of others,
What duty binds them to betray their own ?
For me, my free-born heart shall bear no dictates,
But those of truth and honour ; wear no chains,
But the dear chains of love, and Sigismunda !
Or if, indeed, my choice must be directed

By views of public good, whom shall I choose
So fit to grace, to dignify a crown,
And beam sweet mercy on a happy people,
As thee, my love? Whom place upon my throne

But thee, descended from the good Siffredi?
'Tis fit that heart be thine, which drew from him
Whate'er can make it worthy thy acceptance.

Sig. Cease, cease to raise my hopes above my duty.

Charm me no more, my Tancred!—Oh, that we
In those bless'd woods, where first you won my soul,

Had pass'd our gentle days; far from the toil
And pomp of courts! Such is the wish of love,
Of love that, with delightful weakness, knows
No bliss, and no ambition but itself.
But in the world's full light, those charming dreams,

Those fond illusions vanish. Awful duties!
The tyranny of men, even your own heart,
Where lurks a sense your passion stifles now,
And proud imperious honour, call you from me.
'Tis all in vain—you cannot hush a voice
That murmurs here—I must not be persuaded!

Tan. [*Kneeling.*] Hear me, thou soul of all my hopes and wishes!

And witness Heaven, prime source of love and joy!

Not a whole warring world combin'd against me,
Its pride, its splendour, its imposing forms,
Nor interest, nor ambition, nor the face
Of solemn state, not even thy father's wisdom,
Shall ever shake my faith to Sigismunda!

[*Trumpets and acclamations heard.*]

But hark! the public voice to duties calls me,
Which with unwearied zeal I will discharge;
And thou, yes, thou, shalt be my bright reward—

Yet—ere I go—to hush thy lovely fears,
Thy delicate objections—[*Writes his name.*]

Take this blank,

Sign'd with my name, and give it to thy father:
Tell him, 'tis my command it be fill'd up
With a most strict and solemn marriage-contract.

How dear each tie! how charming to my soul!
That more unites me to my Sigismunda.
For thee, and for my people's good to live,
Is all the bliss which sovereign power can give.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Grand Saloon.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. So far 'tis well—The late king's will proceeds

Upon the plan I counsell'd; that Prince Tancred
Shall make Constantia partner of his throne.

Oh, great, oh, wish'd event! whence the dire seeds

Of dark intestine broils, of civil war,
And all its dreadful miseries and crimes,
Shall be for ever rooted from the land.

May these dim eyes, long blasted by the rage
Of cruel faction and my country's woes,
Tir'd with the toils and vanities of life,
Behold this period, then be clos'd in peace!
But how this mighty obstacle surmount,

Which love has thrown betwixt? Love, that disturbs

The schemes of wisdom still; that, wing'd with passion,

Blind and impetuous in its fond pursuits,
Leaves the gray-headed reason far behind.

Alas, how frail the state of human bliss!

When even our honest passions oft destroy it.

I was to blame, in solitude and shades,
Infectious scenes! to trust their youthful hearts.

Would I had mark'd the rising flame that now
Burns out with dangerous force!—My daughter, owns

Her passion for the king; she trembling own'd it,

With prayers, and tears, and tender supplications,

That almost shook my firmness—And this blank,

Which his rash fondness gave her, shows how much,

To what a wild extravagance he loves—

I see no means—it foils my deepest thought—

How to controul this madness of the king.

That wears the face of virtue, and will thence

Disdain restraint, will, from his generous heart,

Borrow new rage, even speciously oppose

To reason reason—But it must be done.

My own advice, of which I more and more

Approve, the strict conditions of the will,

Highly demand his marriage with Constantia;

Or else her party has a fair pretence—

And all at once is horror and confusion—

How issue from this maze!—The crowding barons

Here summon'd to the palace, meet already,

To pay their homage, and confirm the will.

On a few moments hangs the public fate,

On a few hasty moments—Ha! there shone

A gleam of hope—Yes, with this very paper

I yet will save him—Necessary means

For good and noble ends, can ne'er be wrong.

In that resistless, that peculiar case,

Deceit is truth and virtue—But how hold

This lion in the toil?—Oh, I will form it

Of such a fatal thread, twist it so strong

With all the ties of honour and of duty,

That his most desperate fury shall not break

The honest snare.—Here is the royal hand—

I will beneath it write a perfect, full,

And absolute agreement to the will;

Which read before the nobles of the realm

Assembled, in the sacred face of Sicily,

Constantia present, every heart and eye

Fix'd on their monarch, every tongue applaud-

ing, He must submit, his dream of love must vanish—

It shall be done—To me, I know 'tis ruin;

But safety to the public, to the king.

I will not reason more, I will not listen

Even to the voice of honour.—No—'tis fix'd!

I here devote me for my prince and country;

Let them be safe, and let me nobly perish!

Behold, Earl Osmond comes, without whose aid

My schemes are all in vain.

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. My Lord Siffredi,
I from the council hasten to Constantia,
And have accomplish'd what we there propos'd.
The princess to the will submits her claims.

She with her presence means to grace the
senate,
And of your royal charge, young Tancred's
hand,

Accept. At first, indeed, it shock'd her hopes
Of reigning sole, this new, surprising scene
Of Manfred's son, appointed by the king,
With her joint heir—But I so fully show'd
The justice of the case, the public good,
And sure establish'd peace which thence would
rise,

Join'd to the strong necessity that urg'd her,
If on Sicilia's throne she meant to sit,
As to the wise disposal of the will
Her high ambition tam'd. Methought, besides,
I could discern, that not from prudence merely
She to this choice submitted.

Sif. Noble Osmond,
You have in this done to the public great
And signal service. Yes, I must avow it;
This frank and ready instance of your zeal,
In such a trying crisis of the state,
When interest and ambition might have warp'd
Your views, I own, this truly generous virtue
Upbraids the rashness of my former judgment.

Osm. Siffredi, no. To you belongs the
praise;

The glorious work is yours. Had I not seiz'd,
Improv'd the wish'd occasion to root out
Division from the land, and sav'd my country,
I had been base and infamous for ever.

'Tis you, my lord, to whom the many thou-
sands,

That by the barbarous sword of civil war
Had fallen inglorious, owe their lives; to you
The sons of this fair isle, from her first peers
Down to the swain who tills her golden plains,
Owe their safe homes, their soft domestic hours,
And through late time posterity shall bless
you,

You who advis'd this will.—I blush to think
I have so long oppos'd the best good man
In Sicily—With what impartial care
Ought we to watch o'er prejudice and passion,
Nor trust too much the jaundiced eye of party!
Henceforth its vain delusions I renounce,
Its hot determinations, that confine
All merit and all virtue to itself.

To yours I join my hand; with you will own
No interest and no party but my country.
Nor is your friendship only my ambition:
There is a dearer name, the name of father,
By which I should rejoice to call Siffredi.
Your daughter's hand would to the public weal
Unite my private happiness.

Sif. My lord,
You have my glad consent. To be allied
To your distinguish'd family and merit,
I shall esteem an honour. From my soul
I here embrace Earl Osmond as my friend
And son.

Osm. You make him happy. This assent,
So frank and warm, to what I long have
wish'd,

Engages all my gratitude; at once,
In the first blossom, it matures our friendship.
I from this moment vow myself the friend
And zealous servant of Siffredi's house.

Enter an OFFICER belonging to the Court.

Off. [To SIFFREDI.] The king, my lord, de-
mands your speedy presence.

Sif. I will attend him straight—Farewell, my
lord;

The senate meets: there, a few moments hence
I will rejoin you.

Osm. There, my noble lord,
We will complete this salutary work;
Will there begin a new auspicious era.

[*Exeunt SIFFREDI and OFFICER.*]

Siffredi gives his daughter to my wishes—

But does she give herself? Gay, young, and
flatter'd,

Perhaps engag'd, will she her youthful heart
Yield to my harsher, uncomplying years?

I am not form'd, by flattery and praise,
By sighs and tears, and all the whining trade
Of love, to feed a fair one's vanity;

To charm at once and spoil her. These soft
arts

Nor suit my ears nor temper; these be left
To boys and doting age. A prudent father,
By nature charg'd to guide and rule her choice,
Resigns his daughter to a husband's power,
Who, with superior dignity, with reason,
And manly tenderness, will ever love her;
Not first a kneeling slave, and then a tyrant.

Enter BARONS.

My lords, I greet you well. This wondrous
day

Unites us all in amity and friendship.

We meet to-day with open hearts and looks,

Not gloom'd by party, scowling on each other,

But all the children of one happy isle,

The social sons of liberty. No pride,

No passion now, no thwarting views divide us:

Prince Manfred's line, at last to William's
join'd,

Combine us in one family of brothers.

This to the late good king's well-ordered will

And wise Siffredi's generous care, we owe.

I truly give you joy. First of you all,

I here renounce those errors and divisions

That have so long disturb'd our peace, and
seem'd

Fermenting still, to threaten new commotions—

By time instructed, let us not disdain

To quit mistakes. We all, my lords, have
err'd.

Men may, I find, be honest, though they differ.

1st Baron. Who follows not, my lord, the fair
example

You set us all, what'er be his pretence,
Loves not, with single and unbiass'd heart,
His country as he ought.

2nd Baron. Oh, beauteous peace!

Sweet union of a state! what else but thou

Gives safety, strength, and glory to a people?

I bow, lord constable, beneath the snow

Of many years; yet in my breast revives

A youthful flame. Methinks, I see again

Those gentle days renew'd that bless'd our isle,

Ere by this wasteful fury of division,

Worse than our Ætna's most destructive fires,

It desolated sunk. I see our plains

Unbounded waving with the gifts of harvest;

Our seas with commerce throng'd; our busy
port

With cheerful toil. Our Enna blooms afresh;

Afesh the sweets of thymy Hybla flow.

Our nymphs and shepherds sporting in each
vale,

Inspire new song, and wake the pastoral reed---

The tongue of age is fond—Come, come, my sons;

I long to see this prince, of whom the world
Speaks largely well—His father was my friend,
The brave, unhappy Manfred—Come, my lords;
We tarry here too long.

Enter two OFFICERS, keeping off the Crowd.

One of the Crowd. Show us our king,
The valiant Manfred's son, who lov'd the people—

We must, we will behold him—Give us way.

1st Off. Pray, gentlemen, give back—it must not be—

Give back, I pray—on such a glad occasion,
I would not ill entreat the lowest of you.

2d Man of the Crowd. Nay, give us but a glimpse of our young king.

We more than any baron of them all,
Will pay him due allegiance.

2d Off. Friends, indeed

You cannot pass this way—We have strict orders,

To keep for him himself, and for the barons,
All these apartments clear—Go to the gate
That fronts the sea, you there will find admission.

Omnos. Long live King Tancred! Manfred's son—huzza! [*Crowd goes off.*]

1st Off. I do not marvel at their rage of joy.

He is a brave and amiable prince.

When in my Lord Siffredi's house I liv'd,
Ere by his favour I obtain'd this office,
I there remember well the young Count Tancred.

To see him and to love him were the same;
He was so noble in his ways, yet still
So affable and mild—Well, well, old Sicily,
Yet happy days await thee!

2d Off. Grant it, Heaven!

We have seen sad and troublesome times enough,

He is, they say, to wed the late king's sister,
Constantia.

1st Off. Friend, of that I greatly doubt.

Or I mistake, or Lord Siffredi's daughter,
The gentle Sigismunda, has his heart.
If one may judge by kindly, cordial looks,
And fond, assiduous care to please each other,
Most certainly they love—Oh, be they bless'd,
As they deserve! It were great pity aught
Should part a matchless pair; the glory he,
And she the blooming grace of Sicily!

2d Off. My Lord Rodolpho comes.

Enter RODOLPHO from the Senate.

Rod. My honest friends,

You may retire. [*OFFICERS go out.*] A storm is in the wind.

This will perplexes all. No, Tancred never
Can stoop to these conditions, which at once
Attack his rights, his honour, and his love.
Those wise old men, those plodding, grave, state
pedants,

Forget the course of youth; their crooked prudence,

To baseness verging still, forgets to take
Into their fine-spun schemes the generous heart,
That, through the cobweb system bursting, lays
Their labours waste—So will this business prove,

Or I mistake the king—back from the pomp
He seem'd at first to shrink, and round his brow

I mark'd a gathering cloud, when, by his side,
As if design'd to share the public homage,
He saw the tyrant's daughter. But confess'd
At least to me the doubling tempest frown'd,
And shook his swelling bosom, when he heard
Th' unjust, the base conditions of the will.

Uncertain, toss'd in cruel agitation,
He oft, methought, address'd himself to speak,
And interrupt Siffredi; who appear'd,
With conscious haste, to dread that interruption,

And hurried on—But hark! I hear a noise,
As if th' assembly rose—Ha! Sigismunda,
Oppress'd with grief, and wrapp'd in pensive sorrow,
Passes along.

[*SIGISMUNDA and Attendants pass through the back Scene.*]

Enter LAURA

Laura. Your high-prais'd friend, the king,
Is false, most vilely false. The meanest slave
Had shown a nobler heart; nor grossly thus,
By the first bait ambition spread, been gull'd.
He Manfred's son! away! it cannot be!
The son of that brave prince could ne'er betray
Those rights so long usurp'd from his great father.

Which he, this day, by such amazing fortune,
Had just regain'd; he ne'er could sacrifice
All faith, all honour, gratitude, and love,
Even just resentment of his father's fate,
And pride itself; whate'er exalts a man
Above the grovelling sons of peasant mud,
All in a moment—And for what? why, truly,
For kind permission, gracious leave, to sit
On his own throne with tyrant William's daughter!

Rod. I stand amaz'd—You surely wrong him
Laura.

'There must be some mistake.

Laura. There can be none!

Siffredi read his full and free consent
Before th' applauding senate. True, indeed,
A small remain of shame, a timorous weakness,
Even dastardly in falsehood, made him blush
To act this scene in Sigismunda's eye,
Who sunk beneath his perfidy and baseness.
Hence, till to-morrow he adjourn'd the senate!
To-morrow, fix'd with infamy to crown him!
Then leading off his gay, triumphant princess,
He left the poor unhappy Sigismunda
To bend her trembling steps to that sad home
His faithless vows will render hateful to her—
He comes—Farewell—I cannot bear his presence!

[*Exit LAURA*]

Enter TANCRED and SIFFREDI, meeting.

Tan. Avoid me, hoary traitor! Go, Rodolpho,

Give orders that all passages this way
Be shut—Defend me from a hateful world,
The bane of peace and honour—then return—
[*Exit RODOLPHO.*]

What! dost thou haunt me still? Oh, monstrous insult!

Unparallel'd indignity! Just Heaven!

Was ever king, was ever man so treated,
So trampled into baseness?

Sif. Here, my liege,
Here strike! I nor deserve, nor ask for mercy.

Tan. Distraction!—Oh, my soul!—Hold, reason, hold

Thy giddy seat—Oh, this inhuman outrage
Unhinges thought!

Sif. Exterminate thy servant.

Tan. All, all but this I could have borne—but this!

This daring insolence beyond example!

This murderous stroke, that stabs my peace for ever!

That wounds me there—there! where the human heart

Most exquisitely feels—

Sif. Oh, bear it not,

My royal lord; appease on me your vengeance!

Tan. Did ever tyrant image aught so cruel!

The lowest slave that crawls upon the earth,
Robb'd of each comfort Heaven bestows on mortals,

On the bare ground, has still his virtue left,
The sacred treasure of an honest heart,

Which thou hast dar'd, with rash, audacious hand,

And impious fraud, in me to violate—

Sif. Behold, my lord, that rash audacious hand,

Which now repents its crime—Oh, glorious, happy!

If by my ruin I can save your honour.

Tan. Such honour I renounce; with sovereign scorn

Greatly detest it, and its mean adviser!

Hast thou not dar'd beneath my name to shelter—

My name, for other purposes design'd,

Given from the fondness of a faithful heart,

With the best love o'erflowing—Hast thou not,

Beneath thy sov'reign's name, basely presum'd

To shield a lie—a lie in public utter'd,

To all deluded Sicily? But know,

This poor contrivance is as weak as base.

In such a wretched toil none can be held

But fools and cowards—Soon thy flimsy arts,

Touch'd by my just, my burning indignation,
Shall burst like threads in flame—Thy doting

prudence

But more secures the purpose it would shake.

Had my resolves been wavering and doubtful,
This would confirm them, make them fix'd as

fate;

'Tis adds the only motive that was wanting

To urge them on through war and desolation.

What! marry her! Constantia! her! the daughter

Of the fell tyrant who destroy'd my father!

The very thought is madness! Ere thou seest

The torch of Hymen light these hated nuptials,

Thou shalt behold Sicilia wrapt in flames,

Her cities raz'd, her vallies drench'd with slaughter—

Love set aside, my pride assumes the quarrel;

My honour now is up; in spite of thee,

A world combin'd against me, I will give

This scatter'd will in fragments to the winds,

Assert my rights, the freedom of my heart,

Crush all who dare oppose me to the dust,

And heap perdition on thee!

Sif. Sir, 'tis just.

Exhaust on me thy rage; I claim it all.

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But for these public threats thy passion utters,
'Tis what thou canst not do.

Tan. I cannot! ha!

Driven to the dreadful brink of such dishonour.

Enough to make the tamest coward brave,

And into fierceness rouse the mildest nature,

What shall arrest my vengeance? Who?

Sif. Thyself.

Tan. Away! Dare not to justify thy crime!

That, that alone can aggravate its horror,

Add insolence to insolence—perhaps

May make my rage forget—

Sif. Oh, let it burst

On this gray head, devoted to thy service!

But when the storm has vented all its fury,

Thou then must hear—nay more, I know thou wilt—

Wilt hear the calm, yet stronger voice of reason.

Thou must reflect that a whole people's safety,

The weal of trusted millions, should bear down,

Thyself the judge, the fondest partial pleasure.

Thou must reflect that there are other duties,

A nobler pride, a more exalted honour,

Superior pleasures far, that will oblige,

Compel thee, to abide by this my deed,

Unwarranted perhaps in common justice,

But which necessity, even virtue's tyrant,

With awful voice commanded.—Yes, thou must,

In calmer hours, divest thee of thy love,

These common passions of the vulgar breast,

This boiling heat of youth, and be a king,

The lover of thy people!

Tan. Truths, ill employ'd,

Abus'd to colour guilt!—A king! a king!

Yes, I will be a king, but not a slave;

In this will be a king; in this my people

Shall learn to judge how I will guard their rights,

When they behold me vindicate my own.

But have I, say, been treated like a king?—

Heavens! could I stoop to such outrageous usage!

I were a mean, a shameless wretch, unworthy

To wield a sceptre in a land of slaves,

A soil abhor'd of virtue; should belie

My father's blood, belie those very maxims,

At other times you taught my youth—Siffredi!

[In a softened tone of voice.]

Sif. Behold, my prince, thy poor old servant,

Whose darling care, these twenty years, has been

To nurse thee up to virtue; who, for thee,

Thy glory and thy weal, renounces all,

All interest or ambition can pour forth;

What many a selfish father would pursue

Through treachery and crimes: behold him here,

Bent on his feeble knees, to beg, conjure thee,

With tears to beg thee to control thy passion,

And save thyself, thy honour, and thy people!

Kneeling with me, behold the many thousands

To thy protection trusted; fathers, mothers,

The sacred front of venerable age,

The tender virgin, and the helpless infant;

The ministers of Heaven, those who maintain,

Around thy throne, the majesty of rule;

And those whose labour, scorch'd by winds and sun,

Feeds the rejoicing public; see them all

Here at thy feet conjuring thee to save them

From misery and war, from crimes and rapine!

Can there be aught, kind Heaven, in self-indulgence

To weigh down these, this aggregate of love,

With which compar'd, the dearest private passion

Is but the wafted dust upon the balance?

Turn not away—Oh, is there not some part
In thy great heart, so sensible to kindness,
And generous warmth, some nobler part, to feel
The prayers and tears of these, the mingled voice
Of Heaven and earth?

Tan. There is, and thou hast touch'd it.
Rise, rise, Siffredi—Oh, thou hast undone me!
Unkind old man!—Oh, ill-entreated Tancred!
Which way soe'er I turn, dishonour rears
Her hideous front—and misery and ruin.
Was it for this you took such care to form me?
For this imbued me with the quickest sense
Of shame; these finer feelings, that ne'er vex
The common mass of mortals, dully happy
In bless'd insensibility? Oh, rather [power
You should have sear'd my heart, taught me that
And splendid interest lord it still o'er virtue;
That, gilded by prosperity and pride,
There is no shame, no meanness; temper'd thus,
I had been fit to rule a venal world.

Alas! what meant thy wantonness of prudence?
Why have you rais'd this miserable conflict
Betwixt the duties of the king and man?
Set virtue against virtue?—Ah, Siffredi!
'Tis thy superfluous, thy unfeeling wisdom,
That has involv'd me in a maze of error
Almost beyond retreat.—But hold, my soul
Thy steady purpose—Toss'd by various pas-
To this eternal anchor keep—There is, [sions
Can be no public without private virtue—
Then, mark me well, observe what I command;
It is the sole expedient now remaining—
To-morrow, when the senate meets again,
Unfold the whole, unravel the deceit;
Nor that alone; try to repair its mischief:
There all thy power, thy eloquence, and interest
Exert to re-instate me in my rights,
And from thy own dark snares to disembrace me.—
Start not, my lord—This must and shall be done!
Or here our friendship ends—Howe'er disguis'd,
Whatever thy pretence, thou art a traitor.

Sif. I should indeed deserve the name of traitor,
And even a traitor's fate, had I so slightly,
From principles so weak, done what I did,
As e'er to disavow it—

Tan. Ha!

Sif. My liege, [courts,
Expect not this—Though practis'd long in
I have not so far learn'd their subtle trade,
To veer obedient with each gust of passion.
I honour thee, I venerate thy orders,
But honour more my duty. Nought on earth
Shall ever shake me from that solid rock,
Nor smiles, nor frowns.—

Tan. You will not then?

Sif. I cannot.

Tan. Away! begone!—Oh, my Rodolpho,
come,
And save me from this traitor! Hence, I say,
Avoid my presence straight! and know, old man,
Thou, my worst foe, beneath the mask of friend-
ship,

Who, not content to trample in the dust
My dearest rights, dost with cool insolence
Persist, and call it duty; hadst thou not
A daughter that protects thee, thou shouldst feel
The vengeance thou deservest.—No reply!
Away! [Exit SIFFREDI.

Enter RODOLPHO.

Rod. What can incense my prince so highly
Against his friend Siffredi!

Tan. Friend! Rodolpho,
When I have told thee what this friend has done,
How play'd me like a boy, a base-born wretch,
Who had nor heart nor spirit, thou wilt stand
Amaz'd, and wonder at my stupid patience.

Rod. I heard, with mix'd astonishment and
grief,

The king's unjust, dishonourable will,
Void in itself—I saw you stung with rage,
And writhing in the snare; just as I went,
At your command to wait you here—but that
Was the king's deed, not his.

Tan. Oh, he advis'd it!

These many years he has in secret hatch'd
This black contrivance, glories in the scheme,
And proudly plumes him with his traitorous vir-
tue.

But that was nought, Rodolpho, nothing, nothing.
Oh, that was gentle, blameless to what follow'd
I had, my friend, to Sigismunda given,
To hush her fears, in the full gush of fondness,
A blank sign'd with my hand—and he, Oh, Hea-
vens!

Was ever such a wild attempt!—he wrote
Beneath my name an absolute compliance
To this detested will, nay, dar'd to read it
Before myself, on my insulted throne
His idle pageant plac'd—Oh, words are weak
To paint the pangs, the rage, the indignation,
That whirl'd from thought to thought my soul in
tempest,

Now on the point to burst, and now by shame
Repress'd—But in the face of Sicily,
All mad with acclamation, what, Rodolpho,
What could I do? the sole relief that rose
To my distracted mind, was to adjourn
Th' assembly till to-morrow—But to-morrow
What can be done?—Oh, it avails not what!
I care not what is done—My only care
Is how to clear my faith with Sigismunda.
She thinks me false! She cast a look that kill'd
me!

Oh! I am base in Sigismunda's eye!
The lowest of mankind, the most perfidious!

Rod. This was a strain of insolence indeed,
A daring outrage of so strange a nature
As stuns me quite—

Tan. Curs'd be my timid prudence,
That dash'd not back, that moment in his face,
The bold presumptuous lie!—and curs'd this
hand,

That, from a start of poor dissimulation,
Led off my Sigismunda's hated rival.
Ah, then! what, poison'd by the false appearance,
What, Sigismunda, were thy thoughts of me?
How, in the silent bitterness of soul,
How didst thou scorn me, hate mankind, thyself,
For trusting to the vows of faithless Tancred!
For such I seem'd—I was—the thought distracts
me!

I should have cast a flattering world aside,
Rush'd from my throne, before them all avow'd her
The choice, the glory of my free-born heart,
And spurn'd the shameful fetters thrown upon it—
Instead of that—confusion!—what I did
Has clinch'd the chain, confirm'd Siffredi's crime,
And fix'd me down to infamy!

Rod. My lord,
Blame not the conduct which your situation
Tore from your tortur'd heart—What could you
do?

Had you, so circumstanc'd, in open senate,

Before th' astonish'd public, with no friends
 Prepar'd, no party form'd, affronted thus
 The haughty princess and her powerful faction,
 Supported by this will, the sudden stroke,
 Abrupt and premature, might have recoil'd
 Upon yourself, even your own friends revolted,
 And turn'd at once the public scale against you.
 Besides, consider, had you then detected
 In its fresh guilt this action of Siffredi,
 You must with signal vengeance have chastis'd
 The treasonable deed—Nothing so mean
 As weak, insulted power that dares not punish.
 And how would that have suited with your love;
 His daughter present too? Trust me, your conduct,

Howe'er abhorrent to a heart like yours,
 Was fortunate and wise—Not that I mean,
 E'er to advise submission—

Tan. Heavens! submission—
 Could I descend to bear it, even in thought,
 Despire me, you, the world, and Sigismunda!
 Submission!—No!—To-morrow's glorious light
 Shall flash discovery on the scene of baseness.
 Whatever be the risk, by Heavens, to-morrow,
 I will o'erturn the dirty lie-built schemes
 Of these old men, and show my faithful senate
 That Manfred's son knows to assert and wear,
 With undiminish'd dignity, that crown
 This unexpected day has plac'd upon him.
 By this, my friend, these stormy gusts of pride
 Are foreign to my love—Till Sigismunda
 Be disabus'd, my breast is tumult all,
 And can obey no settled course of reason.
 I see her still, I feel her powerful image,
 That look, where with reproach complaint was
 mix'd,

Big with soft wo, and gentle indignation,
 Which seem'd at once to pity and to scorn me—
 Oh, let me find her! I too long have left
 My Sigismunda to converse with tears,
 A prey to thoughts that picture me a villain.
 But ah! how, clogg'd with this accursed state,
 A tedious world, shall I now find access?
 Her father too—Ten thousand horrors crowd
 Into the wild, fantastic eye of love—
 Who knows what he may do? Come then, my
 friend,

And by thy sister's hand, oh, let me steal
 A letter to her bosom—I no longer
 Can bear her absence, by the just contempt
 She now must brand me with, inflam'd to madness.
 Fly, my Rodolpho, fly! engage thy sister
 To aid my letter, and this very evening
 Secure an interview—I would not bear
 This rack another day, not for my kingdom.
 Till then, deep plung'd in solitude and shades,
 I will not see the hated face of man.
 Thought drives on thought, on passion passions
 roll;
 Her smiles alone can calm my raging soul.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

SIGISMUNDA *alone, sitting in a disconsolate posture.*

Sig. Ah, tyrant prince! ah more than faithless Tancred!
 Ungenerous and inhuman in thy falsehood!
 Hadst thou this morning, when my hopeless
 heart,

Submissive to my fortune and my duty,
 Had so much spirit left, as to be willing
 To give thee back thy vows, ah! hadst thou then
 Confess'd the sad necessity thy state
 Impos'd upon thee, and with gentle friendship,
 Since we must part at last, our parting soften'd:
 I should indeed—I should have been unhappy,
 But not to this extreme—Amidst my grief,
 I had, with pensive pleasure, cherish'd still
 The sweet remembrance of thy former love,
 Thy image still had dwelt upon my soul,
 And made our guiltless woes not undelightful.
 But coolly thus—How couldst thou be so cruel?—
 Thus to revive my hopes, to sooth my love,
 And call forth all its tenderness, then sink me
 In black despair—What unrelenting pride
 Possess'd thy breast, that thou couldst bear un-
 mov'd

To see me bent beneath a weight of shame?
 Pangs thou canst never feel! How couldst thou
 drag me,

In barbarous triumph at a rival's car?
 How make me witness to a sight of horror?
 That hand, which but a few short hours ago,
 So wantonly abus'd my simple faith,
 Before th' attesting world given to another,
 Irrevocably given!—There was a time,
 When the least cloud that hung upon my brow,
 Perhaps imagin'd only, touch'd thy pity.
 Then, brighten'd often by the ready tear,
 Thy looks were softness all; then the quick heart
 In every nerve alive, forgot itself,
 And for each other then we felt alone.
 But now, alas! those tender days are fled;
 Now thou canst see me wretched, pierc'd with
 anguish,

With studied anguish of thy own creating,
 Nor wet thy harden'd eye—Hold, let me think—
 I wrong thee sure; thou canst not be so base,
 As meanly in my misery to triumph—
 What is it then?—'Tis fickleness of nature,
 'Tis sickly love extinguish'd by ambition—
 Is there, kind Heaven, no constancy in man?
 No steadfast truth, no generous fix'd affection,
 That can bear up against a selfish world?
 No there is none—Even Tancred is inconstant!

[*Rising.*]

Hence! let me fly this scene!—Whate'er I see,
 These roofs, these walls, each object that sur-
 rounds me,

Are tainted with his vows—But whither fly?
 The groves are worse, the soft retreat of Belmont,
 Its deepening glooms, gay lawns, and airy sum-
 mits,

Will wound my busy memory to torture,
 And all its shades will whisper—faithless Tan-
 cred!—

My father comes—How, sunk in this disorder,
 Shall I sustain his presence?

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. Sigismunda,
 My dearest child! I grieve to find thee thus
 A prey to tears. I know the powerful cause
 From which they flow, and therefore can excuse
 them,
 But not their wilful, obstinate continuance.
 Come, rouse thee, then, call up thy drooping
 spirit,
 Awake to reason from this dream of love,
 And show the world thou art Siffredi's daughter.
Sig. Alas! I am unworthy of that name.

Sif. Thou art indeed to blame; thou hast too rashly
Engag'd thy heart, without a father's sanction.
But this I can forgive. The king has virtues,
That plead thy full excuse; nor was I void
Of blame, to trust thee to those dangerous virtues.
Then dread not my reproaches. Though he
blames,
Thy tender father pities more than blames thee.
Thou art my daughter still; and, if thy heart
Will now resume its pride, assert itself,
And greatly rise, superior to this trial,
I to my warmest confidence again
Will take thee, and esteem thee more my daughter.

Sig. Oh, you are gentler far than I deserve!
It is, it ever was, my darling pride,
To bend my soul to your supreme commands,
Your wisest will; and though, by love betray'd—
Alas! and punish'd too—I have transgress'd
The nicest bounds of duty, yet I feel
A sentiment of tenderness, a source
Of filial nature springing in my breast,
That, should it kill me, shall control this passion,
And make me all submission and obedience
To you, my honour'd lord, the best of fathers.
Sif. Come to my arms, thou comfort of my age!
Thou only joy and hope of these gray hairs!
Come, let me take thee to a parent's heart;
There, with the kindly aid of my advice,
Even with the dew of these paternal tears,
Revive and nourish this becoming spirit—
Then thou dost promise me, my Sigismunda—
Thy father stoops to make it his request—
Thou wilt resign thy fond, presumptuous hopes,
And henceforth never more indulge one thought
That in the light of love regards the king?

Sig. Hopes I have none!—Those by this fatal day
Are blasted all—But from my soul to banish,
While weeping memory there retains her seat,
Thoughts which the purest bosom might have
cherish'd,
Once my delight, now even in anguish charming,
Is more, my lord, than I can promise.

Sif. Absence, and time, the soft'ner of our passions,
Will conquer this. Meantime, I hope from thee
A generous great effort; that thou wilt now
Exert thy utmost force, nor languish thus
Beneath the vain extravagance of love.
Let not thy father blush to hear it said,
His daughter was so weak, e'er to admit
A thought so void of reason, that a king
Should to his rank, his honour, and his glory,
The high important duties of a throne,
Even to his throne itself, madly prefer
A wild, romantic passion, the fond child
Of youthful dreaming thought and vacant hours;
That he should quit his Heaven-appointed station,
Desert his awful charge, the care of all
The toiling millions which this isle contains;
Nay more, should plunge them into war and ruin,
And all to sooth a sick imagination,
A miserable weakness.—Must for thee,
To make thee bless'd, Sicilia be unhappy?
The king himself, lost to the nobler sense
Of manly praise, become the piteous hero
Of some soft tale, and rush on sure destruction?
Canst thou, my daughter, let the monstrous
thought
Possess one moment thy perverted fancy?

Rouse thee, for shame! and if a spark of virtue
Lies slumbering in thy soul, bid it blaze forth
Nor sink unequal to the glorious lesson,
This day thy lover gave thee from his throne.

Sig. Ah, that was not from virtue!—Had, my father,

That been his aim, I yield to what you say;
'Tis powerful truth, unanswerable reason.
Then, then, with sad but dutious resignation,
I had submitted as became your daughter;
But in that moment, when my humbled hopes
Were to my duty reconcil'd, to raise them
To yet a fonder height than e'er they knew,
Then rudely dash them down—There is the sting!

The blasting view is ever present to me—

Why did you drag me to a sight so cruel?

Sif. It was a scene to fire thy emulation.

Sig. It was a scene of perfidy!—But know,
I will do more than imitate the king—
For he is false!—I, though sincerely pierc'd
With the best, truest passion, ever touch'd
A virgin's breast, here vow to Heaven and you,
Though from my heart I cannot, from my hopes
To cast this prince—What would you more, my father?

Sif. Yes, one thing more—thy father then is happy—

Though by the voice of innocence and virtue
Absolv'd we live not to ourselves alone:
A rigorous world with peremptory sway,
Subjects us all, and even the noblest most.
This world from thee, my honour and thy own,
Demands one step; a step, by which, convinc'd,
The king may see thy heart disdains to wear
A chain which his has greatly thrown aside.
'Tis fitting too, thy sex's pride commands thee,
To show th' approving world thou canst resign,
As well as he, nor with inferior spirit,
A passion fatal to the public weal.
But above all, thou must root out for ever
From the king's breast the least remain of hope,
And henceforth make his mentioned love dishonour.

These things my daughter, that must needs be done,

Can but this way be done—by the safe refuge,
The sacred shelter of a husband's arms.

And there is one—

Sig. Good Heavens! what means my lord?

Sif. One of illustrious family, high rank,
Yet still of higher dignity and merit
Who can and will protect thee; one to awe
The king himself—Nay, hear me, Sigismunda—
The noble Osmond courts thee for his bride
And has my plighted word—This day—

Sig. [*Kneeling.*] My father!
Let me with trembling arms embrace thy knees!
Oh, if you ever wish to see me happy;
If e'er in infant years I gave you joy,
When, as I prattling twin'd around your neck,
You snatch'd me to your bosom, kiss'd my eyes,
And melting said you saw my mother there;
Oh, save me from that worst severity
Of fate! Oh, outrage not my breaking heart
To that degree!—I cannot!—'tis impossible
So soon withdraw it, give it to another—
Hear me, my dearest father; hear the voice
Of nature and humanity, that plead,
As well as justice, for me!—Not to choose
Without your wise direction may be duty;
But still my choice is free—that is a right,

Which even the lowest slave can never lose.
And would you thus degrade me?—make me base?

For such it were to give my worthless person
Without my heart, an injury to Osmond,
The highest can be done.—Let me, my lord—
Or I shall die, shall by the sudden change,
Be to distraction shock'd. Let me wear out
My hapless days in solitude and silence,
Far from the malice of a prying world!
At least—you cannot sure refuse me this—
Give me a little time—I will do all,
All I can do, to please you!—Oh, your eye
Sheds a kind beam

Sif. My daughter! you abuse
The softness of my nature—

Sig. Here, my father,
Till you relent, here will I grow for ever!

Sif. Rise, Sigismunda.—Though you touch
my heart,

Nothing can shake th' inexorable dictates
Of honour, duty, and determin'd reason.
Then, by the holy ties of filial love,
Resolve, I charge thee, to receive Earl Osmond,
As suits the man who is thy father's choice,
And worthy of thy hand—I go to bring him—

Sig. Spare me, my dearest father!

Sif. [*Aside.*] I must rush
From her soft grasp, or nature will betray me!
Oh, grant us, Heaven, that fortitude of mind,
Which listens to our duty, not our passions.—
Quit me, my child!

Sig. You cannot, oh, my father!
You cannot leave me thus!

Sif. Come hither, Laura,
Come to thy friend. Now show thyself a friend.
Combat her weakness; dissipate her tears;
Cherish, and reconcile her to her duty.

[*Exit SIFFREDI.*]

Enter LAURA.

Sig. Oh, wo on wo! distress'd by love and
duty—

Oh, every way unhappy Sigismunda!

Laura Forgive me, Madam, if I blame your
grief

How can you waste your tears on one so false?
Unworthy of your tenderness; to whom
Nought but contempt is due, and indignation?

Sig. You know not half the horrors of my fate;
I might perhaps have learn'd to scorn his false-
hood:

Nay, when the first sad burst of tears was past,
I might have rous'd my pride, and scorn'd him-
self—

But 'tis too much, this greatest last misfortune—
Oh, whither shall I fly? Where hide me, Laura,
From the dire scene my father now prepares?

Laura. What thus alarms you, Madam?

Sig. Can it be?

Can I—ah, no!—at once give to another
My violated heart? in one wild moment?
He brings Earl Osmond to receive my vows.
Oh, dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty Os-
mond.

Laura. Now, on my soul, 'tis what an outrag'd
heart

Like yours should wish!—I should, by Hea-
vens, esteem it

Most exquisite revenge!

Sig. Revenge! on whom?
On my own heart already but too wretched!

Laura. On him! this Tancred! who has base-
ly sold,

For the dull form of despicable grandeur,
His faith, his love!—At once a slave and tyrant!

Sig. Oh, rail at me, at my believing folly,
My vain ill-founded hopes; but spare him, Laura.

Laura. Who rais'd these hopes? who tri-
umphs o'er that weakness?

Pardon the word—You greatly merit him;
Better than him, with all his giddy pomp;
You rais'd him by your smiles when he was no-
thing.

Where is your woman's pride, that guardian
spirit

Given us to dash the perfidy of man?
Ye powers! I cannot bear the thought with pa-
tience—

Yet recent from the most unsparing vows
The tongue of love e'er lavish'd; from your hopes
So vainly, idly, cruelly deluded;
Before the public thus, before your father,
By an irrevocable, solemn deed,
With such inhuman scorn, to throw you from
him:

To give his faithless hand yet warm from thine,
With complicated meanness, to Constantia:
And, to complete his crime, when thy weak limits
Could scarce support thee, then, of thee regard-
less,

To lead her off.

Sig. That was indeed a sight
To poison love; to turn it into rage
And keen contempt.—What means this stupid
weakness

That hangs upon me? Hence, unworthy tears!
Disgrace my cheek no more! No more, my heart,
For one so coolly false or meanly fickle—
Oh, it imports not which—dare to suggest

The least excuse!—Yes, traitor, I will wring
Thy pride, will turn thy triumph to confusion!
I will not pine away my days for thee,
Sighing to brooks and groves; while, with vain
pity,

You in a rival's arms lament my fate—
No, let me perish! ere I tamely be
That soft, that patient, gentle Sigismunda,
Who can console her with the wretched boast,
She was for thee unhappy!—If I am,
I will be nobly so!—Sicilia's daughters
Shall, wondering, see in me a great example
Of one who punish'd an ill-judging heart,
Who made it bow to what it most abhorr'd!
Crush'd it to misery! for having thus
So lightly listen'd to a worthless lover!

Laura. At last it mounts, the kindling pride
of virtue;

Trust me, thy marriage will embitter his—

Sig. Oh, may the furies light his nuptial torch!
Be it accurs'd as mine! For the fair peace,
The tender joys of hymeneal love,
May jealousy awak'd, and fell remorse,
Pour all their fiercest venom through his breast!—
Where the fates lead, and blind revenge, I fol-
low.—

Let me not think—By injur'd love! I vow,
Thou shalt, base prince! perfidious and inhuman!
Thou shalt behold me in another's arms,
In his thou hatest! Osmond's!

Laura. That will grind
His heart with secret rage: Ay, that will sting
His soul to madness; set him up a terror,
A spectacle of wo to faithless lovers!—

Your cooler thoughts besides, will of the change
Approve, and think it happy. Noble Osmond
From the same stock with him derives his birth,
First of Sicilian barons, prudent, brave,
Of strictest honour, and by all rever'd—

Sig. Talk not of Osmond, but perfidious Tan-
cred!

Rail at him, rail! invent new names of scorn!
Assist me, Laura; lend my rage fresh fuel;
Support my staggering purpose, which already
Begins to fail me—Ah, my vaunts how vain!
How have I lied to my own heart!—Alas,
My tears return, the mighty flood o'erwhelms me!
Ten thousand crowding images distract
My tortur'd thought—And is it come to this?
Our hopes, our vows, our oft repeated wishes,
Breath'd from the fervent soul, and full of Hea-
ven,

To make each other happy—come to this!

Laura. If thy own peace and honour cannot
keep

Thy resolution fix'd; yet, Sigismunda,
Oh, think how deeply, how beyond retreat,
Thy father is engag'd.

Sig. Ah, wretched weakness!
That thus enthrals my soul, that chases thence
Each nobler thought—the sense of every duty;
And have I then no tears for thee, my father?
Can I forget thy cares, from helpless years,
Thy tenderness for me? an eye still beam'd
With love; a brow that never knew a frown;
Nor a harsh word thy tongue? Shall I for these
Repay thy stooping, venerable age
With shame, disquiet, anguish, and dishonour?
It must not be! Thou first of angels! come,
Sweet filial piety, and firm my breast!
Yes, let one daughter to her fate submit,
Be nobly wretched—but her father happy!—
Laura!—they come! Oh, Heavens I cannot
stand

The horrid trial!—Open, open, earth!
And hide me from their view.

Laura. Madam.

Enter SIFFREDI and OSMOND.

Sif. My daughter,
Behold my noble friend, who courts thy hand,
And whom to call my son I shall be proud;
Nor shall I less be pleas'd in this alliance,
To see thee happy.

Osm. Think not, I presume,
Madam, on this your father's kind consent,
To make me bless'd. I love you from a heart,
That seeks your good superior to my own;
And will by every art of tender friendship,
Consult your dearest welfare. May I hope,
Yours does not disavow your father's choice?

Sig. I am a daughter, Sir—and have no power
O'er my own heart—I die—support me, *Laura.*

Sif. Help—Bear her off—She breathes—my
daughter!

Sig. Oh,
Forgive my weakness—soft—my *Laura*, lead
me—

To my apartment.

Exeunt SIGISMUNDA and LAURA.

Sif. Pardon me, my lord,
If by this sudden accident alarm'd,
I leave you for a moment. *[Exit SIFFREDI.]*

Osm. Let me think—
What can this mean?—Is it to me aversion?

Or is it, as I fear'd, she loves another?

Ha!—yes—perhaps the king, the young Count
Tancred;

They were bred up together—Surely that,
That cannot be—Has he not given his hand,
In the most solemn manner, to Constantia?
Does not his crown depend upon the deed?
No—If they lov'd, and this old statesman knew it,
He could not to a king prefer a subject.
His virtues I esteem—nay more, I trust them—
So far as virtue goes—but could he place
His daughter on the throne of Sicily—
Oh, 'tis a glorious bribe, too much for man!
What is it then? I care not what it be.
My honour now, my dignity demands,
That my propos'd alliance, by her father,
And even herself accepted, be not scorn'd.
I love her too—I never knew till now
To what a pitch I love her. Oh, she shot
Ten thousand charms into my inmost soul!
She look'd so mild, so amiably gentle,
She bow'd her head, she glow'd with such confu-
sion,

Such loveliness of modesty! She is,
In gracious mind, in manners, and in person,
The perfect model of all female beauty!
She must be mine—She is!—If yet her heart
Consents not to my happiness, her duty,
Join'd to my tender cares, will gain so much
Upon her generous nature—That will follow.
The man of sense who acts a prudent part,
Not flattering steals, but forms himself the heart.
[Exit.]

ACT IV.

*SCENE I.—The Garden belonging to Sir-
FREDI'S House.*

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA.

SIGISMUNDA, with a letter in her hand.

'Tis done!—I am a slave!—The fatal vow
Has pass'd my lips!—Methought in those sad
moments,
The tombs around, the saints, the darken'd altar,
And all the trembling shrines with horror shook.
But here is still new matter of distress.
Oh, Tancred, cease to persecute me more!
Oh, grudge me not some calmer state of wo;
Some quiet gloom to shade my hopeless days,
Where I may never hear of love and thee!—
Has *Laura*, too, conspir'd against my peace?
Why did you take this letter:—Bear it back—
I will not court new pain.

[Giving her the letter.]

Laura. Madam, Rodolpho
Urg'd me so much, nay, even with tears conjur'd
me,
But this once more to serve th' unhappy king—
For such he said he was—that though enrag'd,
Equal with thee, at his inhuman falsehood,
I could not to my brother's fervent prayers
Refuse this office—Read it—His excuses
Will only more expose his falsehood.

Sig. No;

It suits not Osmond's wife to read one line
From that contagious hand—she knows too well!

Laura. He paints him out distress'd beyond
expression;
Even on the point of madness. Wild as winds,
And fighting seas, he raves. His passions mix,

With ceaseless rage, all in each giddy moment.
He dies to see you, and to clear his faith.

Sig. Save me from that!—That would be worse than all!

Laura. I but report my brother's words; who then

Began to talk of some dark imposition,
That had deceived us all; when interrupted,
We heard your father and Earl Osmond near,
As summon'd to Constantia's court they went.

Sig. Ha! imposition?—Well, if I am doom'd
To be, o'er all my sex, the wretch of love,
In vain I would resist—Give me the letter—
To know the worst is some relief—Alas,
It was not thus, with such dire palpitations,
That, Tancred, once I us'd to read thy letters.

[*Attempting to read the letter, gives it to LAURA.*]

Ah, fond remembrance blinds me!—Read it,
Laura.

Laura. [*Reads.*] *Deliver me, Sigismunda, from that most exquisite misery which a faithful heart can suffer—to be thought base by her, from whose esteem even virtue borrows new charms. When I submitted to my cruel situation, it was not falsehood you beheld, but an excess of love. Rather than endanger that, I for a while gave up my honour. Every moment till I see you, stabs me with severer pangs than real guilt itself can feel. Let me then conjure you to meet me in the garden, toward the close of the day, when I will explain this mystery. We have been most inhumanly abused; and that by the means of the very paper which I gave you, from the warmest sincerity of love, to assure to you the heart and hand of* TANCRED.

Sig. There, Laura, there the dreadful secret sprung!

That paper! ah, that paper! it suggests
A thousand horrid thoughts—I to my father
Gave it; and he perhaps—I dare not cast
A look that way—If yet indeed you love me,
Oh, blast me not, kind Tancred, with the truth!
Oh, pitying, keep me ignorant for ever.
What strange peculiar misery is mine?
Reduc'd to wish the man I love were false!
Why was I hurried to a step so rash?
Repairless wo!—I might have waited, sure,
A few short hours—No duty that forbade—
I ow'd thy love that justice; till this day
Thy love an image of all perfect goodness!
A beam from Heaven that glow'd with every
virtue!

And have I thrown this prize of life away?
The piteous wreck of one distracted moment?
Ah, the cold prudence of remorseless age!
Ah, parents, traitors to your children's bliss!
Ah, curs'd, ah, blind revenge!—On every hand
I was betray'd—You, Laura, too, betray'd me!

Laura. Who, who but he, whate'er he writes,
betray'd you?

Or false or pusillanimous. For once,
I will with you suppose, that his agreement
To the king's will was forg'd—Though forg'd
by whom?

Your father scorns the crime—Yet what avails it?
This, if it clears his truth, condemns his spirit.
A youthful king, by love and honour fir'd,
Patient to sit on his insulted throne,
And let an outrage, of so high a nature,
Unpunish'd pass, unchecked, uncontradicted—
Oh, 'tis a meanness equal even to falsehood.

Sig. Laura, no more—We have already judg'd
Too largely without knowledge. Oft, what seems
A trifle, a mere nothing, by itself,

In some nice situation turns the scale
Of fate, and rules the most important actions.
Yes, I begin to feel a sad presage!
I am undone, from that eternal source
Of human woes—the judgment of the passions.
But what have I to do with these excuses?
O, cease, my treacherous heart, to give them room
It suits not thee to plead a lover's cause:
Even to lament my fate is now dishonour.
Nought now remains, but with relentless purpose
To shun all interviews, all clearing up
Of this dark scene; to wrap myself in gloom,
In solitude and shades; there to devour
The silent sorrows ever swelling here;
And since I must be wretched—for I must—
To claim the mighty misery myself,
Engross it all, and spare a hapless father.
Hence, let me fly!—The hour approaches—

Laura. Madam,
Behold he comes—the king—
Sig. Heavens! how escape?

No—I will stay—This one last meeting—Leave
me. [*Exit LAURA.*]

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. And are these long, long hours of tor-
ture past?
My life! my Sigismunda!

[*Throwing himself at her feet.*]
Sig. Rise, my lord.

To see my sovereign thus no more becomes me.

Tan. O, let me kiss the ground on which you
tread!

Let me exhale my soul in softest transport!
Since I again behold my Sigismunda! [*Rising.*]
Unkind! how couldst thou ever deem me false?
How thus dishonour love?—Oh, I could much
Imbitter my complaint!—How low were then
Thy thoughts of me? How didst thou then
affront

The human heart itself? After the vows,
The fervent truth, the tender protestations,
Which mine has often pour'd, to let thy breast,
Whate'er th' appearance was, admit suspicion?

Sig. How! when I heard myself your full
consent

To the late king's so just and prudent will?
Heard it before you read, in solemn senate?
When I beheld you give your royal hand
To her, whose birth and dignity of right
Demands that high alliance? Yes, my lord,
You have done well. The man whom Heaven
appoints

To govern others, should himself first learn
To bend his passions to the sway of reason.
In all you have done well; but when you bid
My humble hopes look up to you again,
And sooth'd with wanton cruelty my weakness—
That too was well—My vanity deserv'd
The sharp rebuke, whose fond extravagance
Could ever dream to balance your repose,
Your glory, and the welfare of a people.

Tan. Chide on, chide on. Thy soft re-
proaches now,

Instead of wounding, only sooth my fondness.
No, no, thou charming consort of my soul!
I never lov'd thee with such faithful ardour,
As in that cruel, miserable moment
You thought me false; when even my honour
stoop'd

To wear for thee a baffled face of baseness.
It was thy barbarous father, Sigismunda,

Who caught me in the toil. He turn'd that paper,
Meant for th' assuring bond of nuptial love
To ruin it for ever; he, he wrote
That forg'd consent, you heard, beneath my name.
Nay, dar'd before my outrag'd throne to read it!
Had he not been thy father—Ha! my love!
You tremble, you grow pale!

Sig. Oh, leave me, Tancred!

Tan. No!—Leave thee!—Never! never till
you set

My heart at peace, till these dear lips again
Pronounce thee mine! Without thee, I renounce
Myself, my friends, the world—Here on this
hand—

Sig. My lord, forget that hand, which never now
Can be to thine united—

Tan. Sigismunda!

What dost thou mean?—Thy words, thy look,
thy manner,

Seem to conceal some horrid secret—Heavens!—
No, that was wild; Distraction fires the thought!

Sig. Inquire no more—I never can be thine.

Tan. What, who shall interpose? Who dares
attempt

To brave the fury of an injur'd king,
Who, ere he sees thee ravish'd from his hopes,
Will wrap all blazing Sicily in flames!—

Sig. In vain your power, my lord—'Tis fatal
error,

Join'd to my father's unrelenting will,
Has plac'd an everlasting bar betwixt us—
I am—Earl Osmond's—wife.

Tan. Earl Osmond's wife!

[After a long pause, during which they look
at one another with the highest agitation,
and most tender distress.

Heavens! did I hear thee right? What! mar-
ried? married!

Lost to thy faithful Tancred? lost for ever!
Could thou then doom me to such matchless woe,
Without so much as hearing me?—Distraction!
Alas! what hast thou done? Ah, Sigismunda!
Thy rash credulity has done a deed,
Which, of two happiest lovers that ere felt
The blissful power, has made two finish'd
wretches!

But—madness!—Sure, thou know'st it cannot be!
This hand is mine! a thousand, thousand vows—

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. [Snatching her hand from the King.]
Madam, this hand, by the most solemn rites,
A little hour ago, was given to me;
And did not sovereign honour now command me,
Never but with my life to quit my claim,
I would renounce it—thus!

Tan. Ha! who art thou?
Presumptuous man!

Sig. [Aside.] Where is my father? Heavens!

[Goes out.]

Osm. One thou shouldst better know—Yes—
view me, one

Who can and will maintain his rights and honour,
Against a faithless prince, an upstart king,
Whose first base deed is what a harden'd tyrant
Would blush to act.

Tan. Insolent Osmond! know,
This upstart king will hurl confusion on thee,
And all who shall invade his sacred rights,
Prior to thine—thine, founded on compulsion,
Or infamous deceit, while his proceed
From mutual love, and free, long-plighted faith.

She is, and shall be mine!—I will annul,
By the high power with which the laws invest me,
Those guilty forms in which you have entrapp'd,
Basely entrapp'd to thy detested nuptials,
My queen betroth'd, who has my heart, my hand,
And shall partake my throne—If, haughty lord,
If this thou didst not know, then know it now;
And know, besides, as I have told thee this,
Shouldst thou but think to urge thy treason fur-
ther—

Than treason more! treason against my love!—
Thy life shall answer for it.

Osm. Ha! my life!—

It moves my scorn to hear thy empty threats.
When was it that a Norman baron's life
Became so vile, as on the frown of kings
To hang?—Of that, my lord, the law must judge:
Or if the law be weak, my guardian sword—

Tan. Dare not to touch it, traitor, lest my rage
Break loose, and do a deed that misbecomes me.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. My gracious lord, what is it I behold!
My sovereign in contention with his subjects?
Surely this house deserves from royal Tancred
A little more regard, than to be made
A scene of trouble, and unseemly jars.
It grieves my soul, it baffles every hope,
It makes me sick of life, to see thy glory
Thus blasted in the bud.—Heavens! can your
highness

From your exalted character descend,
The dignity of virtue; and, instead
Of being the protector of our rights,
The holy guardian of domestic bliss,
Unkindly thus disturb the sweet repose,
The secret peace of families, for which
Alone the free-born race of man to laws
And government submitted?

Tan. My lord Siffredi,
Spare thy rebuke. The duties of my station
Are not to me unknown. But thou, old man,
Dost thou not blush to talk of rights invaded,
And of our best our dearest bliss disturb'd?

Thou, who with more than barbarous perfidy
Hast trampled all allegiance, justice, truth,
Humanity itself, beneath thy feet?
Thou know'st thou hast—I could, to thy confusion,
Return thy hard reproaches; but I spare thee
Before this lord, for whose ill-sorted friendship
Thou hast most basely sacrificed thy daughter.
Farewell, my lord.—For thee, lord constable,
Who dost presume to lift thy surly eye
To my soft love, my gentle Sigismunda,
I once again command thee, on thy life—
Yes—chew thy rage—but mark me—on thy life,
No further urge thy arrogant pretensions! [Exit.]

Osm. Ha! Arrogant pretensions! Heaven
and earth!

What! arrogant pretensions to my wife?
My wedded wife! Where are we? in a land
Of civil rule, of liberty and laws?—
Not, on my life, pursue them?—Giddy prince!
My life disdains thy nod. It is the gift
Of parent Heaven, who gave me too an arm,
A spirit to defend it against tyrants.
The Norman race, the sons of mighty Rollo,
Who, rushing in a tempest from the north,
Great nurse of generous freemen, bravely won
With their own swords their seats, and still pos-
sess them

By the same noble tenure, are not us'd

To hear such language—If I now desist,
Then brand me for a coward! deem me villain!
A traitor to the public! by this conduct
Deceiv'd, betray'd, insulted, tyranniz'd.
Mine is a common cause. My arm shall guard,
Mix'd with my own, the rights of each Sicilian,
Of social life, and of mankind in general.
Ere to thy tyrant rage they fall a prey,
I shall find means to shake thy tottering throne,
Which this illegal, this perfidious usage
Forfeits at once, and crush thee in the ruins!
Constantia is my queen!

Sif. Lord constable,
Let us be steadfast in the right; but let us
Act with cool prudence, and with manly temper,
As well as manly firmness. True, I own,
Th' indignities you suffer are so high,
As might even justify what now you threaten.
But if, my lord, we can prevent the woes,
The cruel horrors of intestine war,
Yet hold untouch'd our liberties and laws;
Oh, let us, rais'd above the turbid sphere
Of little, selfish passions, nobly do it.
Nor to our hot, intemperate pride, pour out
A dire libation of Sicilian blood.
'Tis godlike magnanimity to keep,
When most provok'd, our reason calm and clear,
And execute her will from a strong sense
Of what is right, without the vulgar aid
Of heat and passion, which, though honest,
bears us

Often too far. Remember that my house
Protects my daughter still; and, ere I saw her
Thus ravish'd from us by the arm of power,
This hand should act the Roman father's part.
Fear not; be temperate; all will yet be well.
I know the king. At first his passions burst
Quick as the lightning's flash; but in his breast
Honour and justice dwell.—Trust me, to reason
He will return.

Osm. He will!—By Heavens, he shall!—
You know the king—I wish, my Lord Siffredi,
That you had deign'd to tell me all you knew—
And would you have me wait, with duteous pa-
tience,

Till he return to reason? Ye just powers!
When he has planted on our necks his foot,
And trod us into slaves; when his vain pride
Is cloy'd with our submission; if at last,
He finds his arm too weak to shake the frame
Of wide-establish'd order out of joint,
And overturn all justice; then, perchance,
He, in a fit of sickly, kind repentance,
May make a merit to return to reason.
No, no, my lord! there is a nobler way,
To teach the blind oppressive fury reason:
Oft has the lustre of avenging steel
Unseal'd her stupid eyes—The sword is reason!

Enter RODOLPHO with Guards.

Rod. My lord high constable of Sicily,
In the king's name, and by his special order,
I here arrest you prisoner of state.

Osm. What king? I know no king of Sicily,
Unless he be the husband of Constantia.

Rod. Then know him now—behold his royal
orders

To bear you to the castle of Palermo.

Sif. Let the big torrent foam its madness off.
Submit, my lord—No castle long can hold
Our wrongs—This, more than friendship or al-
liance,

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Confirms me thine; this binds me to thy fortunes,
By the strong tie of common injury,
Which nothing can dissolve—I grieve, Rodol-
pho,

To see the reign in such unhappy sort
Begin.

Osm. The reign! the usurpation call it!
This meteor king may blaze awhile, but soon
Must spend his idle terrors—Sir, lead on.
Farewell, my lord—more than my life and for-
tune,

Remember well, is in your hands—my honour!

Sif. Our honour is the same. My son, fare-
well—

We shall not long be parted. On these eyes
Sleep shall not shed his balm, till I behold thee
Restor'd to freedom, or partake thy bonds.

Even noble courage is not void of blame,
Till nobler patience sanctifies its flame.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

SIFFREDI alone.

The prospect lowers around. I found the king,
Though calm'd a little, with subsiding tempest,
As suits his generous nature, yet in love
Abated nought, most ardent in his purpose;
Inexorably fix'd, whate'er the risk,
To claim my daughter, and dissolve this mar-
riage—

I have embark'd, upon a perilous sea,
A mighty treasure. Here the rapid youth,
Th' impetuous passions of a lover-king,
Check my bold purpose; there, the jealous pride,
Th' impatient honour of a haughty lord,
Of the first rank, in interest and dependence
Near equal to the king, forbid retreat.
My honour too, the same unchang'd conviction,
That these my measures were, and still remain,
Of absolute necessity to save
The land from civil fury, urge me on.
But how proceed?—I only faster rush
Upon the desperate evils I would shun.
Whate'er the motive be, deceit, I fear,
And harsh unnatural force, are not the means
Of public welfare, or of private bliss.—
Bear witness, Heaven! thou mind-inspecting eye!
My breast is pure. I have prefer'd my duty,
The good and safety of my fellow-subjects,
To all those views that fire the selfish race
Of mortal men, and mix them in eternal broils.

Enter an OFFICER belonging to SIFFREDI.

Off. My lord, a man of noble port, his face
Wrapp'd in disguise, is earnest for admission.

Sif. Go bid him enter— [OFFICER goes out.
Ha! wrapp'd in disguise!

And at this late, unseasonable hour!
When o'er the world tremendous midnight reigns,
By the dire gloom of raging tempest doubled—

Enter OSMOND, discovering himself.

Sif. What! ha! Earl Osmond, you?—Wel-
come, once more,

To this glad roof!—But why in this disguise?
Would I could hope the king exceeds his promise!
I have his faith soon as to-morrow's sun
Shall gild Sicilia's cliffs, you shall be free.—
Has some good angel turn'd his heart to justice?

Osm. It is not by the favour of Count Tancred That I am here. As much I scorn his favour, As I defy his tyranny and threats—
Our friend Goffredo, who commands the castle, On my parole, ere dawn to render back My person, has permitted me this freedom. Know then; the faithless outrage of to-day, By him committed whom you call the king, Has rous'd Constantia's court. Our friends, the

friends
Of virtue, justice, and of public faith,
Ripe for revolt, are in high ferment all.
This, this, they say, exceeds whate'er deform'd
The miserable days we saw beneath
William the Bad. This saps the solid base,
At once, of government and private life:
This shameless imposition on the faith,
The majesty of senates, this lewd insult,
This violation of the rights of men;
Added to these, his ignominious treatment
Of her, the illustrious offspring of our kings,
Sicilia's hope, and now our royal mistress.
You know, my lord, how grossly these infringe
The late king's will, which orders, if Count Tan-

cred
Make not Constantia partner of his throne,
That he be quite excluded the succession,
And she to Henry given, king of the Romans,
The potent emperor Barbarossa's son,
Who seeks, with earnest instance, her alliance.
I thence of you, as guardian of the laws,
As guardian of this will, to you intrusted,
Desire, nay, more, demand your instant aid,
To see it put in vigorous execution.

Sif. You cannot doubt, my lord, of my concurrence.

Who, more than I, have labour'd this great point?
'Tis my own plan; and if I drop it now,
I should be justly branded with the shame
Of rash advice, or despicable weakness.
But let us not precipitate the matter.
Constantia's friends are numerous and strong;
Yet, Tancred's, trust me, are of equal force:
E'er since the secret of his birth was known,
The people all are in a tumult hurl'd,
Of boundless joy, to hear their lives a prince
Of mighty Guiscard's line. Numbers, besides,
Of powerful barons, who at heart had pin'd,
To see the reign of their renown'd forefathers
Won by immortal deeds of matchless valour,
Pass from the gallant Normans to the Suevi,
Will with a kind of rage, espouse his cause—
'Tis so, my lord—be not by passion blinded—
'Tis surely so—Oh, if our prating virtue
Dwells not in words alone—Oh, let us join,
My generous Osmond, to avert these woes,
And yet sustain our tottering Norman kingdom.

Osm. But how, Siffredi, how?—If by soft means

We can maintain our rights, and save our country,
May his unnatural blood first stain the sword,
Who with unpitying fury first shall draw it!

Sif. I have a thought—The glorious work be thine.

But it requires an awful flight of virtue,
Above the passions of the vulgar breast,
And thence from thee I hope it, noble Osmond—
Suppose my daughter, to her God devoted,
Were plac'd within some convent's sacred verge,
Beneath the dread potation of the altar—

Osm. Ere then, by Heavens! I would devoutly shave

My holy scalp, turn wailing monk myself,
And pray incessant for the tyrant's safety.—
What! How! because an insolent invader,
A sacrilegious tyrant, in contempt
Of all those noblest rights, which to maintain
Is man's peculiar pride, demands my wife;
That I shall thus betray the common cause
Of human kind,—tamely yield her up,
Even in the manner you propose?—Oh, then
I were supremely vile! degraded! sham'd!
The scorn of manhood! and abhorr'd of honour!

Sif. There is, my lord, an honour, the calm child

Of reason, of humanity, and mercy,
Superior far to this punctilious demon,
That singly minds itself, and oft embroils
With proud barbarian niceties the world.

Osm. My lord, my lord, I cannot brook your prudence;

It holds a pulse unequal to my blood—
Unblemish'd honour is the flower of virtue!
The vivifying soul! and he who slights it,
Will leave the other dull and lifeless dross.

Sif. No more—You are too warm.

Osm. You are too cool.

Sif. Too cool, my lord? I were indeed too cool,

Not to resent this language, and to tell thee—
I wish Earl Osmond were as cool as I
To his own selfish bliss—ay, and as warm
To that of others—But of this no more—
My daughter is thy wife—I gave her to thee,
And will, against all force, maintain her thine.
But think not I will catch thy headlong passions,
Whirl'd in a blaze of madness o'er the land;
Or, till the last extremity compel me,
Risk the dire means of war—The king, to-

morrow,
Will set you free; and, if, by gentle means
He does not yield my daughter to your arms,
And wed Constantia, as the will requires,
Why then expect me on the side of justice—
Let that suffice.

Osm. It does—Forgive my heat.

My rankled mind, by injuries inflam'd,
May be too prompt to take, and give offence.

Sif. 'Tis past—Your wrongs, I own, may well transport

The wisest mind—But henceforth, noble Osmond,

Do me more justice, honour more my truth,
Nor mark me with an eye of squint suspicion—
These jars apart—You may repose your soul
On my firm faith, and unremitting friendship.
Of that I sure have given exalted proof,
And the next sun we see shall prove it further.—
Return, my son, and from your friend Goffredo
Release your word. There try, by soft repose,
To calm your breast.

Osm. Bid the vex'd ocean sleep,
Swept by the pinions of the raging north—
But your frail age, by care and toil exhausted,
Demands the balm of all-repairing rest.

Sif. Soon as to-morrow's dawn shall streak the

skies,
I, with my friends in solemn state assembled,
Will to the palace, and demand your freedom,
Then by calm reason, or by higher means,
The king shall quit his claim, and, in the face
Of Sicily, my daughter shall be yours.
Farewell.

Osm. My lord, good night. [*Exit SIFFREDI.*
After a long pause.] I like him not—

Yes—I have mighty matter of suspicion.
 'Tis plain. I see it lurking in his breast,
 He has a foolish fondness for this king.—
 My honour is not safe, while here my wife
 Remains—Who knows but he, this very night,
 May bear her to some convent, as he mentioned—
 The king too—though I smother'd up my rage,
 I mark'd it well—will set me free to-morrow.
 Why not to-night? He has some dark design—
 By Heavens, he has!—I am abus'd most grossly;
 Made the vile tool of this old statesman's schemes;
 Married to one—ay, and he knew it—one
 Who loves young Tancred! Hence her swoon-
 ing, tears,
 And all her soft distress, when she disgrac'd me,
 By basely giving her perfidious hand
 Without her heart—Hell and perdition! this,
 This is the perfidy!—this is the fell,
 The keen, envenom'd, exquisite disgrace,
 Which, to a man of honour, even exceeds
 The falsehood of the person—But I now
 Will rouse me from the poor tame lethargy,
 By my believing fondness cast upon me.
 I will not wait his crawling timid motions,
 Perhaps to blind me meant, which he to-morrow
 Has promis'd to pursue. No! ere his eyes
 Shall open on to-morrow's orient beam,
 I will convince him that Earl Osmond never
 Was form'd to be his dupe—I know full well
 Th' important weight and danger of the deed:
 But to a man, whom greater dangers press,
 Driven to the brink of infamy and horror,
 Rashness itself, and utter desperation,
 Are the best prudence.—I will bear her off
 This night, and lodge her in a place of safety:
 I have a trusty band that waits not far.
 Hence! let me lose no time—One rapid moment
 Should ardent form, at once, and execute
 A bold design—'Tis fix'd—'Tis done!—yes, then,
 When I have seiz'd the prize of love and honour,
 And with a friend secur'd her; to the castle
 I will repair, and claim Goffredo's promise,
 To rise with all his garrison—My friends
 With brave impatience wait. The mine is laid,
 And only wants my kindling touch to spring.
 [Exit.]

SCENE II.—SIGISMUNDA'S Apartment.

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA. Thunder.

Laura. Heavens! 'tis a fearful night!

Sig. Ah! the black rage

Of midnight tempest, or th' assuring smiles

Of radiant morn, are equal all to me.

Nought now has charms or terrors to my breast,

The seat of stupid wo!—Leave me, my Laura.

Kind rest, perhaps, may hush my woes a little.

Oh, for that quiet sleep that knows no morning!

Laura. Madam, indeed I know not how to go.

Indulge my fondness—Let me watch a while

By your sad bed, 'till these dread hours shall pass.

Sig. Alas! what is the toil of elements,

[Thunder.]

This idle perturbation of the sky,
 To what I feel within?—Oh, that the fires
 Of pitying Heaven would point their fury here!
 Good night, my dearest Laura.

Laura. Oh, I know not

What this oppression means—But 'tis with pain,
 With tears I can persuade myself to leave you—
 Well then—Good night, my dearest Sigismunda.

[Exit.]

Sig. And am I then alone?—The most un-
 done,

Most wretched being now beneath the cope
 Of this affrighting gloom that wraps the world—
 I said I did not fear—Ah, me! I feel

A shivering horror run through all my powers!
 Oh, I am nought but tumult, fears, and weakness!
 And yet how idle fear when hope is gone,
 Gone, gone for ever!—Oh thou gentle scene

[Looking towards her bed.]

Of sweet repose, where, by th' oblivious draught
 Of each sad toilsome day, to peace restor'd,
 Unhappy mortals lose their woes awhile,
 Thou hast no peace for me!—What shall I do?
 How pass this dreadful night, so big with ter-
 ror?

Here, with the midnight shades, here will I sit,
 [Sitting down.]

A prey to dire despair, and ceaseless weep
 The hours away—Bless me—I heard a noise—

[Starting up.]

No—I mistook—nothing but silence reigns,
 And awful midnight, round—Again!—Oh, Hea-
 vens!

My lord the king!

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. Be not alarm'd, my love!

Sig. My royal lord, why at this midnight hour,
 How came you hither?

Tan. By that secret way

My love contriv'd, when we, in happier days,
 Us'd to devote these hours, so much in vain,
 To vows of love, and everlasting friendship.

Sig. Why will you thus persist to add new
 stings

To her distress, who never can be thine?

Oh, fly me! fly! you know—

Tan. I know too much.

Oh, how I could reproach thee, Sigismunda!

Pour out my injur'd soul in just complaints!

But now the time permits not, these swift mo-
 ments—

I told thee how thy father's artifice

Forc'd me to seem perfidious in thy eyes.

Ah, fatal blindness! not to have observ'd

The mingled pangs of rage and love that shook
 me:

When by my cruel public situation

Compell'd, I only feign'd consent, to gain

A little time, and more secure thee mine.

E'er since—a dreadful interval of care!

My thoughts have been employ'd, not without
 hope,

How to defeat Siffredi's barbarous purpose.

But thy credulity has ruin'd all,

Thy rash, thy wild—I know not what to name it;

Oh, it has prov'd the giddy hopes of man

To be delusion all, and sickening folly!

Sig. Ah, generous Tancred! ah, thy truth de-
 stroys me!

Yes, yes, 'tis I, 'tis I alone am false!

My hasty rage, join'd to my tame submission,

More than the most exalted filial duty

Could e'er demand, has dash'd our cup of fate

With bitterness unequal'd—But, alas!

What are thy woes to mine?—to mine, just Hea-
 ven!

Now is thy turn of vengeance—hate, renounce me!

Oh, leave me to the fate I well deserve,

To sink in hopeless misery!—at least,

Try to forget the worthless Sigismunda!

Tan. Forget thee! No! Thou art my soul itself!
I have no thought, no hope, no wish but thee!
Even this repented injury, the fears,
That rouse me all to madness, at the thought
Of losing thee, the whole collected pains
Of my full heart, serve but to make thee dearer.
Ah, how forget thee!—Much must be forgot,
Ere Tancred can forget his Sigismunda!

Sig. But you, my lord, must make that great effort.

Tan. Can Sigismunda make it?

Sig. Ah, I know not
With what success—But all that feeble woman
And love-entangled reason can perform,
I, to the utmost, will exert to do it.

Tan. Fear not—'Tis done!—If thou canst form the thought,
Success is sure—I am forgot already.

Sig. Ah, Tancred!—But, my lord, respect me more.

Think who I am—What can you now propose?

Tan. To claim the plighted vows which Heaven has heard,

To vindicate the rites of holy love
By faith and honour bound, to which compar'd
These empty forms, which have ensnar'd thy hand,

Are impious guile, abuse, and profanation—
Nay, as a king, whose high prerogative
By this unlicens'd marriage is affronted,
To bid the laws themselves pronounce it void.

Sig. Honour, my lord, is much too proud to catch

At every slender twig of nice distinctions.
These for the unfeeling vulgar may do well:
But those, whose souls are by the nicer rule
Of virtuous delicacy nobly sway'd,
Stand at another bar than that of laws.
Then cease to urge me—Since I am not born
To that exalted fate to be your queen—
Or, yet a dearer name—to be your wife!—
I am the wife of an illustrious lord
Of your own princely blood; and what I am,
I will with proper dignity remain.
Retire, my royal lord.—There is no means
To cure the wounds this fatal day has given.
We meet no more!

Tan. Oh, barbarous Sigismunda!
And canst thou talk this steadily; thus treat me
With such un pitying, unrelenting rigour?
Poor is the love, that rather than give up
A little pride, a little formal pride,
The breath of vanity, can bear to see
The man, whose heart was once so dear to thine,
By many a tender vow so mix'd together,
A prey to anguish, fury, and distraction!
Thou canst not surely make me such a wretch,
Thou canst not, Sigismunda!—Yet relent,
Oh, save us yet!—Rodolpho, with my guards,
Waits in the garden—Let us seize the moments
We ne'er may have again—With more than

power
I will assert thee mine, with fairest honour.
The world shall even approve; each honest bosom

Swell'd with a kindred joy to see us happy.

Sig. The world approve! what is the world to me;

The conscious mind is its own awful world.—
And mine is fix'd—Distress me then no more;
Not all the heart can plead, (and it, alas,

Pleads but too much)—

And yet, perhaps, if thou wert not a king,
I know not, Tancred, what I might have done,
Then, then, my conduct, sanctified by love,
Could not be deem'd, by the severest judge,
The mean effect of interest or ambition.
But now, not all my partial heart can plead,
Shall ever shake th' unalterable dictates
That tyrannize my breast.

Tan. 'Tis well—No more—

I yield me to my fate—Yes, yes, inhuman!
Since thy barbarian heart is steel'd by pride,
Shut up to love and pity, here behold me
Cast on the ground, a vile and abject wretch!
Lost to all cares, all dignities, all duties!
Here will I grow, breathe out my faithful soul,
Here at thy feet—Death, death alone shall part us!

Sig. Have you then vow'd to drive me to perdition?

What can I more?—Yes, Tancred, once again
I will forget the dignity my station
Commands me to sustain—for the last time
Will tell thee, that, I fear, no ties, no duty,
Can ever root thee from my hapless bosom.
Oh, leave me! fly me! were it but in pity!—
To see what once we tenderly have lov'd,
Cut off from every hope—cut off for ever!
Is pain thy generosity should spare me.
Then rise, my lord; and if you truly love me,
If you respect my honour, nay, my peace,
Retire! for though th' emotions of my heart
Can ne'er alarm my virtue; yet, alas!
They tear it so, they pierce it with such anguish—
Oh, 'tis too much!—I cannot bear the conflict!

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. Turn, tyrant, turn! and answer to my honour,
For this thy base insufferable outrage!

Tan. Insolent traitor! think not to escape
Thyself my vengeance!

[*They fight*; OSMOND falls.]

Sig. Help, here! help!—Oh, Heavens!

[*Throwing herself down by him.*]

Alas, my lord, what meant your headlong rage?
That faith, which I this day, upon the altar,
To you devoted, is unblemish'd, pure
As vestal truth; was resolutely yours,
Beyond the power of aught on earth to shake it.

Osm. Perfidious woman! die!—[*Shortening his sword, he plunges it into her breast.*] and to the grave

Attend a husband, yet but half aveng'd!

Tan. Oh, horror! horror! execrable villain!

Osm. And tyrant! thou!—thou shalt not o'er my tomb

Exult—'Tis well—'tis great! I die content!—
[*Dies.*]

Enter RODOLPHO and LAURA.

Tan. [*Throwing himself down by SIGISMUNDA.*] Quick! here! bring aid!—All in Palermo bring,
Whose skill can save her!—Ah, that gentle bosom

Pours fast the streams of life.

Sig. All aid is vain;

I feel the powerful hand of death upon me—
But, oh! if sheds a sweetness through my fate,
That I am thine again; and without blame
May in my Tancred's arms resign my soul!

Tan. Oh, death is in that voice! so gently mild,
So sadly sweet, as mixes even with mine
The tears of hovering angels!—Mine again!—
And is it thus the cruel fates have join'd us?
Are these the horrid nuptials they prepare
For love like ours?—Is virtue thus rewarded?
Let not my impious rage accuse just Heaven!
Thou, Tancred, thou hast murder'd Sigismunda!
That furious man was but the tool of fate,
I, I the cause.—But I will do thee justice
On this deaf heart! that to thy tender wisdom
Refused an ear—Yes, death shall soon unite us.

Sig. Live, live, my Tancred!—Let my death suffice

To expiate all that may have been amiss.
May it appease the fates, avert their fury
From thy propitious reign! Meantime, of me
And of thy glory mindful, live, I charge thee,
To guard our friends, and make thy people happy—

Enter SIFFREDI, fixed in astonishment and grief.

My father!—Oh, how shall I lift my eyes
To thee, my sinking father!

Sif. Awful Heaven!

I am chastis'd—My dearest child!—

Sig. Where am I?

A fearful darkness closes all around—
My friends! We needs must part—I must obey
Th' impetuous call—Farewell, my Laura! cherish
My poor afflicted father's age—Rodolpho,
Now is the time to watch the unhappy king,
With all the care and tenderness of friendship.—
Oh, my dear father, bow'd beneath the weight
Of age and grief—the victim even of virtue,
Receive my last adieu!—Where art thou, Tancred?

Give me thy hand—But, ah, it cannot save me
From the dire king of terrors, whose cold power
Creeps o'er my heart—Oh!

Tan. How these pangs distract me!

Oh, lift thy gracious eyes!—Thou leav'st me then!

Thou leav'st me, Sigismunda!

Sig. Yet a moment—

I had, my Tancred, something more to say—
Yes—but thy love and tenderness for me,
Sure make it needless—Harbour no resentment
Against my father; venerate his zeal,
That acted from a principle of goodness,
From faithful love to thee—Live, and maintain
My innocence embalm'd, with holiest care
Preserve my spotless memory! Oh,—I die—
Eternal Mercy take my trembling soul!
Oh, 'tis the only sting of death to part
From those we love—from thee—farewell, my
Tancred! [*Dies.*]

Tan. Thus then!

[*Flying to his sword, is held by RODOLPHO.*]

Rod. Hold, hold, my lord!—Have you forgot
Your Sigismunda's last request already?

Tan. Off! set me free! I think not to bind me down,

With barbarous friendship, to the rack of life!
What hand can shut the thousand, thousand gates

Which death still opens to the woes of mortals?—
I shall find means—No power in earth or heaven
Can force me to endure the hateful light,
Thus robb'd of all that lent it joy and sweetness!
Off, traitors, off! or my distracted soul

Will burst indignant from this jail of nature,
To where she beckons yonder—No, mild seraph,
Point not to life—I cannot linger here,
Cut off from thee, the miserable pity,
The scorn of human kind!—A trampled king!
Who let his mean, poor-hearted love, one moment,

To coward prudence stoop! who made it not
The first undoubting action of his reign,
To snatch thee to his throne, and there to shield thee,

Thy helpless bosom, from a ruffian's fury!—
Oh, shame! Oh, agony! Oh, the fell stings
Of late, of vain repentance!—Ha, my brain
Is all on fire! a wild abyss of thought!
Th' infernal world discloses! See! Behold him!
Lo! with fierce smiles he shakes the bloody steel,
And mocks my feeble tears—Hence, quickly, hence!

Spurn his vile carcass! give it to the dogs!
Expose it to the winds and screaming ravens,
Or hurl it down that fiery steep to hell,
There with his soul to toss in flames for ever.
Ah, impotence of rage! What am I? Where?
Sad, silent, all?—The forms of dumb despair,
Around some mournful tomb.—What do I see?
The soft abode of innocence and love
Turn'd to the house of death! a place of horror!—

Ah, that poor corpse! pale! pale! deform'd with murder!

Is that my Sigismunda?

[*Throws himself down by her.*]

Sif. [*After a pathetic pause, looking on the scene before him.*]

Have I liv'd

To these enfeebled years, by Heaven reserv'd
To be a dreadful monument of justice?—
Rodolpho, raise the king, and bear him hence
From this distracting scene of blood and death.
Alas! I dare not give him my assistance;
My care would only more inflame his rage.
Behold the fatal work of my dark hand,
That by rude force the passions would command,
That ruthless thought to root them from the breast;

They may be rul'd, but will not be oppress'd.
Taught hence, ye parents, who from nature stray,
And the great ties of social life betray;
Ne'er with your children act a tyrant's part:
'Tis yours to guide, not violate the heart.
Ye vainly wise, who o'er mankind preside,
Behold my righteous woes, and drop your pride;
Keep virtue's simple path before your eyes,
Nor think from evil good can ever rise.

EPILOGUE.

CRAMM'D to the throat with wholesome moral stuff,

Alas, poor audience! you have had enough.

Was ever hapless heroine of a play

In such a piteous plight as ours to-day?

Was ever woman so by love betray'd?

Match'd with two husbands, and yet—die a maid.

But bless me!—hold—what sounds are these I hear—

I see the Tragic Muse herself appear.

The back-scene opens, and discovers a romantic sylvan landscape; from which the Tragic Muse advances slowly to music, and speaks the following lines:

Hence with your flippant epilogue, that tries
To wipe the virtuous tears from British eyes;
That dares my moral, tragic scene profane,
With strains—at best, unsuited, light, and vain.
Hence from the pure unsully'd beams that play
In yon fair eyes where virtue shines—away!

Britons, to you from chaste Castalian groves,
Where dwell the tender, oft unhappy loves;
Where shades of heroes roam, each mighty
name,

And court my aid to rise again to fame;
To you I come, to freedom's noblest seat,
And in Britannia fix my last retreat.

In Greece and Rome, I watch'd the public
weal;

The purple tyrant trembled at my steel:
Nor did I less o'er private sorrows reign,
And mend the melting heart with softer pain.
On France and You then rose my brightening
star,

With social ray—The arts are ne'er at war.

Oh, as your fire and genius strongly blaze,

As yours are generous freedom's bolder lays,

Let not the Gallic taste leave yours behind,

In decent manners and in life refin'd;

Banish the motley mode, to tag low verse,

The laughing ballad to the mournful hearse.

When through five acts your hearts have learn'd
to glow,

Touch'd with the sacred force of honest wo;

Oh, keep the dear impression on your breast,

Nor idly lose it for a wretched jest.

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GEORGE FARQUHAR.

REMARKS.

THE Author of this play scarcely lived to see the great success of his lively comedy. He is said to have written it in the short space of six weeks, and during an illness, which, at last, carried him off. The frequent representation of this play, and the pleasure it always affords, are proofs of its intrinsic merit.

It was first acted at the Haymarket, in 1707; and was never better supported than by the dramatic corps of the present day.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY ACTED.

DRURY LANE, 1814.

AIMWELL,.....	Mr. Mills.....	Mr. Holland.
ARCHER,.....	Mr. Wilks.....	Mr. Elliston.
COUNT BELLAIR,.....	Mr. Bowman.	
SULLEN,.....	Mr. Verbruggen.....	Mr. Powell.
SIR C. FREEMAN, .	Mr. Keen.....	Mr. Kay.
FOIGARD,.....	Mr. Bowen.....	Mr. Johnstone.
GIBBET,.....	Mr. Cibber.....	Mr. Wewitzer.
BAGSHOT.		
HOUNSLOW.		
BONIFACE,.....	Mr. Bullock.....	Mr. Palmer.
SCRUB,.....	Mr. Norris.....	Mr. J. Bannister
LADY BOUNTIFUL,.....	Mrs. Powell.....	Mrs. Maddocks.
DORINDA,.....	Mrs. Bradshaw.....	Mrs. Orger.
MRS. SULLEN,.....	Mrs. Oldfield.....	Mrs. Edwin.
GIPSEY,.....	Mrs. Mills.....	Mrs. Scott.
CHERRY,.....	Mrs. Bicknell.....	Miss Mellon.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Inn.

The bar-bell rings.—Enter BONIFACE, running.

Bon. Chamberlain, maid, Cherry, daughter Cherry! All asleep, all dead?

Enter CHERRY, running.

Cher. Here, here. Why d'ye bawl so, father? D'ye think we have no ears?

Bon. You deserve to have none, you young minx—the company of the Warrington coach has stood in the hall this hour, and nobody to show them to their chambers.

Cher. And let 'em wait, father: there's neither red coat in the coach, nor footman behind it.

Bon. But they threaten to go to another inn to-night.

Cher. That they dare not, for fear the coachman should overturn them to-morrow. [*Ring-ing.*] Coming, coming: here's the London coach arrived.

Several People, with trunks, &c. cross the stage.

Bon. Welcome, ladies.

Cher. Very welcome, gentlemen—Chamberlain, show the Lion and the Rose.

[*Exit with the Company.*]

Enter AIMWELL in a riding-habit. ARCHER as Footman, carrying a portmanteau.

Bon. This way, this way, gentlemen.

Aim. Set down the things; go to the stable, and see my horses well rubbed.

Arch. I shall, Sir. [Exit.]

Aim. You're my landlord, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, Sir, I'm old Will Boniface; pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is!

Aim. O, Mr. Boniface, your servant.

Bon. O, Sir—what will your honour please to drink? as the saying is.

Aim. I have heard your town of Litchfield much famed for ale: I think I'll taste that.

Bon. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten ton of the best ale in Staffordshire: 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy, and will be just fourteen years old the fifth day of next March, old style.

Aim. You are very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

Bon. As punctual, Sir, as I am in the age of my children: I'll show you such ale.—Here, tapster, broach number 1706, as the saying is. Sir, you shall taste my anno *domino*—I have lived in Litchfield, man and boy, above eight and fifty years, and I believe have not consumed eight and fifty ounces of meat.

Aim. At a meal, you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

Bon. Not in my life, Sir; I have fed purely upon ale: I have eat my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon my ale.

Enter TAPSTER with a tankard.

Now, Sir, you shall see. [Filling it out.] Your worship's health: Ha! delicious—fancy it Burgundy—only fancy it, and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

Aim. [Drinks.] 'Tis confounded strong.

Bon. Strong! it must be so, or how would we be strong that drink it?

Aim. And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord?

Bon. Eight and fifty years, upon my credit, Sir; but it killed my wife, poor woman! as the saying is.

Aim. How came that to pass?

Bon. I don't know how, Sir; she would not let the ale take its natural course, Sir; she was for qualifying it every now and then with a dram, as the saying is: and an honest gentleman, that came this way from Ireland, made her a present of a dozen bottles of usquebaugh—but the poor woman was never well after; but, however, I was obliged to the gentleman, you know.

Aim. Why, was it the usquebaugh that killed her?

Bon. My lady Bountiful said so—she, good lady, did what could be done; she cured her of three tympanies, but the fourth carried her off; but she's happy and I am contented, as the saying is.

Aim. Who's that lady Bountiful you mentioned?

Bon. Od's my life, Sir, we'll drink her health. [Drinks.] My lady Bountiful is one of the best of women: her last husband, Sir Charles Bountiful, left her worth a thousand pounds a year; and I believe she lays out one half on't in charitable uses for the good of her neighbours; in short she has cured more people in and about Litchfield within ten years, than the doctors have killed in twenty, and that's a bold word.

Aim. Has the lady been any other way useful in her generation?

Bon. Yes, Sir, she has a daughter by Sir Charles, the finest woman in all our country, and the greatest fortune; she has a son too, by her first husband, 'squire Sullen, who married a fine lady from London t'other day; if you please, Sir we'll drink his health.

Aim. What sort of a man is he?

Bon. Why, Sir, the man's well enough; says little, thinks less, and does—nothing at all, 'faith; but he's a man of great estate, and values nobody.

Aim. A sportsman, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, Sir; he's a man of pleasure; he plays at whist, and smokes his pipe eight and forty hours together, sometimes.

Aim. A fine sportsman, truly! and married, you say?

Bon. Ay, and to a curious woman, Sir.—But he's a——He wants it here, Sir.

[Pointing to his forehead]

Aim. He has it there you mean.

Bon. That's none of my business, he's my landlord, and so a man, you know would not—but I'od he's no better than—Sir, my humble service to you. [Drinks.] Though I value not a farthing what he can do me; I pay him his rent at quarter day; I have a good running trade; I have but one daughter, and I can give her—But no matter for that.

Aim. You're very happy, Mr. Boniface; pray, what other company have you in town?

Bon. A power of fine ladies; and then we have the French officers.

Aim. O, that's right; you have a good many of those gentlemen: pray, how do you like their company?

Bon. So well, as the saying is, that I could wish we had as many more of 'em: they're full of money, and pay double for every thing they have; they know, Sir, that we pay good round taxes for the taking of them, and so they are willing to reimburse us a little: one of 'em lodges in my house.

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. Landlord, there are some French gentlemen below that ask for you.

Bon. I'll wait on them—Does your master stay long in town, as the saying is?

[To ARCHER.]

Arch. I can't tell, as the saying is.

Bon. Come from London?

Arch. No.

Bon. Going to London, mayhap?

Arch. No.

Bon. An odd fellow, this. [Bar-bell rings.] I beg your worship's pardon, I'll wait on you in half a minute.

[Exit.]

Aim. The coast is clear, I see—Now, my dear Archer, welcome to Litchfield.

Arch. I thank thee, my dear brother in iniquity.

Aim. Iniquity! pr'ythee leave canting; you need not change your style with your dress.

Arch. Don't mistake me, Aimwell, for 'tis still my maxim, that there's no scandal like rags, nor any crime so shameful as poverty. Men must not be poor; idleness is the root of all evil; the world's wide enough, let 'em bustle: fortune has taken the weak under her protection, but men of sense are left to their industry.

Aim. Upon which topic we proceed, and I think luckily hitherto. Would not any man

swear now, that I am a man of quality, and you my servant; when, if our intrinsic value were known——

Arch. Come, come, we are the men of intrinsic value, who can strike our fortunes out of ourselves, whose worth is independent of accident in life, or revolutions in government; we have heads to get money, and hearts to spend it.

Aim. As to our hearts, I grant ye they are as willing tits as any within twenty degrees; but I can have no great opinion of our heads from the service they have done us hitherto, unless it be that they brought us from London, hither to Litchfield, made me a lord, and you my servant.

Arch. That's more than you could expect already. But what money have we left?

Aim. But two hundred pounds.

Arch. And our horses, clothes, rings, &c. Why, we have very good fortunes now for moderate people: and let me tell you, that this two hundred pounds, with the experience that we are now masters of, is a better estate than the ten thousand we have spent—our friends, indeed, began to suspect that our pockets were low; but we came off with flying colours, showed no signs of want, either in word or deed.

Aim. Ay, and our going to Brussels was a good pretence enough for our sudden disappearing; and, I warrant you, our friends imagine that we are gone a-volunteering.

Arch. Why, 'faith, if this project fails, it must e'en come to this. I am for venturing one of the hundreds, if you will, upon this knight errantry; but, in case it should fail, we'll reserve the other to carry us to some counterscarp, where we may die, as we lived, in a blaze.

Aim. With all my heart; and we have lived justly, Archer; we can't say that we have spent our fortunes, but that we have enjoyed 'em.

Arch. Right; so much pleasure for so much money; we have had our pennyworths; and had I millions, I would go to the same market again. O London, London! Well, we have had our share, and let us be thankful: past pleasures, for ought I know, are best, such as we are sure of: those to come may disappoint us. But you command for the day, and so I submit.—At Nottingham, you know, I am to be master.

Aim. And at Lincoln, I again.

Arch. Then at Norwich I mount, which, I think, shall be our last stage! for if we fail there, we'll embark for Holland, bid adieu to Venus, and welcome Mars.

Aim. A match! mum.

Enter BONIFACE.

Bon. What will your worship please to have for supper?

Aim. What have you got?

Bon. Sir, we have a delicate piece of beef in the pot, and a pig at the fire.

Aim. Good supper meat, I must confess—I can't eat beef, landlord.

Arch. And I hate pig.

Aim. Hold your prating sirrah! Do you know who you are? *[Aside.]*

Bon. Please to bespeak something else; I have every thing in the house.

Aim. Have you any veal?

Bon. Veal! Sir, we had a delicate loin of veal on Wednesday last.

Aim. Have you got any fish, or wild fowl?

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Bon. As for the fish, truly, Sir, we are an inland town, and indifferently provided with fish, that's the truth on't; but then for wild fowl!—we have a delicate couple of rabbits.

Aim. Get me the rabbits fricasseed.

Bon. Fricasseed! Lard, Sir, they'll eat much better smothered with onions.

Arch. Pshaw! rot your onions.

Aim. Again, sirrah!—Well, landlord, what you please; but hold, I have a small charge of money, and your house is so full of strangers, that I believe it may be safer in your custody than mine: for when this fellow of mine get's drunk, he minds nothing—Here, sirrah, reach me the strong box.

Arch. Yes, Sir—this will give us reputation.

[Aside—brings the box.]

Aim. Here, landlord, the locks are sealed down, both for your security and mine; it holds somewhat above two hundred pounds: if you doubt it, I'll count them to you after supper; but be sure you lay it where I may have it at a minute's warning; for my affairs are a little dubious at present; perhaps I may be gone in half an hour, perhaps I may be your guest till the best part of that be spent; and pray order your hostler to keep my horses ready saddled: but one thing above the rest, I must beg that you will let this fellow have none of your *anno domini*, as you call it; for he's the most insufferable sot—Here, sirrah, light me to my chamber.

Arch. Yes, Sir. *[Exit, lighted by ARCHER.]*

Bon. Cherry! daughter Cherry!

Enter CHERRY.

Cher. D'ye call, father?

Bon. Ay, child: you must lay by this box for the gentleman, 'tis full of money.

Cher. Money! is all that money? why sure, father, the gentleman comes down to be chosen parliament-man. Who is he?

Bon. I don't know what to make of him; he talks of keeping his horses ready saddled, and of going, perhaps, at a minute's warning, or of staying, perhaps, till the best part of this be spent.

Cher. Ay! ten to one, father, he's a highwayman.

Bon. A highwayman! Upon my life, girl, you have hit it, and this box is some new purchased booty.—Now, could we find him out, the money were ours.

Cher. He don't belong to our gang.

Bon. What horses have they?

Cher. The master rides upon a black.

Bon. A black! ten to one, the man upon the black mare; and since he don't belong to our fraternity, we may betray him with a safe conscience. I don't think it lawful to harbour any rogues but my own. Lookye, child, as the saying is, we must go cunningly to work; proofs we must have; the gentleman's servant loves drink, I'll ply him that way; and ten to one he loves a wench; you must work him t'other way.

Cher. Father, would you have me give my secret for his?

Bon. Consider, child, there's two hundred pounds to boot. *[Ringing without.]* Coming coming—Child, mind your business. *[Exit.]*

Cher. What a rogue is my father!—My father! I deny it—My mother was a good, generous, free-hearted woman, and I can't tell how far her good nature might have extended for the

good of her children. This landlord of mine, for I think I can call him no more, would betray his guest, and his daughter into the bargain—by a footman too!

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. What footman, pray, mistress, is so happy as to be the subject of your contemplation?

Cher. Whoever he is, friend, he'll be but little the better for 't.

Arch. I hope so, for I'm sure you did not think of me.

Cher. Suppose I had!

Arch. Why, then, you're but even with me; for the minute I came in, I was considering in what manner I should make love to you.

Cher. Love to me, friend!

Arch. Yes, child.

Cher. Child! Manners: if you keep a little more distance, friend, it would be much better.

Arch. Distance! good night, saucebox.

[Going.]

Cher. A pretty fellow—I like his pride—Sir! pray, Sir, you see, Sir, [*ARCHER returns.*] I have the credit to be trusted with your master's fortune here, which sets me a degree above his footman. I hope, Sir, you an't affronted.

Arch. Let me look you full in the face, and I'll tell you whether you can affront me or not—'Sdeath, child, you have a pair of delicate eyes, and you don't know what to do with 'em.

Cher. Why, Sir, don't I see every body?

Arch. Ay, but if some women had them, they would kill every body.—Pr'ythee, instruct me; I would fain make love to you, but I don't know what to say.

Cher. Why, did you never make love to any body before?

Arch. Never to a person of your figure, I can assure you, Madam; my addresses have always been confined to persons within my own sphere; I never aspired so high before. [*Sings.*]

*But you look so bright,
And are dressed so tight, &c.*

Cher. What can I think of this man? [*Aside.*] Will you give me that song, Sir?

Arch. Aye, my dear, take it while it is warm. [*Kisses her.*] Death and fire! her lips are honey-combs.

Cher. And I wish there had been a swarm of bees too, to have stung you for your impudence.

Arch. There's a swarm of Cupids, my little Venus, that has done the business much better.

Cher. This fellow is misbegotten as well as I. [*Aside.*] What's your name, Sir?

Arch. Name! 'Egad, I have forgot it. [*Aside.*] Oh, Martin.

Cher. Where was you born?

Arch. In St. Martin's parish.

Cher. What was your father?

Arch. Of—of—St. Martin's parish.

Cher. Then, friend, good night.

Arch. I hope not.

Cher. You may depend upon't.

Arch. Upon what?

Cher. That you're very impudent.

Arch. That you're very handsome.

Cher. That you're a footman.

Arch. That you're an angel.

Cher. I shall be rude.

Arch. So shall I.

Cher. Let go my hand.

Arch. Give me a kiss.

Bon. [*Without.*] Cherry, Cherry! [*Kisses her.*]

Cher. I'm—My father calls! you plaguy devil, how dare you stop my breath so?—Offer to follow me one step, if you dare. [*Exit.*]

Arch. A fair challenge, by this light; this is a pretty fair opening for an adventure; but we are knight-errants, and so fortune be our guide.

[*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Gallery in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

MRS. SULLEN and DORINDA meeting.

Dor. 'Morrow, my dear sister; are you for church this morning?

Mrs. S. Any where, to pray; for Heaven alone can help me: but I think, Dorinda, there's no form of prayer in the liturgy against bad husbands.

Dor. But there's a form of law at Doctors' Commons; and I swear, sister Sullen, rather than see you thus continually discontented, I would advise you to apply to that: for, besides the part that I bear in your vexatious broils, as being sister to the husband, and friend to the wife, your examples give me such an impression of matrimony, that I shall be apt to condemn my person to a long vacation all its life. But supposing, Madam, that you brought it to a case of separation, what can you urge against your husband?

Mrs. S. The most constant man, I grant ye.

Dor. He never sleeps from you.

Mrs. S. No, he always sleeps with me.

Dor. He allows you a maintenance suitable to your quality.

Mrs. S. A maintenance! Do you take me, Madam, for an hospital child, that I must sit down and bless my benefactors for meat, drink, and clothes? As I take it, Madam, I brought your brother ten thousand pounds, out of which I might expect some pretty things called pleasures.

Dor. You share in all the pleasures the country affords.

Mrs. S. Country pleasures! Racks and tortments! Dost think, child, that my limbs were made for leaping of ditches, and clambering over stiles; or, that my parents, wisely foreseeing my future happiness in country pleasures, had early instructed me in the rural accomplishments of drinking fat ale, playing at whist, and smoking tobacco with my husband; or of spreading of plaisters, brewing of diet drinks, and stilling of rosemary-water, with the good old gentlewoman, my mother-in-law?

Dor. I'm sorry, Madam, that it is not more in our power to divert you; I could wish, indeed, that our entertainments were a little more polite, or your taste a little less refined; but pray, Madam, how came the poets and philosophers, that laboured so much in hunting after pleasure, to place it at last in a country life?

Mrs. S. Because they wanted money, child, to find out the pleasures of the town. Did you ever hear of a poet or a philosopher worth ten thousand pounds? If you can show me such a man, I'll lay you fifty pounds, you'll find him somewhere within the weekly bills. Not that I

disapprove rural pleasures, as the poets have painted them in their landscapes: every Phillis has her Corydon; every murmuring stream, and every flowery mead, gives fresh alarm to love. Besides, you'll find that the couples were never married. But yonder I see my Corydon, and a sweet swain it is, heaven knows! Come, Dorinda, don't be angry; he's my husband, and your brother; and, between both, is he not a sad brute?

Dor. I have nothing to say to your part of him; you're the best judge.

Mrs. S. O, sister, sister! if ever you marry, beware of a sullen, silent sot, one that's always musing, but never thinks.—There's some diversion in talking blockhead; and, since the woman must wear chains, I would have the pleasure of hearing 'em rattle a little. Now you shall see: but take this by the way; he came home this morning at the usual hour of four, wakened me out of a sweet dream of something else, by tumbling over the tea-table, which he broke all to pieces. After his man and he had rolled about the room, like sick passengers in a storm, he comes flounce into bed, dead as a salmon into a fishmonger's basket; his feet cold as ice; his breath hot as a furnace—Oh! matrimony! matrimony!—he tosses up the clothes with a barbarous swing over his shoulders, disorders the whole economy of my bed, leaves me half naked, and my whole night's comfort is the tunable serenade of that wakeful nightingale, his nose.—O, the pleasure of counting the melancholy clock by a snoring husband!—But now, sister, you shall see how handsomely, being a well-bred man, he will beg my pardon.

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. My head aches consumedly.

Mrs. S. Will you be pleased, my dear, to drink tea with us this morning; it may do your head good?

Sul. No.

Dor. Coffee, brother?

Sul. Pshaw!

Mrs. S. Will you please dress, and go to church with me? the air may help you.

Sul. Scrub!

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. Sir!

Sul. What day o' th' week is this?

Scrub. Sunday, an't please your worship.

Sul. Sunday! bring me a dram; and d'ye hear, set out the venison pasty and a tankard of strong beer, upon the hall table: I'll go to breakfast.

[Going.]

Dor. Stay, stay brother, you sha'n't get off so; you were very naughty last night, and must make your wife reparation. Come, come, brother, wont you ask pardon?

Sul. For what?

Dor. For being drunk last night.

Sul. I can afford it, can't I?

Mrs. S. But I can't, Sir.

Sul. Then you may let it alone.

Mrs. S. But I must tell you, Sir, that this is not to be borne.

Sul. I'm glad on't.

Mrs. S. What is the reason, Sir, that you use me thus inhumanly?

Sul. Scrub!

Scrub. Sir!

Sul. Get the things ready to shave my head.

[Exit.]

Mrs. S. Have a care of coming near his temples, Scrub, for fear you meet something there that may turn the edge of your razor. *[Exit SCRUB.]* Inveterate stupidity! did you ever know so hard, so obstinate, a spleen as his? O, sister, sister! I shall never have any good of the beast till I get him to town; London, dear London, is the place for managing and breaking a husband.

Dor. And has not a husband the same opportunities for humbling a wife?

Mrs. S. No, no, child; 'tis a standing maxim in conjugal discipline, that, when a man would enslave his wife, he hurries her into the country; and when a lady would be arbitrary with her husband, she wheedles her booby up to town.—A man dare not play the tyrant in London, because there are so many examples to encourage the subject to rebel. O, Dorinda, Dorinda! a fine woman may do any thing in London. O' my conscience, she may raise an army of forty thousand men.

Dor. I fancy, sister, you have a mind to be trying your power that way here in Litchfield; you have drawn the French count to your colours already.

Mrs. S. The French are a people that can't live without their gallantries.

Dor. And some English that I know, sister, are not averse to such amusements.

Mrs. S. Well, sister, since the truth must out, it may do as well now as hereafter; I think one way to rouse my lethargic, sottish husband, is to give him a rival; security begets negligence in all people, and men must be alarmed to make 'em alert in their duty. Women are like pictures, of no value in the hands of a fool, till he hears men of sense bid high for the purchase.

Dor. This might do, sister, if my brother's understanding were to be convinced into a passion for you; but, I believe, there's a natural aversion on his side: and I fancy, sister, that you don't come much behind him, if you dealt fairly.

Mrs. S. I own it; we are united contradictions, fire and water. But I could be contented, with a great many other wives, to humour the censorious vulgar, and give the world an appearance of living well with my husband, could I bring him to dissemble a little kindness to keep me in countenance.

Dor. But how do you know, sister, but that instead of rousing your husband, by this artifice, to a counterfeit kindness, he should awake in a real fury.

Mrs. S. Let him.—If I can't entice him to the one, I would provoke him to the other.

Dor. But how must I behave myself between ye?

Mrs. S. You must assist me.

Dor. What, against my own brother?

Mrs. S. He's but half a brother, and I'm your entire friend. If I go a step beyond the bounds of honour, leave me; till then, I expect you should go along with me in every thing. The count is to dine here to-day.

Dor. 'Tis a strange thing, sister, that I can't like that man.

Mrs. S. You like nothing; your time is not come. Love and death have their frailties, and strike home one time or other.—You'll pay for all one day, I warrant ye.—But come, my lady's tea is ready, and 'tis almost church-time.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—*The Inn.*

Enter AIMWELL, dressed, and ARCHER.

Aim. And was she the daughter of the house?
Arch. The landlord is so blind as to think so; but I dare swear she has better blood in her veins.

Aim. Why dost think so?

Arch. Because the baggage has a pert *je-ne-sçai-quoi*; she reads plays, keeps a monkey, and is troubled with vapours.

Aim. By which discoveries, I guess that you know more of her.

Arch. Not yet, 'faith. The lady gives herself airs, forsooth; nothing under a gentleman.

Aim. Let me take her in hand.

Arch. Say one word more o'that, and I'll declare myself, spoil your sport there, and every where else: look ye, Aimwell, every one in his own sphere.

Aim. Right; and therefore you must pimp for your master.

Arch. In the usual forms, good Sir, after I have served myself—But to your business. You are so well dressed, Tom, and make so handsome a figure, that I fancy you may do execution in a country church.

Aim. There's something in that which may turn to advantage. The appearance of a stranger in a country church, draws as many gazers as a blazing star: no sooner he comes into the cathedral, but a train of whispers run buzzing round the congregation in a moment—Who is he? Whence comes he? Do you know him?—Then I, Sir, tips the verger half-a-crown; he pockets the simony, and inducts me into the best pew in the church; I pull out my snuff-box, turn myself round, bow to the bishop, or the dean, if he be the commanding officer, single out a beauty, rivet both my eyes on hers, set my nose a-bleeding by the strength of imagination, and show the whole church my concern, by my endeavouring to hide it! after the sermon, the whole town gives me to her for her lover, and by persuading the lady that I am dying for her, the tables are turned, and she in good earnest falls in love with me.

Arch. There's nothing in this, Tom, without a precedent; but instead of rivetting your eyes on a beauty, try to fix them upon a fortune: that's our business at present.

Aim. Pshaw! no woman can be a beauty without a fortune. Let me alone for a marksman.

Arch. Tom!

Aim. Ay!

Arch. When were you at church before, pray?

Aim. Um—I was there at the coronation.

Arch. And how can you expect a blessing by going to church now?

Aim. Blessing! Nay, Frank, I ask but for a wife. [Exit.]

Arch. Truly, the man is not very unreasonable in his demands. [Exit, at the opposite door.]

Enter BONIFACE and CHERRY.

Bon. Well, daughter, as the saying is, have you brought Martin to confess?

Cher. Pray, father, don't put me upon getting any thing out of a man; I'm but young, you know, father, and don't understand wheedling.

Bon. Young! why, you jade, as the saying is, can any woman wheedle that is not young? Your mother was useless at five and twenty. Would

you make your mother a whore and me a cuckold, as the saying is? I tell you, his silence confesses it, and his master spends his money so freely, and is so much a gentleman every manner of way, that he must be a highwayman.

Enter GIBBET, in a cloak.

Gib. Landlord, landlord, is the coast clear?

Bon. O, Mr. Gibbet, what's the news?

Gib. No matter; ask no questions; all's fair and honourable. Here, my dear Cherry, [*Gives her a bag.*] Two hundred sterling pounds, as good as ever hanged or saved a rogue; lay 'em by with the rest; and here—three wedding or mourning rings—'tis much the same, you know.—Here, two silver-hilted swords: I took these from fellows that never show any part of their swords but the hilts. Here is a diamond necklace, which the lady hid in the privatest place in the coach, but I found it out. This gold watch I took from a pawnbroker's wife: it was left in her hands by a person of quality; there's the arms upon the case.

Cher. But who had you the money from?

Gib. Ah! poor woman, I pitied her!—from a poor lady just eloped from her husband; she had made up her cargo, and was bound for Ireland as hard as she could drive; she told me of her husband's barbarous usage, and so 'faith I left her half-a-crown. But I had almost forgot, my dear Cherry, I have a present for you.

Cher. What is't?

Gib. A pot of ceruse, my child, that I took out of a lady's under petticoat pocket.

Cher. What, Mr. Gibbet, do you think I paint?

Gib. Why, you jade, your betters do; I'm sure the lady I took it from had a coronet upon her handkerchief—Here, take my cloak, and go secure the premises.

Cher. I will secure 'em. [Exit.]

Bon. But, harkye, where's Hounslow and Bagshot?

Gib. They'll be here to-night.

Bon. D'ye know of any other gentleman o'the pad on the road.

Gib. No.

Bon. I fancy I have two that lodge in the house just now.

Gib. The devil! how do you smoke 'em?

Bon. Why, one is gone to church.

Gib. To church! That's suspicious I must confess.

Bon. And the other is now in his master's chamber; he pretends to be a servant to the other; we'll call him out, and pump him a little.

Gib. With all my heart.

Bon. Mr. Martin! Mr. Martin!

Enter ARCHER, brushing a hat, and singing.

Gib. The roads are consumed deep; I'm as dirty as Old Brentford at Christmas.—A good pretty fellow that;—whose servant are you, friend?

Arch. My master's.

Gib. Really.

Arch. Really.

Gib. That's much. That fellow has been at the bar, by his evasions:—but pray, Sir, what is your master's name?

Arch. Tall, all, dall. [*Sings and brushes the hat.*]—This is the most obstinate spot—

Gib. I ask you his name?

Arch. Name, Sir—Tall, all, dall—I never asked him his name in my life—Tall, all, dall.

Bon. What think you now?

Gib. Plain, plain; he talks now as if he were before a judge. But pray, friend, which way does your master travel?

Arch. A-horseback.

Gib. Very well again; an old offender—Right—But I mean does he go upwards or downwards?

Arch. Downwards I fear, Sir—Tall, lall.

Gib. I'm afraid thy fate will be a contrary way.

Bon. Ha, ha, ha! Mr. Martin, you are very arch.—This gentleman is only travelling towards Chester, and would be glad of your company, that's all. Come, captain, you'll stay to-night, I suppose; I'll show you a chamber—Come, captain.

Gib. Farewell, friend.

[*Exeunt GIBBET and BONIFACE.*]

Arch. Captain, your servant.—Captain! a pretty fellow! 'Sdeath! I wonder that the officers of the army don't conspire to beat all scoundrels in red but their own.

Enter CHERRY.

Cher. Gone, and Martin here! I hope he did not listen: I would have the merit of the discovery all my own, because I would oblige him to love me. [*Aside.*] Mr. Martin, who was that man with my father?

Arch. Some recruiting serjeant, or whipped-out trooper, I suppose.

Cher. All's safe, I find.

[*Aside.*]

Arch. Come, my dear, have you conned over the catechism I taught you last night?

Cher. Come, question me.

Arch. What is love?

Cher. Love is I know not what, it comes I know not how, goes I know not when.

Arch. Very well, an apt scholar. [*Chucks her under the chin.*] Where does love enter?

Cher. Into the eyes.

Arch. And where go out?

Cher. I won't tell you.

Arch. What are the objects of that passion?

Cher. Youth, beauty, and clean linen.

Arch. The reason?

Cher. The two first are fashionable in nature, and the third at court.

Arch. That's my dear. What are the signs and tokens of that passion?

Cher. A stealing look, a stammering tongue, words improbable, designs impossible, and actions impracticable.

Arch. That's my good child; kiss me—What must a lover do to obtain a mistress?

Cher. He must adore the person that disdains him, he must bribe the chambermaid that betrays him, and court the footman that laughs at him! He must, he must—

Arch. Nay, child, I must whip you, if you don't mind your lesson; he must treat his—

Cher. O! ay. He must treat his enemies with respect, his friends with indifference, and all the world with contempt: he must suffer much, and fear more; he must desire much and hope little; in short he must embrace his ruin, and throw himself away.

Arch. Had ever man so hopeful a pupil as mine! Come, my dear, why is love called a riddle?

Cher. Because, being blind, he leads those that see; and, though a child, he governs a man.

Arch. Mighty well. And why is love pictured blind?

Cher. Because the painters, out of their weak-

ness, or the privilege of their art, choose to hide those eyes they could not draw.

Arch. That's my dear little scholar, kiss me again—And why should love, that's a child, govern a man?

Cher. 'Cause that a child is the end of love.

Arch. Ah, so ends love's catechism—And now, my dear, we'll go in, and make my master's bed.

Cher. Hold, hold, Mr. Martin—you have taken a great deal of pains to instruct me, and what d'ye think I have learned by it?

Arch. What?

Cher. That your discourse and your habit are contradictions, and it would be nonsense in me to believe you a footman any longer.

Arch. 'Oons, what a witch it is!

Cher. Depend upon this, Sir; nothing in that garb shall ever tempt me: for though I was born to servitude, I hate it. Own your condition, swear you love me, and then—

Arch. And then we shall go make my master's bed?

Cher. Yes.

Arch. You must know then, that I am born a gentleman; my education was liberal; but I went to London a younger brother, fell into the hands of sharpers, who stripped me of my money; my friends disowned me, and now my necessity brings me to what you see.

Cher. Then take my hand—promise to marry me before you sleep, and I'll make you master of two thousand pounds.

Arch. How?

Cher. Two thousand pounds that I have this minute in my own custody; so throw off your livery this instant, and I'll go find a parson.

Arch. What said you? a parson?

Cher. What!—do you scruple?

Arch. Scruple! no, no; but—two thousand pounds, you say?

Cher. And better.

Arch. 'Sdeath, what shall I do?—But harkye, child, what need you make me master of yourself and money, when you may have the same pleasure out of me, and still keep your fortune in your own hands?

Cher. Then you won't marry me?

Arch. I would marry you, but—

Cher. O, sweet Sir, I'm your humble servant, you're fairly caught. Would you persuade me that any gentleman who could bear the scandal of wearing a livery, would refuse two thousand pounds, let the condition be what it would—No, no, Sir, but I hope you'll pardon the freedom I have taken, since it was only to inform myself of the respect I ought to pay you. [*Going.*]

Arch. Fairly bit, by Jupiter!—Hold! hold! and have you actually two thousand pounds?

Cher. Sir, I have my secrets as well as you—when you please to be more open, I shall be more free; and be assured that I have discoveries that will match yours, be they what they will.—In the mean while be satisfied, that no discovery I make shall ever hurt you; but beware of my father.

[*Exit.*]

Arch. So—we're like to have as many adventures in our inn, as Don Quixote had in his—Let me see—two thousand pounds! if the wench would promise to die when the money were spent, 'egad, one would marry her; but the fortune may go off in a year or two, and the wife may live—

Lord knows how long! Then an innkeeper's daughter! Ay, that's the devil—there, my pride brings me off.

For whatsoe'er the sages charge on pride,
The angels' fall, and twenty faults beside;
On earth, I'm sure, 'mong us of mortal calling,
Pride saves man oft, and woman too, from
falling. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

Enter MRS. SULLEN and DORINDA.

Mrs. S. Ha, ha, ha! my dear sister; let me embrace thee; now we are friends, indeed; for I shall have a secret of yours as a pledge for mine.

Dor. But do you think that I am so weak as to fall in love with a fellow at first sight.

Mrs. S. Pshaw! now you spoil all; why should not we be as free in our friendships as the men? I warrant you, the gentleman has got to his confidant already, has avowed his passion, toasted your health, called you ten thousand angels.

Dor. Your hand, sister; I an't well.

Mrs. S. Shall I send to your mother, child? or shall I send to the gentleman for something for you?—Come, unbosom yourself—the man is perfectly a pretty fellow; I saw him when he first came into church.

Dor. I saw him too, sister, and with an air that shone, methought, like rays about his person.

Mrs. S. Well said, up with it.

Dor. No forward coquette behaviour, no air to set him off, no studied looks, no artful posture,—but nature did it all—

Mrs. S. Better and better—One touch more—Come—

Dor. But then his looks—Did you observe his eyes?

Mrs. S. Yes, yes, I did—his eyes; well, what of his eyes?

Dor. Sprightly, but not wandering; they seemed to view, but never gazed on any thing but me—and then his looks so humble were, and yet so noble, that they aimed to tell me, that he could with pride die at my feet, though he scorned slavery any where else.

Mrs. S. The physic works purely.—How d'ye find yourself now, my dear?

Dor. Hem! much better my dear—Oh, here comes our Mercury!

Enter SCRUB.

Dor. Well, Scrub, what news of the gentleman?

Scrub. Madam, I have brought you a whole packet of news.

Dor. Open it quickly; come.

Scrub. In the first place, I inquired who the gentleman was? They told me he was a stranger. Secondly, I asked what the gentleman was? They answered and said, that they never saw him before. Thirdly, I inquired what countryman he was? They replied, 'twas more than they knew. Fourthly, I demanded whence he came? Their answer was, they could not tell. And fifthly, I asked whither he went? And they replied, they knew nothing of the matter.—And this is all I could learn.

Mrs. S. But what do the people say? Can't they guess?

Scrub. Why some think he's a spy, some

guess he's a mountebank, some say one thing, some another; but for my own part, I believe he's a jesuit.

Dor. A jesuit! why a jesuit?

Scrub. Because he keeps his horses always ready saddled, and his footman talks French.

Mrs. S. His footman!

Scrub. Ay, he and the count's footman were gabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a millpond; and I believe they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.

Dor. What sort of livery has the footman?

Scrub. Livery! Lord, Madam, I took him for a captain, he's so bedizen'd with lace; and then he has a silver-headed cane dangling at his knuckles—he carries his hands in his pockets, and walks just so—[Walks in a French air.] and has a fine long periwig tied up in a bag—Lord, Madam, he's clear another sort of a man than I.

Mrs. S. That may easily be.—But what shall we do now, sister?

Dor. I have it.—This fellow has a world of simplicity, and some cunning; the first hides the latter by abundance.—Scrub!

Scrub. Madam!

Dor. We have a great mind to know who this gentleman is, only for our satisfaction.

Scrub. Yes, Madam, it would be a satisfaction, no doubt.

Dor. You must go and get acquainted with his footman, and invite him hither to drink a bottle of your ale, because you're butler to-day.

Scrub. Yes, Madam, I am butler every Sunday.

Mrs. S. O brave, sister! o'my conscience you understand the mathematics already.—'Tis the best plot in the world? Your mother, you know, will be gone to church, my spouse will be got to the alehouse with his scoundrels, and the house will be our own—so we drop in by accident, and ask the fellow some questions ourselves. In the country, you know, any stranger is company, and we're glad to take up with the butler in a country-dance, and happy if he will do us the favour.

Scrub. Oh, Madam, you wrong me; I never refused your ladyship the favour in my life.

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. Ladies, dinner's upon table.

Dor. Scrub, we'll excuse you waiting.—Go where we order'd you.

Scrub. I shall.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The Inn.

Enter AIMWELL and ARCHER.

Arch. Well, Tom, I find you're a marksman

Aim. A marksman! who so blind could be as not discern a swan among the ravens?

Arch. Well, but harkye, Aimwell—

Aim. Aimwell! call me Oroondates, Cesario Amadis, all that romance can in a lover paint, and then I'll answer. Oh, Archer! I read her thousands in her looks; she looked like Ceres in her harvest: corn, wine, and oil, milk, honey, gardens, groves, and purling streams, played on her plenteous face.

Arch. Her face! her pocket, you mean! the corn, wine, and oil, lie there. In short, she has twenty thousand pounds, that's the English on't.

Aim. Her eyes—

Arch. Are demi-cannons, to be sure; so I won't stand their battery.

[Going.]

Aim. Pray, excuse me, my passion must have vent.

Arch. Passion! what a plague, d'y'e think these romantic airs will do our business! Were my temper as extravagant as yours, my adventures have something more romantic by half.

Aim. Your adventures?

Arch. Yes.

The nymph who, with her twice one thousand pounds,

With brazen engine hot, and coif clear starch'd,
Can fire the guest in warming of the bed—
There's a touch of sublime Milton for you, and the subject but an innkeeper's daughter. I can play with a girl as an angler does his fish; he keeps it at the end of his line, runs it up the stream, and down the stream, till at last he brings it to hand, tickles the trout, and so whips it into his basket.

Enter BONIFACE.

Bon. Mr. Martin, as the saying is—yonder's an honest fellow below, my Lady Bountiful's butler, who begs the honour that you would go home with him, and see his cellar.

Arch. Do my *baise-mains* to the gentleman, and tell him I will do myself the honour to wait on him immediately, as the saying is.

Bon. I shall do your worship's commands, as the saying is. [*Exit, bowing obsequiously.*]

Aim. What do I hear? soft Orpheus play, and fair Toftida sing!

Arch. Pshaw! Damn your raptures; I tell you here's a pump going to be put into the vessel, and the ship will get into harbour, my life on't. You say there's another lady very handsome, there.

Aim. Yes, 'faith.

Arch. I'm in love with her already.

Aim. Can't you give me a bill upon Cherry, in the mean time?

Arch. No, no, 'faith; all her corn, wine, and oil, is engrossed to my market.—And once more I warn you to keep your anchorage clear of mine; for if you fall foul of me, by this light, you shall go to the bottom.—What! make a prize of my little frigate, while I am upon the cruise for you. You're a pretty fellow indeed! [*Exit.*]

Enter BONIFACE.

Aim. Well, well, I wont—Landlord, have you any tolerable company in the house? I don't care for dining alone.

Bon. Yes, Sir, there's a captain below, as the saying is, that arrived about an hour ago.

Aim. Gentlemen of his coat are welcome every where; will you make a compliment for me, and tell him I should be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. Who shall I tell him, Sir, would—

Aim. Ha: that stroke was well thrown in.—I'm only a traveller like himself, and would be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. I obey your commands, as the saying is. [*Exit.*]

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. 'Sdeath! I had forgot; what title would you give yourself?

Aim. My brother's to be sure; he would never give me any thing else, so I'll make bold with his honour this bout.—You know the rest of your cue!

Arch. Ay, ay.

[*Exit.*]

Enter GIBBET.

Gib. Sir, I'm yours.

Aim. 'Tis more than I deserve, Sir, for I don't know you.

Gib. I don't wonder at that, Sir, for you never saw me before—I hope. [*Aside.*]

Aim. And pray, Sir, how came I by the honour of seeing you now?

Gib. Sir, I scorn to intrude upon any gentleman—but my landlord—

Aim. O, Sir, I ask your pardon—you're the captain he told me of.

Gib. At your service, Sir.

Aim. What regiment, may I be so bold?

Gib. A marching regiment, Sir; an old corps

Aim. Very old, if your coat be regimental

[*Aside.*] You have served abroad, Sir?

Gib. Yes, Sir, in the plantations; 'twas my lot to be sent into the worst service; I would have quitted it indeed, but a man of honour you know—Besides, 'twas for the good of my country that I should be abroad—Any thing for the good of one's country—I'm a Roman for that.

Aim. One of the first, I'll lay my life. [*Aside.*] You found the West Indies very hot, Sir.

Gib. Ay, Sir, too hot for me.

Aim. And where's your company now, captain?

Gib. They a'n't come yet.

Aim. Why, d'y'e expect them here?

Gib. They'll be here to-night, Sir.

Aim. Which way do they march?

Gib. Across the country.—The devil's in't if I han't said enough to encourage him to declare—but I'm afraid he's not right, I must tack about.

[*Aside.*]

Aim. Is your company to quarter at Litchfield?

Gib. In this house, Sir.

Aim. What, all?

Gib. My company is but thin, ha, ha, ha! we are but three, ha, ha, ha!

Aim. You're merry, Sir.

Gib. Ay, Sir, you must excuse me. Sir, I understand the world, especially the art of travelling: I don't care for answering questions directly upon the road—for I generally ride with a charge about me.

Aim. Three or four, I believe. [*Aside.*]

Gib. I am credibly informed that there are highwaymen upon this quarter; not, Sir, that I could suspect a gentleman of your figure—But truly, Sir, I have got such a way of evasion upon the road, that I don't care for speaking truth to any man.

Aim. Your caution may be necessary. Then I presume you're no captain.

Gib. Not I, Sir, captain is a good travelling name, and so I take it; it stops a great many foolish inquiries that are generally made about gentlemen that travel; it gives a man an air of something, and makes the drawers obedient—And thus far I am a captain, and no further.

Aim. And pray, Sir, what is your true profession?

Gib. O, Sir, you must excuse me—upon my word, Sir, I don't think it safe to tell you.

Aim. Ha, ha! upon my word, I commend you.

Enter BONIFACE.

Well, Mr. Boniface, what's the news?

Bon. There's another gentleman below, as the

saying is, that hearing you were but two, would be glad to make the third man, if you'd give him leave.

Aim. What is he?

Bon. A clergyman, as the saying is.

Aim. A clergyman! is he really a clergyman? or is it only a travelling name, as my friend the captain has it?

Bon. Oh, Sir, he's a priest, and chaplain to the French officers in town.

Aim. Is he a Frenchman?

Bon. Yes, Sir, born at Brussels.

Gib. A Frenchman, and a priest! I won't be seen in his company, Sir; I have a value for my reputation, Sir.

Aim. Nay, but, captain, since we are by ourselves—Can he speak English, landlord?

Bon. Very well, Sir; you may know him, as the saying is, to be a foreigner, by his accent, and that's all?

Aim. Then he has been in England before?

Bon. Never, Sir; but he's master of languages, as the saying is; he talks Latin! it does one good to hear him talk Latin.

Aim. Then you understand Latin, Mr. Boniface?

Bon. Not I, Sir, as the saying is; but he talks it so very fast, that I'm sure it must be good.

Aim. Pray desire him to walk up.

Bon. Here he is, as the saying is.

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. Save you, gentleman, bote.

Aim. A Frenchman! Sir, your most humble servant.

Foig. Och, dear joy, I am your most shervant, and yours alsho.

Gib. Doctor, you talk very good English, but you have a mighty twang of the foreigner.

Foig. My English is very well for the vords, but we foreigners, you know, cannot bring our tongues about the pronunciation so soon.

Aim. A foreigner! a downright Teague, by this light. [*Aside.*] Were you born in France, doctor?

Foig. I was educated in France, but I was borned at Brussels: I am a subject of the king of Spain, joy.

Gib. What king of Spain, Sir? Speak.

Foig. Upon my soul, joy, I cannot tell you as yet.

Aim. Nay, captain, that was too hard upon the doctor; he's a stranger.

Foig. O let him alone, dear joy, I'm of a nation that is not easily put out of countenance.

Aim. Come, gentlemen, I'll end the dispute: here, landlord, is dinner ready?

Bon. Upon the table, as the saying is.

Aim. Gentlemen—pray—that door—

Foig. No, no, fait, the captain must lead.

Aim. No, doctor, the church is our guide.

Gib. Ay, ay, so it is. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Gallery in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

Enter ARCHER and SCRUB, singing and hugging one another; SCRUB with a tankard in his hand, GIPSEY listening at a distance.

Scrub. Tall, all, dall. Come, my dear boy—let's have a song once more.

Arch. No, no, we shall disturb the family—But will you be sure to keep the secret?

Scrub. Pho! upon my honour, as I'm a gentleman.

Arch. 'Tis enough. You must know then, that my master is the Lord Viscount Aimwell; he fought a duel t'other day in London, wounded his man so dangerously, that he thinks fit to withdraw till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not; he never was in this part of England before, so he chose to retire to this place, that's all.

Gip. And that's enough for me. [*Exit.*]

Scrub. And where were you when your master fought?

Arch. We never know of our master's quarrels.

Scrub. No! if our masters in the country here receive a challenge, the first thing they do, is to tell their wives; the wives tell the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and in half an hour, you shall have the whole country up in arms.

Arch. To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for—But if you should chance to talk now of this business?

Scrub. Talk! Ah, Sir, had I not learned the knack of holding my tongue, I had never lived so long in a great family.

Arch. Ay, ay, to be sure, there are secrets in all families.

Scrub. Secrets, O lud!—but I'll say no more—Come, sit down, we'll make an end of our tankard;—Here—

Arch. With all my heart; who knows but you and I may come to be better acquainted, eh?—Here's your ladies' health; you have three I think, and to be sure there must be secrets among them.

Scrub. Secrets! ah, friend, friend! I wish I had a friend.

Arch. Am I not your friend? Come, you and I will be sworn brothers.

Scrub. Shall we?

Arch. From this minute—Give me a kiss—And now, brother Scrub—

Scrub. And now, brother Martin, I will tell you a secret, that will make your hair stand on end.—You must know that I am consumedly in love.

Arch. That's a terrible secret that's the truth on't.

Scrub. That jade, Gipse, that was with us just now in the cellar, is the arrantest whore that ever wore a petticoat, and I'm dying for love of her.

Arch. Ha, ha, ha!—Are you in love with her person or her virtue, brother Scrub?

Scrub. I should like virtue best, because it is more durable than beauty; for virtue holds good with some women long and many a day after they have lost it.

Arch. In the country, I grant ye, where no woman's virtue is lost till a bastard be found.

Scrub. Ay, could I bring her to a bastard, I should have her all to myself; but I dare not put it upon that lay, for fear of being sent for a soldier—Pray, brother, how do you gentlemen in London like that same pressing act?

Arch. Very ill, brother Scrub—'Tis the worst that ever was made for us; formerly, I remember the good days when we could dun our masters for our wages, and if they refused to pay us, we could have a warrant to carry them before a justice; but now, if we talk of eating, they have a warrant for us, and carry us before three justices.

Scrub. And to be sure we go, if we talk of

eating; for the justices wont give their own servants a bad example. Now this is my misfortune—I dare not speak in the house, while that jade Gipsy, dings about like a fury—Once I had the better end of the staff.

Arch. And how comes the change now?

Scrub. Why, the mother of all this mischief is a priest.

Arch. A priest!

Scrub. Ay, a damned son of a whore of Babylon, that came over hither to say grace to the French officers, and eat up our provisions—There's not a day goes over his head without a dinner or supper in this house.

Arch. How came he so familiar in the family?

Scrub. Because he speaks English as if he had lived here all his life, and tells lies as if he had been a traveller from his cradle.

Arch. And this priest, I'm afraid, has converted the affections of your Gipsy.

Scrub. Converted! ay, and perverted, my dear friend—for I am afraid he has made her a whore and a papist—but this is not all; there's the French count and Mrs. Sullen, they're in the confederacy, and for some private ends of their own too, to be sure.

Arch. A very hopeful family yours, brother Scrub; I suppose the maiden lady has her lover too?

Scrub. Not that I know—She's the best of them, that's the truth on't; but they take care to prevent my curiosity, by giving me so much business, that I am a perfect slave: What d'ye think is my place in this family?

Arch. Butler, I suppose.

Scrub. Ah, Lord help your silly head!—I'll tell you—Of a Monday I drive the coach; of a Tuesday I drive the plough; on Wednesday I follow the hounds; on Thursday I dun the tenants; on Friday I go to market; on Saturday I draw warrants; and on Sunday I draw beer.

Arch. Ha, ha, ha! if variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough on't, my dear brother—but what ladies are those?

Scrub. Ours, ours; that upon the right hand is Mrs. Sullen, and the other Mrs. Dorinda—don't mind them; sit still, man.

Enter MRS SULLEN and DORINDA.

Mrs. S. I have heard my brother talk of Lord Aimwell, but they say that his brother is the finer gentleman.

Dor. That's impossible, sister.

Mrs. S. He's vastly rich, and very close, they say.

Dor. No matter for that; if I can creep into his heart, I'll open his breast, I warrant him; I have heard say, that people may be guessed at by the behaviour of their servants; I could wish we might talk to that fellow.

Mrs. S. So do I; for I think he's a very pretty fellow: come this way; I'll throw out a lure for him presently.

[They walk to the opposite side of the stage;

Mrs. SULLEN drops her fan. ARCHER takes it up, and gives it to her.

Arch. Corn, wine, and oil, indeed—But I think the wife has the greatest plenty of flesh and blood; she should be my choice—Ay, ay, say you so—Madam—your ladyship's fan.

Mrs. S. O, Sir, I thank you—What a handsome bow the fellow made?

Dor. Bow! why I have known several footmen

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come down from London, set up here for dancing masters, and carry off the best fortunes in the country.

Arch. *[Aside.]* That project, for aught I know, had been better than ours—Brother Scrub, why don't you introduce me?

Scrub. Ladies, this is the strange gentleman's servant, that you saw at church to-day: I understood he came from London, and so I invited him to the cellar, that he might show me the newest flourish in whetting my knives.

Dor. And I hope you have made much of him.

Arch. Oh, yes, Madam, but the strength of your ladyship's liquor is a little too potent for the constitution of your humble servant.

Mrs. S. What, then you don't usually drink ale?

Arch. No, Madam, my constant drink is tea, or a little wine and water; 'tis prescribed me by the physicians, for a remedy against the spleen.

Scrub. O la! O la!—A footman have the spleen!

Mrs. S. I thought that distemper had been only proper to people of quality.

Arch. Madam, like all other fashions, it wears out, and descends to their servants; though in a great many of us, I believe, it proceeds from some melancholy particles in the blood, occasioned by the stagnation of wages.

Dor. How affectedly the fellow talks!—How long, pray, have you served your present master?

Arch. Not long; my life has been mostly spent in the service of the ladies.

Mrs. S. And pray, which service do you like best?

Arch. Madam, the ladies pay best; the honour of serving them is sufficient wages; there is a charm in their looks, that delivers a pleasure with their commands, and gives our duty the wings of inclination.

Mrs. S. That flight was above the pitch of a livery:—and, Sir, would not you be satisfied to serve a lady again?

Arch. As groom of the chambers, Madam, but not as a footman.

Mrs. S. I suppose you served as footman before?

Arch. For that reason I would not serve in that post again; for my memory is too weak for the load of messages that the ladies lay upon their servants in London: my Lady Howd'ye, the last mistress I served, called me up one morning, and told me, Martin, go to my Lady All-night with my humble service; tell her I was to wait on her ladyship yesterday, and left word with Mrs. Rebecca, that the preliminaries of the affair she knows of are stopped till we know the concurrence of the person that I know of, for which there are circumstances wanting, which we shall accommodate at the old place; but that, in the mean time, there is a person about her ladyship, that from several hints and surmises, was necessary at a certain time to the disappointments that naturally attend things, that to her knowledge are of more importance—

Mrs. S. } Ha, ha! where are you going, Sir?

Dor. } *Arch.* Why, I hav'n't half done.

Scrub. I should not remember a quarter of it.

Arch. The whole how d'ye was about half an hour long; I happened to misplace two syllables, and was turned off, and rendered incapable—

Dor. The pleasantest fellow, sister, I ever saw.—But, friend, if your master be married, I presume you still serve a lady?

Arch. No, Madam, I take care never to come into a married family; the commands of the master and mistress are always so contrary, that 'tis impossible to please both.

Dor. There's a main point gained. My lord is not married, I find. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. S. But, I wonder, friend, that in so many good services, you had not a better provision made for you?

Arch. I don't know, how, Madam—I am very well as I am.

Mrs. S. Something for a pair of gloves.

[*Offers money.*]

Arch. I humbly beg leave to be excused. My master, Madam, pays me; nor dare I take money from any other hand, without injuring his honour and disobeying his commands.

Scrub. Brother Martin! brother Martin!

Arch. What do you say, brother Scrub?

Scrub. Take the money, and give it me.

[*Exeunt ARCHER and SCRUB.*]

Dor. This is surprising. Did you ever see so pretty a well-bred fellow?

Mrs. S. The devil take him for wearing that livery.

Dor. I fancy, sister, he may be some gentleman, a friend of my lord's, that his lordship has pitched upon for his courage, fidelity, and discretion, to bear him company in this dress, and who, ten to one, was his second.

Mrs. S. It is so, it must be so, it shall be so—For I like him.

Dor. What! better than the count?

Mrs. S. The count happened to be the most agreeable man in the place; and so I chose him to serve me in my design upon my husband. But I should like this fellow better in a design upon myself.

Dor. But now, sister, for an interview with this lord and this gentleman; how shall we bring that about?

Mrs. S. Patience! you country ladies give no quarter. Lookye, Dorinda, if my Lord Aimwell loves you, or deserves you, he'll find a way to see you, and there we must leave it. My business comes now upon the tapis. Have you prepared your brother?

Dor. Yes, yes.

Mrs. S. And how did he relish it?

Dor. He said little, mumbled something to himself, and promised to be guided by me: but here he comes.

[*Enter SULLEN.*]

Sul. What singing was that I heard just now?

Mrs. S. The singing in your head, my dear; you complained of it all day.

Sul. You're impertinent.

Mrs. S. I was ever so, since I became one flesh with you.

Sul. One flesh! rather two carcasses joined unnaturally together.

Mrs. S. Or rather a living soul coupled to a dead body.

Dor. So, this is fine encouragement for me!

Sul. Yes, my wife shows you what you must do!

Mrs. S. And my husband shows you what you must suffer.

Sul. 'Sdeath, why can't you be silent?

Mrs. S. 'Sdeath, why can't you talk?

Sul. Do you talk to any purpose?

Mrs. S. Do you think to any purpose?

Sul. Sister, harkye—[*Whispers.*] I sha'n't be home till it be late. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. S. What did he whisper to you?

Dor. That he would go round the back way, come into the closet, and listen, as I directed him. But let me beg you once more, dear sister, to drop this project; for, as I told you before, instead of awaking him to kindness, you may provoke him to rage: and then who knows how far his brutality may carry him?

Mrs. S. I'm provided to receive him, I warrant you; away! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Gallery in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

Enter LADY BOUNTIFUL and Mrs. SULLEN, DORINDA meeting them.

Dor. News, dear sister, news, news!

Enter ARCHER, running.

Arch. Where, where is my Lady Bountiful? Pray, which is the old lady of you three?

Lady B. I am.

Arch. O, Madam, the fame of your ladyship's charity, goodness, benevolence, skill, and ability, have drawn me hither, to implore your ladyship's help in behalf of my unfortunate master, who is at this moment breathing his last.

Lady B. Your master! where is he?

Arch. At your gate, Madam: drawn by the appearance of your handsome house, to view it nearer, and walking up the avenue, within five paces of the court-yard, he was taken ill of a sudden, with a sort of I know not what; but down he fell, and there he lies.

Lady B. Here, Scrub, Gipsy!

Enter SCRUB and GIPSEY.

All run, get my easy-chair down stairs, put the gentleman in it, and bring him in quickly, quickly.

Arch. Heaven will reward your ladyship for this charitable act.

Lady B. Is your master used to these fits?

Arch. O yes, Madam, frequently. I have known him have five or six of a night.

Lady B. What's his name?

Arch. Lord, Madam, he's dying: a minute's care or neglect may save or destroy his life.

Lady B. Ah, poor gentleman! come, friend, show me the way; I'll see him brought in myself.

[*Exit ARCH.*]

Dor. O, sister, my heart flutters about strangely; I can hardly forbear running to his assistance.

Mrs. S. And I'll lay my life he deserves your assistance more than he wants it: did not I tell you that my lord would find a way to come at you? Love's his distemper, and you must be the physician: put on all your charms, summon all your fire into your eyes, plant the whole artillery of your looks against his breast, and down with him.

Dor. O, sister, I'm but a young gunner, I shall be afraid to shoot for fear the piece should recoil, and hurt myself.

Mrs. S. Never fear, you shall see me shoot before you, if you will.

Dor. No, no, dear sister, you have missed your mark so unfortunately, that I sha'n't care for being instructed by you.

Enter AIMWELL, in a chair, carried by ARCHER and SCRUB, LADY BOUNTIFUL, and GIPSEY. AIMWELL counterfeiting a swoon.

Lady B. Here, here, let's see—the hartshorn drops—Gipsey, a glass of fair water; his fit's very strong. Bless me, how his hands are clenched!

Arch. For shame, ladies, what d'ye do? why don't you help us? Pray, Madam, [*To DOR.*] take his hand, and open it, if you can, whilst I hold his head. [*DORINDA takes his hand.*]

Dor. Poor gentleman!—Oh—he has got my hand within his, and squeezes it unmercifully.—

Lady B. 'Tis the violence of his convulsions, child.

Arch. Oh, Madam, he's perfectly possessed in these cases—he'll bite you, if you don't have a care.

Dor. O, my hand, my hand!

Lady B. What's the matter with the foolish girl! I have got this hand open you see with a great deal of ease.

Arch. Ay, but, Madam, your daughter's hand is somewhat warmer than your ladyship's, and the heat of it draws the force of the spirits that way.

Mrs. S. I find, friend, you are very learned in these sort of fits.

Arch. 'Tis no wonder, Madam, for I'm often troubled with them myself; I find myself extremely ill at this minute.

[*Looking hard at MRS. SULLEN.*]

Mrs. S. [*Aside.*] I fancy I could find a way to cure you.

Lady B. His fit holds him very long.

Arch. Longer than usual, Madam—

Lady B. Where did his illness take him first, pray?

Arch. To-day at church, Madam.

Lady B. In what manner was he taken?

Arch. Very strangely, my lady. He was of a sudden touched with something in his eyes, which at the first he only felt, but could not tell whether 'twas pain or pleasure.

Lady B. Wind, nothing but the wind.—Your master should never go without a bottle to smell to—Oh! he recovers—the lavender water—some feathers to burn under his nose—Hungary water, to rub his temples—Oh, he comes to himself. Hem a little, Sir, hem—Gipsey, bring the cordial water.

[*AIMWELL seems to awake in amaze.*]

Dor. How do you, Sir?

Aim. Where am I?

[*Rising.*]

Sure I have pass'd the gulph of silent death, And now am landed on the Elysian shore. Behold the goddess of those happy plains, Fair Proserpine—let me adore thy bright divinity.

[*Kneels to DORINDA, and kisses her hand.*]

Mrs. S. So, so, so; I knew where the fit would end.

Aim. Eurydice, perhaps—

How could thy Orpheus keep his word, And not look back on thee?

No treasure but thyself could sure have brib'd him To look one minute off thee.

Lady B. Delirious, poor gentleman.

Arch. Very delirious, Madam—very delirious.

Scrub. Very dolorous, indeed.

Aim. Martin's voice, I think.

Arch. Yes, my lord.—How does your lordship?

Lady B. Lord! did you mind that, girls?

Aim. Where am I?

Arch. In very good hands, Sir. You were taken just now with one of your old fits, under

the trees, just by this good lady's house; her ladyship had you taken in, and has miraculously brought you to yourself, as you see—

Aim. I am so confounded with shame, Madam, that I can only now beg pardon—and refer my acknowledgments for your ladyship's care till an opportunity offers of making some amends—I dare be no longer troublesome—Martin, give two guineas to the servants. [*Going.*]

Dor. Sir, you may catch cold by going so soon into the air; you don't look, Sir, as if you were perfectly recovered.

[*ARCH. talks to LADY B. in dumb show.*]

Aim. That I shall never be, Madam; my present illness is so rooted, that I must expect to carry it to my grave.

Lady B. Come, Sir, your servant has been telling me that you are apt to relapse, if you go into the air—your good manners sha'n't get the better of ours—you shall sit down again, Sir:—come, Sir, we don't mind ceremonies in the country.—Here, Gipsey, bring the cordial water.—Here, Sir, my service t'ye—you shall taste my water; 'Tis a cordial, I can assure you, and of my own making.

Scrub. Yes, my lady makes very good water.

Lady B. Drink it off, Sir. [*AIMWELL drinks.*] And how d'ye find yourself now, Sir?

Aim. Somewhat better—though very faint still.

Lady B. Ay, ay, people are always faint after these fits. Come, girls, you shall show the gentleman the house; 'tis but an old family building, Sir; but you had better walk about, and cool by degrees, than venture immediately into the air. You'll find some tolerable pictures. Dorinda, show the gentleman the way. I must go to the poor woman below. [*Exit.*]

Dor. This way, Sir.

Aim. Ladies, shall I beg leave for my servant to wait on you? for he understands pictures very well.

Mrs. S. Sir, we understand originals, as well as he does pictures; so he may come along.

[*Exit DOR. and AIM.; MRS. S. and ARCH.*]

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. Shave you, master Scrub.

Scrub. Sir, I wont be saved your way—I hate a priest, I abhor the French, and I defy the devil.—Sir, I'm a bold Briton, and will spill the last drop of my blood to keep out popery and slavery.

Foig. Master Scrub, you would put me down in politics, and so I would be spaking with Mrs. Gipsey.

Scrub. Good Mr. Priest, you can't speak with her; she's sick, Sir; she's gone abroad, Sir; she's—dead two months ago, Sir.

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. How now, impudence! How dare you talk so saucily to the doctor? Pray, Sir, don't take it ill; for the common people of England are not so civil to strangers, as—

Scrub. You lie, you lie: 'tis the common people, such as you are, that are civilest to strangers.

Gip. Sirrah, I have a great mind to—get you out, I say.

Scrub. I wont.

Gip. You wont, saucebox!—Pray, doctor, what is the captain's name that came to your inn last night?

Scrub. The captain! ah, the devil! there she

hampers me again; the captain has me on one side, and the priest on t'other;—so between the gown and the sword I have a fine time on 't.

Gip. What, sirrah, wont you march?

Scrub. No, my dear, I wont march—but I'll walk:—and I'll make bold to listen a little too.

[*Goes behind the side scene, and listens.*]

Gip. Indeed, doctor, the count has been barbarously treated, that's the truth on 't.

Foig. Ah, Mrs. Gipse, upon my shoul, now gra, his complainings would mollify the marrow in your bones, and move the bowels of your commiseration: he weeps, and he dances, and he fistles, and he swears, and he laughs, and he stamps, and he sings: in conclusion, joy, he's afflicted *a la Française*, and a stranger would not know whider to cry or to laugh with him.

Gib. What would you have me do, doctor?

Foig. Nothing, joy, but only to hide the count in Mrs. Sullen's closet, when it is dark.

Gip. Nothing! is that nothing? it would be both a sin and a shame, doctor.

Foig. Here is twenty Louis d'ors, joy, for your shame; and I will give you an absolution for the shin.

Gip. But wont that money look like a bribe?

Foig. Dat is according as you shall take it—if you receive the money beforehand, 'twill be *logice*, a bribe; but if you stay till afterwards, 'twill be only a gratification.

Gip. Well, doctor, I'll take it *logice*—But what must I do with my conscience, Sir?

Foig. Leave dat wid me, joy; I am your priest, *gra*; and your conscience is under my hands.

Gip. But should I put the count into the closet—

Foig. Vell, is dere any shin for a man's being in a closet? one may go to prayers in a closet.

Gip. But if the lady should come into her chamber and go to bed?

Foig. Vell, and is dere any shin in going to bed, joy?

Gip. Ah, but if the parties should meet, doctor?

Foig. Vell den—the parties must be responsible.—Do you be gone after putting the count in the closet; and leave the shins wid themselves—I will come with the count to instruct you in your chamber.

Gip. Well, doctor, your religion is so pure, that I'm resolved to die a martyr to 't.—Here's the key of the garden door; come in the back way, when 'tis late—I'll be ready to receive you; but don't so much as whisper, only take hold of my hand; I'll lead you, and do you lead the count, and follow me. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. What witchcraft now have these two imps of the devil been a-hatching here?—There's twenty Louis d'ors! I heard that, and saw the purse: but I must give room to my betters. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Picture Gallery.

Enter AIMWELL, leading DORINDA, and making love in dumb show; MRS. SULLEN and ARCHER.

Mrs. S. Pray, Sir, [*To ARCH.*] how d'ye like that piece?

Arch. O, 'tis Leda—you find, Madam, how Jupiter came disguised to make love—

Mrs. S. Pray, Sir, what head is that in the corner there?

Arch. O, Madam, 'tis poor Ovid in his exile.

Mrs. S. What was he banished for?

Arch. His ambitious love, Madam. [*Bowing.*] His misfortune touches me.

Mrs. S. Was he successful in his amours?

Arch. There he has left us in the dark.—He was too much a gentleman to tell.

Mrs. S. If he were secret, I pity him.

Arch. And if he were successful, I envy him.

Mrs. S. How d'ye like that Venus over the chimney?

Arch. Venus! I protest, Madam, I took it for your picture: but now I look again, 'tis not handsome enough.

Mrs. S. Oh, what a charm is flattery! if you would see my picture, there it is, over that cabinet—how d'ye like it?

Arch. I must admire any thing, Madam, that has the least resemblance of you.—But, methinks, Madam—[*He looks at the picture and MRS. SULLEN three or four times, by turns.*] Pray, Madam, who drew it?

Mrs. S. A famous hand, Sir.

[*Ex. AIM. and DOR.*]

Arch. A famous hand, Madam! Your eyes, indeed, are featured there; but where's the sparkling moisture and shining fluid, in which they swim? The picture, indeed, has your dimples, but where's the swarm of killing Cupids that should ambush there? These lips too are figured out; but where's the carnation dew, the pouting ripeness, that tempts the taste in the original?

Mrs. S. Had it been my lot to have matched with such a man!

[*Aside.*]

Arch. Your neck too, presumptuous man! what! paint heaven!—*A-propos*, Madam, in the very next picture is Salmoneus, that was struck dead with lightning for offering to imitate Jove's thunder; I hope you served the painter so, Madam.

Mrs. S. Had my eyes the power of thunder, they should employ their lightning better.

Arch. There's the finest bed in that room, Madam; I suppose 'tis your ladyship's bed-chamber?

Mrs. S. And what then, Sir?

Arch. I think the quilt is the richest that ever I saw—I can't, at this distance, Madam, distinguish the figures of the embroidery: will you give me leave, Madam?

Mrs. S. The devil take his impudence—Sure, if I give him an opportunity, he durst not be rude. I have a great mind to try. [*Going—returns.*] 'Sdeath! what am I doing!—And alone too!—Sister, sister!

[*Exit.*]

Arch. I'll follow her close—

For where a Frenchman durst attempt to storm,

A Briton, sure, may well the work perform.

[*Going.*]

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. Martin! brother Martin!

Arch. O brother Scrub, I beg your pardon, I was not a-going: here's a guinea my master ordered you.

Scrub. A guinea! hi, hi, hi, a guinea! eh— by this light it is a guinea; but I suppose you expect one and twenty shillings in change.

Arch. Not at all; I have another for Gipse.

Scrub. A guinea for her! Fire and Faggot for the witch—Sir, give me that guinea, and I'll discover a plot.

Arch. A plot!

Scrub. Ay, Sir, a plot, a horrid plot.—First, it must be a plot, because there's a woman in 't,

secondly, it must be a plot, because there's a priest in 't: thirdly, it must be a plot, because there's French gold in 't: and, fourthly, it must be a plot, because I don't know what to make on 't.

Arch. Nor any body else, I'm afraid, brother Scrub.

Scrub. Truly, I'm afraid so too; for where there's a priest and a woman, there's always a mystery and a riddle.—This I know, that here has been the doctor with a temptation in one hand, and an absolution in the other, and Gipsev has sold herself to the devil; I saw the price paid down, my eyes shall take their oath on 't.

Arch. And is all this bustle about Gipsev?

Scrub. That's not all; I could hear but a word here and there; but I remember they mentioned a count, a closet, a back door, and a key.

Arch. The count! did you hear nothing of Mrs. Sullen?

Scrub. I did hear some words that sounded that way; but whether it was Sullen or Dorinda, I could not distinguish.

Arch. You have told this matter to nobody, brother?

Scrub. Told! no, Sir, I thank you for that; I'm resolved never to speak one word, *pro nor con*, till we have a peace.

Arch. You are i' th' right, brother Scrub; here's a treaty a-foot between the count and the lady.—The priest and the chambermaid are plenipotentiaries.—It shall go hard, but I'll find a way to be included in the treaty. Where's the doctor now?

Scrub. He and Gipsev are this moment devouring my lady's marmalade in the closet.

Aim. [*From without.*] Martin, Martin!

Arch. I come, Sir, I come.

Scrub. But you forget the other guinea, brother Martin.

Arch. Here I give it with all my heart. [*Exit.*]

Scrub. And I take it with all my soul. 'Ecod, I'll spoil your plotting, Mrs. Gipsev; and if you should set the captain upon me, these two guineas will buy me off. [*Exit.*]

Enter MRS. SULLEN and DORINDA, meeting.

Mrs. S. Well, sister.

Dor. And well, sister.

Mrs. S. What's become of my lord?

Dor. What's become of his servant?

Mrs. S. Servant! he's a prettier fellow and a finer gentleman by fifty degrees than his master.

Dor. O' my conscience I fancy you could beg that fellow at the gallows' foot.

Mrs. S. O' my conscience I could, provided I could put a friend of yours in his room.

Dor. You desired me, sister, to leave you, when you transgressed the bounds of honour.

Mrs. S. Thou dear, censorious, country girl—What dost mean? You can't think of the man without the bed-fellow, I find.

Dor. I don't find any thing unnatural in that thought.

Mrs. S. How a little love and conversation improve a woman? Why, child, you begin to live—you never spoke before.

Dor. Because I was never spoke to before; my lord has told me, that I have more wit and beauty than any of my sex; and truly I begin to think the man is sincere.

Mrs. S. You are in the right, Dorinda; pride is the life of a woman, and flattery is our daily

bread—but I'll lay you a guinea that I had finer things said to me than you had.

Dor. Done—What did your fellow say to you?

Mrs. S. My fellow took the picture of Venus for mine.

Dor. But my lover took me for Venus herself.

Mrs. S. Common cant! had my spark called me a Venus directly, I should have believed him a footman in good earnest.

Dor. But my lover was upon his knees to me.

Mrs. S. And mine was upon his tiptoes to me.

Dor. Mine vowed to die for me.

Mrs. S. Mine swore to die with me.

Dor. Mine kissed my hand ten thousand times.

Mrs. S. Mine has all that pleasure to come.

Dor. Mine spoke the softest moving things.

Mrs. S. Mine had his moving things too.

Dor. Mine offered marriage.

Mrs. S. O lard! d'ye call that a moving thing?

Dor. The sharpest arrow in his quiver, my dear sister:—Why, my twenty thousand pounds may lie brooding here these seven years, and hatch nothing at last but some ill-natured clown, like yours: whereas, if I marry my Lord Aimwell, there will be title, place, and precedence; the park, the play, and the drawing-room; splendour, equipage, noise, and flambeaux—Hey, my Lady Aimwell's servants there—lights, lights, to the stairs—my Lady Aimwell's coach, put forward—stand by; make room for her ladyship—Are not these things moving? What! melancholy of a sudden?

Mrs. S. Happy, happy sister! your angel has been watchful for your happiness, whilst mine has slept, regardless of his charge—Long smiling years of circling joys for you, but not one hour for me! [*Weeps.*]

Dor. Come, my dear, we'll talk of something else.

Mrs. S. O, Dorinda, I own myself a woman, full of my sex, a gentle, generous soul—easy and yielding to soft desires: a spacious heart, where love and all his train might lodge: and must the fair apartment of my breast be made a stable for a brute to lie in?

Dor. Meaning your husband, I suppose.

Mrs. S. Husband!—No—even husband is too soft a name for him—But, come, I expect my brother here to-night or to-morrow; he was abroad when my father married me: perhaps he'll find a way to make me easy.

Dor. Will you promise not to make yourself uneasy in the mean time with my lord's friend?

Mrs. S. You mistake me, sister—It happens with us, as among the men, the greatest talkers are the greatest cowards; and there's a reason for it; those spirits evaporate in prattle, which might do more mischief if they took another course.—Though, to confess the truth, I do love that fellow;—and if I met him dressed as he should be, and I undressed as I should be—Lookye, sister, I have no supernatural gifts;—I can't swear I could resist the temptation—though I can safely promise to avoid it; and that's as much as the best of us can do. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—The Inn.

Enter AIMWELL and ARCHER, laughing.

Arch. And the awkward kindness of the good, motherly, old gentlewoman—

Aim. And the coming easiness of the young one—'Sdeath, 'tis a pity to deceive her.

Arch. Nay, if you adhere to those principles, stop where you are.

Aim. I can't stop; for I love her to distraction.

Arch. 'Sdeath, if you love her a hair's breadth beyond discretion, you must go no farther.

Aim. Well, well, any thing to deliver us from sauntering away our idle evenings at White's, Tom's, or Will's—but now—

Arch. Ay, now is the time to prevent all this—Strike while the iron is hot—The priest is the luckiest part of our adventure; he shall marry you and pimp for me.

Aim. But I should not like a woman that can be so fond of a Frenchman.

Arch. Alas, Sir, necessity has no law; the lady may be in distress. But if the plot lies as I suspect—I must put on the gentleman. But here comes the doctor; I shall be ready. [*Exit.*]

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. Shave you, noble friend.

Aim. O, Sir, your servant. Pray, doctor, may I crave your name?

Foig. Fat naam is upon me? My name is Foigard, joy.

Aim. Foigard! a very good for a clergyman. Pray, Doctor Foigard, were you ever in Ireland?

Foig. Ireland! No, joy. Fat sort of a plaace is dat shame Ireland? Dey say de people are catched dere when they are young.

Aim. And some of them here when they are old,—as for example—[*Takes FOIGARD by the shoulder.*] Sir, I arrest you as a traitor against government; you are a subject of England, and this morning showed me a commission, by which you served as chaplain in the French army. This is death by our law, and your reverence must hang for it.

Foig. Upon my shoul, noble friend, dis is strange news you tell me; fader Foigard a subject of England! de son of a burgomaster at Brussels a subject of England! Ubooboo—

Aim. The son of a bog-trotter in Ireland. Sir, your tongue will condemn you before any bench in the kingdom.

Foig. And is my tongue all your evidensh, joy?

Aim. That's enough.

Foig. No, no, joy, for I will never spaak English no more.

Aim. Sir, I have other evidence. Here, Martin, you know this fellow.

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. [*In a brogue.*] Shave you, my dear cussen, how does your health?

Foig. Ah! upon my soul, dere is my countryman, and his brogue will hang mine. [*Aside.*] Mynhere, Ick wet neal watt hey zacht, ich Universton ewe neet, sacramant.

Aim. Altering your language wont do, Sir; this fellow knows your person, and will swear to your face.

Foig. Faash! Fey, is der de brogue upon my faash, too?

Arch. Upon my salvation dere is, joy.—But, cussen Mackshane, vill you not put a remembrance upon me?

Foig. Mackshane! by St. Patrick, dat ish my name sure enough. [*Aside.*]

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have it.

Foig. The devil hang you, joy—By fat acquaintance are you my cussen?

Arch. O, de devil hang yourself, joy, you know we were little boys togeder upon de school, and your foster-moder's son was married upon my nurse's shister, joy, and so we are Irish cussens.

Foig. De devil take de relationship! Vell, joy; and fat school was it?

Arch. I think it was—Ay—'twas Tipperary.

Foig. Now, upon my shoul, joy, it was Killenny.

Aim. That's enough for us—self-confession—Come, Sir, we must deliver you into the hands of the next magistrate.

Arch. He sends you to gaol, you're tried next assizes, and away you go swing into purgatory.

Foig. And is it so wid you, cussen?

Arch. It will be so wid you, cussen, if you don't immediately confess the secret between you and Mrs. Gipsey. Lookye, Sir, the gallows or the secret, take your choice.

Foig. The gallows! Upon my shoul I hate that shaame gallows, for it ish a disease dat is fatal to our family.—Vell, den, there is nothing, gentlemen, but Mrs. Sullen would speak wid the count in her chamber at midnight; and dere is no harm, joy, for I am to conduct the count to de plaash myself.

Arch. As I guessed.—Have you communicated the matter to the count?

Foig. I have not seen him since.

Arch. Right again; why then, doctor—you shall conduct me to the lady instead of the count?

Foig. Fat, my cussen to the lady! upon my shoul, gra, dat's too much upon the brogue.

Arch. Come, come, doctor, consider we have got a rope about your neck, and if you offer to squeak, we'll stop your windpipe, most certainly; we shall have another job for you in a day or two, I hope.

Aim. Here's company coming this way; let's into my chamber, and there concert our affairs further.

Arch. Come, my dear cussen, come along.

Foig. Arrah, the devil take our relationship.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter BONIFACE, HOUNSLOW, and BAGSHOT, at one door, GIBBET at the opposite.

Gib. Well, gentlemen, 'tis a fine night for our enterprise.

Houn. Dark as hell.

Bag. And blows like the devil: our landlord here has shown us the window where we must break in, and tells us the plate stands in the wainscot cupboard in the parlour.

Bon. Ay, ay, Mr. Bagshot, as the saying is, knives and forks, cups and cans, tumblers and tankards—There's one tankard, as the saying is, that's near upon as big as me; it was a present to the 'squire from his godmother, and smells of nutmeg and toast, like an East India ship.

Houn. Then you say we must divide at the stair-head.

Bon. Yes, Mr. Hounslow, as the saying is—At one end of the gallery lies my Lady Bountiful and her daughter, and at the other Mrs. Sullen.—As for the 'squire—

Gib. He's safe enough; I have fairly entered him, and he's more than half seas over already—But such a parcel of scoundrels are got about him there, that egad, I was ashamed to be seen in their company.

Bon. 'Tis now twelve, as the saying is—Gentlemen, you must set out at one.

Gib. Hounslow, do you and Bagshot see our arms fixed, and I'll come to you presently.

Houn. and Bag. We will.

[*Exeunt HOUN. and BAG.*]

Gib. Well, my dear Bonny, you assure me that Scrub is a coward?

Bon. A chicken, as the saying is—You'll have no creature to deal with but the ladies.

Gib. And I can assure you, friend, there's a great deal of address and good manners in robbing a lady: I am the most a gentleman that way that ever travelled the road.—But, my dear Bonny, this prize will be a galleon, a Vigo business—I warrant you, we shall bring off three or four thousand pounds.

Bon. In plate, jewels, and money, as the saying is, you may.

Gib. Why, then, Tyburn, I defy thee: I'll get up to town, sell off my horse and arms, but myself some pretty employment in the law, and be as snug and as honest as e'er a long gown of them all.

Bon. And what think you, then, of my daughter Cherry for a wife?

Gib. Lookye, my dear Bonny, Cherry is the goddess I adore, as the song goes; but it is a maxim, that man and wife should never have it in their power to hang one another; for, if they should, the Lord have mercy upon them both.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Inn.

Enter BONIFACE.

Bon. Coming, coming—a coach and six foaming horses at this time o'night! some great man, as the saying is, for he scorns to travel with other people.

Enter SIR CHARLES FREEMAN.

Sir C. What, fellow! a public house, and a-bed when other people sleep!

Bon. Sir, I an't a-bed, as the saying is.

Sir C. I see that, as the saying is! Is Mr. Sullen's family a-bed, think ye?

Bon. All but the 'squire himself, Sir, as the saying is: he's in the house.

Sir C. What company has he?

Bon. Why, Sir, there's the constable—Mr. Gage, the exciseman—the hunch-backed barber—and two or three other gentlemen.

Sir C. I find my sister's letters gave me the true picture of her spouse.

Enter SULLEN, drunk.

Bon. Sir, here's the 'squire.

Sul. The puppies left me asleep—Sir.

Sir C. Well, Sir.

Sul. Sir, I am an unfortunate man—I have three thousand pounds a-year, and I can't get a man to drink a cup of ale with me.

Sir C. That's very hard.

Sul. Ay, Sir; and unless you have pity upon me, and smoke one pipe with me, I must e'en go home to my wife, and I had rather go to the devil by one half.

Sir C. But I presume, Sir, you wont see your wife to-night, she'll be gone to-bed—you don't use to lie with your wife in that pickle.

Sul. What! not lie with my wife! Why, Sir, do you take me for an atheist, or a rake?

Sir C. If you hate her, Sir, I think you had better lie from her.

Sul. I think so too, friend—But I am a justice of peace, and must do nothing against the law.

Sir C. Law! as I take it, Mr. Justice, nobody observes law for law's sake, only for the good of those for whom it was made.

Sul. But if the law orders me to send you to gaol, you must lie there, my friend.

Sir C. Not unless I commit a crime to deserve it.

Sul. A crime! oons, an't I married?

Sir C. Nay, Sir, if you call marriage a crime, you must disown it for a law.

Sul. Eh!—I must be acquainted with you, Sir—But, Sir, I should be very glad to know the truth of this matter.

Sir C. Truth, Sir, is a profound sea, and few there be that dare wade deep enough to find out the bottom on't. Besides, Sir, I am afraid the line of your understanding mayn't be long enough.

Sul. Lookye, Sir, I have nothing to say to your sea of truth; but, if a good parcel of land can entitle a man to a little truth, I have as much as any he in the country.

Bon. I never heard your worship, as the saying is, talk so much before.

Sul. Because I never met with a man that I liked before.

Bon. Pray, Sir, as the saying is, let me ask you one question: Are not man and wife one flesh?

Sir C. You and your wife, Mr. Guts, may be one flesh, because you are nothing else—but rational creatures have minds that must be united.

Sul. Minds?

Sir C. Ay, minds, Sir; don't you think that mind takes place of the body?

Sul. In some people.

Sir C. Then the interest of the master must be consulted before that of his servant.

Sul. Sir, you shall dine with me to-morrow—Oons, I always thought that we were naturally one.

Sir C. Sir, I know that my two hands are naturally one, because they love one another, kiss one another, help one another in all the actions of life; but I could not say so much if they were always at cuffs.

Sul. Then, 'tis plain we are two.

Sir C. Why don't you part with her, Sir?

Sul. Will you take her, Sir?

Sir C. With all my heart.

Sul. You shall have her to-morrow morning, and a venison pasty into the bargain.

Sir C. You'll let me have her fortune too?

Sul. Fortune! why, Sir, I have no quarrel to her fortune—I only hate the woman, Sir, and none but the woman shall go.

Sir C. But her fortune, Sir—

Sul. Can you play at whist, Sir?

Sir C. No, truly, Sir.

Sul. Nor at all-fours.

Sir C. Neither.

Sul. Oons! where was this man bred? [*Aside.*] Burn me, Sir, I can't go home; 'tis but two o'clock.

Sir C. For half an hour, Sir, if you please—but you must consider 'tis late.

Sul. Late! that is the reason I can't go to bed—Come, Sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter CHERRY; she runs across the stage, and knocks at AIMWELL'S chamber-door. Enter AIMWELL, in his nightcap and gown.

Aim. What's the matter? you tremble, child; you are frightened!

Cher. No, wonder, Sir—but, in short, Sir, this very minute a gang of rogues are gone to rob my Lady Bountiful's house.

Aim. How!

Cher. I dogged them to the very door, and left them breaking in.

Aim. Have you alarmed any body else with the news.

Cher. No, no, Sir; I wanted to have discovered the whole plot, and twenty other things, to your man, Martin; but I have searched the whole house, and can't find him; where is he?

Aim. No matter, child; will you guide me immediately to the house?

Cher. With all my heart, Sir; my Lady Bountiful is my godmother, and I love Miss Dorinda so well—

Aim. Dorinda! the name inspires me! the glory and the danger shall be all my own—Come, my life, let me but get my sword. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Bed-chamber in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

MRS. SULLEN and DORINDA discovered; a table and lights.

Dor. 'Tis very late, sister; no news of your spouse yet?

Mrs. S. No; I'm condemned to be alone till towards four, and then, perhaps, I may be executed with his company.

Dor. Well, my dear, I'll leave you to your rest; you'll go directly to bed, I suppose.

Mrs. S. I don't know what to do; heigho!

Dor. That's a desiring sigh, sister.

Mrs. S. This is a languishing hour, sister.

Dor. And might prove a critical minute, if the pretty fellow were here.

Mrs. S. Here! what, in my bed-chamber, at two o'clock i' th' morning! I undressed, the family asleep, my hated husband abroad, and my lovely fellow at my feet!—O, gad, sister!

Dor. Thoughts are free, sister, and them I allow you—So, my dear, good night. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. S. A good rest to my dear Dorinda—Thoughts free! are they so? why, then, suppose him here, dressed like a youthful, gay, and burning bridegroom, [*ARCHER steals out of the closet.*] with tongue enchanting, eyes bewitching, knees imploring—[*Turns a little on one side, and sees ARCHER in the posture she describes.*] Ah! [*Shrieks, and runs to the other side of the stage.*] Have my thoughts raised a spirit? What are you, Sir! a man or a devil?

Arch. A man, a man, Madam. [*Rising.*]

Mrs. S. How shall I be sure of it?

Arch. Madam, I'll give you demonstration this minute. [*Takes her hand.*]

Mrs. S. What, Sir! do you intend to be rude?

Arch. Yes, Madam, if you please.

Mrs. S. In the name of wonder, whence came ye?

Arch. From the skies, Madam—I'm a Jupiter in love, and you shall be my Alemena.

Mrs. S. How came you in?

Arch. I flew in at the window, Madam, your cousin Cupid lent me his wings, and your sister Venus opened the casement.

Mrs. S. I'm struck dumb with admiration.

Arch. And I with wonder.

[*Looks passionately at her.*]

Mrs. S. What will become of me?

Arch. How beautiful she looks!—the teeming, jolly spring smiles in her blooming face, and when she was conceived, her mother smelt to roses, looked on lilies—

Lilies unfold their white, their fragrant charms, When the warm sun that darts into their arms.

[*Runs to her.*]

Mrs. S. Ah!

[*Shrieks.*]

Arch. Oons, Madam, what do you mean? you'll raise the house.

Mrs. S. Sir, I'll wake the dead, before I'll bear this. What! approach me with the freedom of a keeper! I'm glad on 't; your impudence has cured me.

Arch. If this be impudence, [*Kneels.*] I leave to your partial self; no panting pilgrim, after a tedious, painful voyage, e'er bowed before his saint with more devotion.

Mrs. S. Now, now, I'm ruin'd if he kneels.

[*Aside.*] Rise, thou prostrate engineer; not all thy undermining skill shall reach my heart. Rise, and know that I am a woman without my sex; I can love to all the tenderness of wishes, sighs, and tears.—But go no farther—Still, to convince you that I'm more than woman, I can speak my frailty, confess my weakness even for you—But—

Arch. For me! [*Going to lay hold on her.*]

Mrs. S. Hold, Sir; build not upon that—for my most mortal hatred follows, if you disobey what I command you now—leave me this minute. If he denies, I'm lost. [*Aside.*]

Arch. Then you'll promise—

Mrs. S. Any thing, another time.

Arch. When shall I come?

Mrs. S. To-morrow—when you will.

Arch. Your lips must seal the promise.

Mrs. S. Pshaw!

Arch. They must, they must. [*Kisses her.*] Raptures and paradise! and why not now, my angel? The time, the place, silence, and secrecy, all conspire—And now the conscious stars have pre-ordained this moment for my happiness.

[*Takes her in his arms.*]

Mrs. S. You will not, cannot, sure.

Arch. If the sun rides fast, and disappoints not mortals of to-morrow's dawn, this night shall crown my joys.

Mrs. S. My sex's pride assist me.

Arch. My sex's strength help me.

Mrs. S. You shall kill me first.

Arch. I'll die with you. [*Carrying her off.*]

Mrs. S. Thieves! thieves! murder!—

Enter SCRUB, in his breeches, and one shoe.

Scrub. Thieves! thieves! murder! popery!

Arch. Ha! [*Draws, and offers to stab SCRUB.*]

Scrub. [*Kneeling.*] O, pray, Sir, spare all I have, and take my life.

Mrs. S. [*Holding ARCHER'S hand.*] What does the fellow mean?

Scrub. O, Madam, down upon your knees, your marrow-bones—he's one of them.

Arch. Of whom?

Scrub. One of the rogues—I beg your pardon, one of the honest gentlemen, that just now are broke into the house.

Arch. How!

Mrs. S. I hope you did not come to rob me?

Arch. Indeed I did, Madam, but I would have taken nothing but what you might very well have spared; but your crying thieves has waked this dreaming fool, and so he takes them for granted.

Scrub. Granted! 'tis granted, Sir; take all we have.

Mrs. S. The fellow looks as if he were broke out of Bedlam.

Scrub. Oons, Madam, they're broke into the house with fire and sword; I saw them, heard them, they'll be here this minute.

Arch. What! thieves?

Scrub. Under favour, Sir, I think so.

Mrs. S. What shall we do, Sir?

Arch. Madam, I wish your ladyship a good night.

Mrs. S. Will you leave me?

Arch. Leave you! lord, Madam, did not you command me to be gone just now, upon the pain of your mortal hatred.

Mrs. S. Nay, but pray, Sir—

[*Takes hold of him.*]

Arch. Ha, ha, ha! now comes my turn to be ravished.—You see now, Madam, you must use men one way or other; but take this by the way, good Madam, that none but a fool will give you the benefit of his courage, unless you take his love along with it. How are they armed, friend?

Scrub. With sword and pistol, Sir.

[*He gets under the table.*]

Arch. Hush! I see a dark lantern coming through the gallery—Madam, be assured I will protect you, or lose my life.

Mrs. S. Your life! no, Sir, they can rob me of nothing that I value half so much; therefore, now, Sir, let me entreat you to be gone.

Arch. No, Madam, I'll consult my own safety for the sake of yours; I'll work by stratagem: have you courage enough to stand the appearance of them.

Mrs. S. Yes, yes; since I have escaped your hands, I can face any thing.

Arch. Come hither, brother Scrub: don't you know me?

Scrub. Eh! my brother, Martin.

Arch. This way—Here—

[*ARCHER and SCRUB hide.*]

Enter GIBBET, with a dark lantern in one hand, and a pistol in the other.

Gib. Ay, ay, this is the chamber, and the lady alone.

Mrs. S. Who are you, Sir? What would you have? D'y'e come to rob me?

Gib. Rob you! Alack-a-day, Madam, I'm only a younger brother, Madam; and so, Madam, if you make a noise, I'll shoot you through the head: but don't be afraid, Madam. [*Laying his lantern and pistol upon the table.*] These rings, Madam; don't be concerned, Madam; I have a profound respect for you, Madam; your keys, Madam; don't be frightened, Madam; I'm the most of a gentleman—[*Searching her pockets.*] This necklace, Madam; I never was rude to any lady! I have a veneration—for this necklace.

[*Here ARCHER, having come round and seized the pistol, takes GIBBET by the collar, trips up his heels, and claps the pistol to his breast.*]

Arch. Hold, profane villain, and take the reward of thy sacrilege.

Gib. Oh! pray, Sir, don't kill me; I an't prepared.

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Arch. How many are there of them, Scrub?

Scrub. Five and forty, Sir.

Arch. Then I must kill the villain, to have him out of the way.

Gib. Hold! hold! Sir; we are but three, upon my honour.

Arch. Scrub, will you undertake to secure him

Scrub. Not I, Sir; kill him, kill him!

Arch. Run to Gipse's chamber; there you'll find the doctor; bring him hither presently. [*Exit SCRUB, running.*] Come, rogue, if you have a short prayer, say it.

Gib. Sir, I have no prayer at all; the government has provided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions.

Mrs. S. Pray, Sir, don't kill him; you fright me as much as him.

Arch. The dog shall die, Madam, for being the occasion of my disappointment. Sirrah, this moment is your last.

Gib. Sir, I'll give you two hundred pounds to spare my life.

Arch. Have you no more, rascal?

Gib. Yes, Sir, I can command four hundred; but I must reserve two of them to save my life at the sessions.

Enter SCRUB and FOIGARD.

Arch. Here, doctor; I suppose Scrub and you, between you, may manage him.—Lay hold of him. [*FOIGARD lays hold of GIBBET.*]

Gib. What! turned over to the priest already—Lookye, doctor, you come before your time; I an't condemned yet, I thank ye.

Foig. Come, my dear joy, I vil secure your body and your shoul too; I will make you a good catholic, and give you an absolution.

Gib. Absolution! can you procure me a pardon, doctor?

Foig. No, joy.

Gib. Then you and your absolution may go to the devil.

Arch. Convey him into the cellar, there bind him. Take the pistol, and if he offers to resist, shoot him through the head,—and come back to us with all the speed you can.

Scrub. Ay, ay; come, doctor, do you hold him fast, and I'll guard him.

[*Exit SCRUB, GIBBET, and FOIGARD.*]

Mrs. S. But how came the doctor?

Arch. In short, Madam—[*Shrieking without.*] 'Sdeath! the rogues are at work with the other ladies: I'm vexed I parted with the pistol; but I must fly to their assistance—Will you stay here, Madam, or venture yourself with me?

Mrs. S. Oh, with you, dear Sir, with you.

[*Takes him by the arm, and Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Another Apartment.

Enter HOUNSLOW, dragging in LADY BOUNTIFUL, and BAGESHOT hauling in DORINDA. The Rogues with swords drawn.

Houn. Come, come, your jewels, mistress.

Bag. Your keys, your keys, old gentlewoman.

Enter AIMWELL.

Aim. Turn this way, villains; I durst engage an army in such a cause.

[*He engages them both.*]

Enter ARCHER and MRS. SULEN.

Arch. Hold! hold! my lord; every man his bird, pray. [*Fight; the rogues are disarmed.*] Shall we kill the rogues?

